

Ohara joins Rivera

Garrett Ohara '84 began this year as Assistant Athletic Director/Middle School Athletic Director, freeing Athletic Director Alex Rivera to focus on a broader agenda that includes expanding the Athletic Council on Leadership, LA outreach, and alumni involvement.

"I'm looking forward to transitioning from the classroom to administration," says Ohara, who brings vital institutional knowledge from both his days on the court and from working alongside Rivera. "Alex has invested so much in me over nearly 40 years, seeing me grow as an athlete, a coach, an administrator, and a person."

"I go way back with Garrett," says Rivera, who sees Ohara's new position as the natural result of Prep's close knit family tradition. "We wanted someone in place to facilitate a smooth transition. We don't just let alumni leave... I knew he'd fit perfectly. Everything's fallen into place."

For photos of Alex and Garrett back in the day, see preptalk.flintridgeprep.org

about homework, balance, and getting enough sleep. We understand it—but don't ask us to like it in the middle of the season!"

The conditioning program was stepped up; soccer coach and PE teacher Esteban Chavez, trainers Erick Rodriguez and Anthony Garcia, and team doctors and parents Raffaele Corbisiero, Fred Fung, and Mark Gerard stepped in to help keep the team competitive and free from injury. In the area of player safety, Antonio taught improved tackling technique while the Fathers Club, following on the heels of the sports survey, contributed new helmets and other equipment and purchased software for the ImPACT program (see story on page 7), used by every athlete on campus.

The community comes together

On the same level of importance, according to Antonio, were parents who were supportive and embraced the changes. "Parents spoke with other parents and helped them see what a great

experience football can be. They saw personal growth in their kids, and they talked it up."

Football parents are traditionally a tight-knit group, as they watch their kids "put it on the line, and prove themselves every day," says David Chemel, parent of Tucker, one of the senior players. "The team is in a really good place. They've come up together. They have so much more than they had at the beginning. It's much more than the sum of its parts."

For parents of younger players, like David and Susan Codiga, whose son Jackson '15 is a sophomore, it's been an amazing ride. "They get that it's a turnaround year," reports David. "And they are looking forward to more." Sandy Law, the mother of Kyle '14, feels, "The seniors are great mentors. They have embraced the younger kids. It's a cohesive team where they take care of everybody, even the sophomores who moved up to Varsity in the last couple of games. The juniors see this, and

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they want to take it on next year and continue the success."

"They fought hard for this," points out Rhonda Kozack, whose son Kurt was the ball boy for his brother's Rebel 2004-08 team. This season, Kurt rushed for more than 1,000 yards, earning a berth on the First Team All-League roster as a running back. "These seniors have been on a roller coaster ride from the top to the bottom and back up again. They love each other, their team, and their school—and they had to get the school to fall in love with them."

That love was certainly on display this season. Students came out en masse for games and were led by the Prep Cheer and Dance Squad and flag-waving, stovepipe-hat wearing baseball player Karlsen Termini '13. More than 200 loyal fans cheered wildly at every game. "Kids from all sports—and all activities—supported these guys. They respected the dedication. In turn, the football players showed up to cheer for the other kids. The support is real, from students and parents, from faculty, from administration. We really felt it at the Malibu game, and from then on—and it makes a huge difference," says Antonio.

While the school was supporting the team, of course, the team and coaches were supporting each other. Glen Beattie was getting a kick out of being on the same staff with alumni he had coached. "I hope I am going to work for all of them out here one day," he grins. "And during the school day, I just like walking by the players on campus," he explains. "They always make me smile."

The feeling is mutual, especially for Dylan Colliflower '13, who calls

Beattie, "my best friend, since chem class and football my freshman year. It really meant a lot to be able to have this success this year with him."

Dylan says that the relationships among the players and coaches were special this year. "We really clicked—we trusted each other and pushed each other to be our best. For instance, players were required to review game films on our own, to free up more time to practice. When the coaches saw that we were putting in that time, in addition to the weight room, practice, and our homework load, they put out a similar effort scouting other teams and coming up with the right plays for us. We all stepped up our energy and desire. We all participated in the success."

But doing well is not the only part of Rebel sports. "This year," says Antonio, "It's about tradition and pride. We remind our players of who came before them and what it meant. We see where the program should be headed, and we're going there."

Making it to the playoffs

It's CIF playoff # 2. Flintridge Prep has the home field advantage but is facing the number one seed, Mission Prep of San Luis Obispo, a formidable squad coached by a cadre of former NFL players. The Rebels know they are outmatched by a team whose roster outnumbers and outweighs them, but they are ready and eager to play.

In the first quarter, the Rebels give fans a heart-stopping interception at Prep's 28-yard line. Parents and faculty cheer. Students wave flags and hoot; cheerleaders shake pompoms. A tight-knit group of alums from the Class of 2008—members of the last Rebel football team that went to the playoffs—are equally enthusiastic. As the game goes on, and Prep battles to a lopsided score of 6-28 at halftime, they reminisce about

Creating a passionately positive environment for high school athletics

Prep's Athletic Council on Leadership (ACL) was established in 2008 to promote athletic participation and school spirit. This year's Spirit Captain Kaitlin Liston '14 believes, "Sports at Prep are more than just an extra-curricular activity that some of our students enjoy; it's a family of peers, coaches and mentors that we will remember for the rest of our lives." ACL has taken on many service projects, like hosting Special Olympics events on campus, the JP Blecksmith Memorial 5K, and the Heroes for Hope Walk in honor of Tom Fry.

Last summer, ACL was a force in creating the Prep League Athletic Council (PLAC), which meets quarterly. The students felt a need to promote sportsmanship among athletes, faculty, parents, and spectators throughout the Prep League. Before each athletic contest, students from each team read a mission statement that the PLAC collectively developed:

We, the members of the Prep League community, promote sportsmanship on and off the field through respect and unity, balancing pride in both our individual schools and in the league as a whole. In order to abide by our mission statement we ask that everybody:

Respect all parties involved including referees, coaches and other fans. Cheer only for your team. Withhold any and all negative actions and most importantly, have fun and remember we are all part of one community.

Explains Kaitlin, "Our ACL is impacting the Prep League as a whole. We want to promote the athletic aspect of school life for everybody, whether it's the shy new kid who has never played soccer before, or the All-CIF basketball stud. We want every student-athlete to feel like we feel at Prep: that they are welcome, that they are in a safe environment to try new things and to enjoy a competitive, fun, and creative outlet after working hard at academics all day long."



Coach Antonio Harrison '01 is at the center of his team.