

Pioneer League Meet #1
Sept. 20, 2017

Palos Verdes HS. Hilly on dirt, woodchips, and cement. 3.0 miles.
Sunny, 74°F

“You know, sometimes you want to die, but at least you’re losing weight!” The aforementioned statement from Boys JV runner Andrew Kim summed up the sentiments of the afternoon at the Pioneer League Meet #1. And in an unprecedented act of great kindness to their son, TA Andrew Leung’s parents agreed to permit him to attend the meet. There, TA Andrew encouraged Girls Varsity runner Rivka Ben-Avides by saying, “Don’t feel bad if you get a bad time; if I ran, I’d get a 99:59!” After running, Ben-Avides said, “I tried my best, gave it my all, and did it for Sejin.” It was such a shame that Selina Brown, Catherine Roach, Anna Radmilovich, Emily Columbine, Francesca Caron, Kanon Mori, Jennifer Fujimoto, Dia Antazo, Aysel Aly, Matthew Peters, and Asst. TA Khalid Mihlar were unable to either run or attend the meet. Brown and Aly both said, “It sucks. I feel guilty.” Freshman Peters said that not being able to run gave him “the most emotional pain [he’d] ever had in his life.” Junior Mori said, “I am Kanon Mori. I am a superstar. I’m gonna get back and whip the competition to State.” Many of the healthy runners, though, did quite well at the meet, even though the course was hilly on dirt, woodchips, and cement. 12 new PR’s were made.

The boys did very well, with Hayden Johnson getting an amazing first place in the Boys Varsity race with a time of 17:11. He said, “It feels good because it shows the hard work is paying off.” Boys JV runner Mark Chung spoke for all runners and said, “My legs hurt. My stomach hurts. But we did well as a team.” Sophomore Caleb Ma ended up finishing with a 21:10, while junior Zach Davis got a 19:33. According to on-site calculations by TA Andrew, South won the Boys Varsity race by nine points against West High. North and Leuzinger High Schools had such slowpoke runners that he gave up calculating their scores. It was sad that TA Andrew had to watch videotapes from each run to find missing runners since some failed to use a shoe tag.

Many girls saw their times improve at this meet. Mia Trodden came in sixth in her race with a time of 21:58. After running, JV runner Desiree Powers said, “I’m tired, it sucked, but I did this for Greg. Thank you, Andrew.” [*Author’s Note:* She wanted me to put that last part in.] And freshman Sara Reeder ran a 23:54. The JV Girls race was amazing to watch, with Nari Kim leading the race with a 22:30. In fact, Carli Colditz and Sejin Park helped South secure the first three places in that race. Rivka Ben-Avides and Ashley Huang were screaming at the runners to hurry up, leading to TA Andrew Leung being afraid that he would get hearing loss.

The pizza night at Lamppost Pizza after the meet was well-received by many of the athletes, with many of them staying until around 8 p.m. Casey Spencer was kind enough to take TA Andrew to the party, and visiting track star Sean Hamilton gave him a ride home in his nice sports car. A variety of pizzas were available, including cheese, pepperoni, sausage, and combo. Many boys were shocked that the girls were invited to get pizza first, with some of them saying that everyone should be treated equally. JV Boys runner Lukas Berhe gulped down some hot sauce for kicks but later regretted it. He said, “I don’t feel too good.”

Next, South High will participate in the South Bay Cup at Columbia Park next Wednesday. TA Andrew Leung was happy to have the help of the injured runners at the Pioneer League Meet #1, but he understands their desire to get back to the races. Girls Varsity runner Emma Gloyer said, “I believe that as our injuries recover, we will kick Torrance’s and West’s butts.”

- TA Andrew Leung
Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2017