

Sports MONDAY

Senior Night Is Exactly That

■ Bunton and Merrill Lead Gauchos in Final Home Game

By **MATT HURST**
Staff Writer

Led by its two senior starters all year long, it was only fitting that on Senior Night the UCSB men's basketball team would have its two big men lead them again.

Seniors B.J. Bunton, Josh Merrill and Tom Poser played their final games in the Thunderdome on Saturday night, and it was Bunton and Merrill carrying the Gauchos (12-12 overall, 10-4 in the Big West) to an 84-72 victory over Cal Poly (10-15, 5-9). Bunton dropped in a game-high 26 points while pulling down 11 boards for his seventh double-double, and Merrill grabbed 14 rebounds and chipped in 16 points for his fourth double-double.

"Our effort was outstanding tonight," UCSB Head Coach Bob Williams said. "We ran the floor hard for 40 minutes, we competed for 40 minutes, we attacked the boards. We played with the enthusiasm and the heart that we've become used to seeing out of these guys, and we proved that Thursday

was a fluke and it wasn't the real Gaucho team."

UCSB was attempting to avenge Thursday's 14-point defeat to North Texas, while trying to hang on to first place in the Big West against the Mustangs.

"We took Thursday a little personal," Merrill said. "It hurt us. We had to come out with some extra fire tonight and we definitely showed that."

Speaking of fire, junior Erick Ashe was en fuego, finishing the game with 22 points and hitting 6 of 11 shots from behind the arc.

"I came out and shot a couple shots and I missed, so I was a little hesitant," Ashe said of his career-high point total. "They were just giving me open jumpers, and once I hit a couple I just started feeling it."

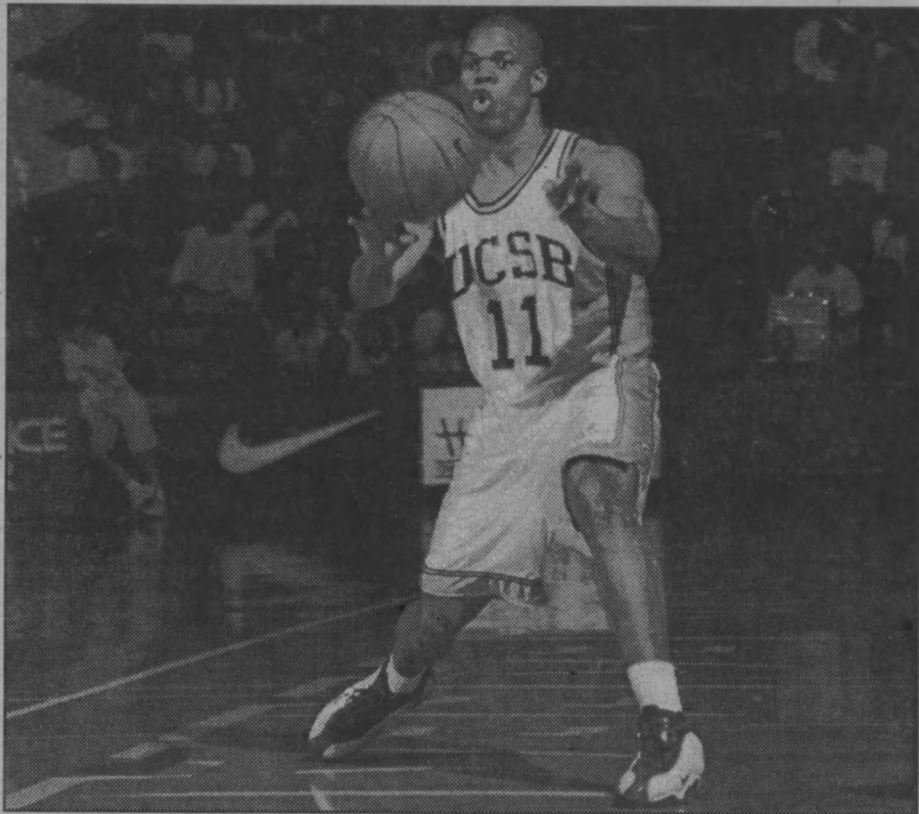
UCSB led by as many as 18 in the second half before a few open jumpers began to fall for Cal Poly in the final two minutes. The Mustangs finished the game shooting a paltry 35.7 percent, while Santa Barbara hit 43.7 percent of its shots. However, Cal Poly Head Coach Jeff Schneider felt the game was

won on the boards, a 54-36 Gaucho rebounding edge.

"They dominated the glass," the fourth-year coach said. "That's the difference in the game. Just dominated the glass. With Bunton and Merrill, they had 25 rebounds. They've got the best inside game in the league. As a tandem, they're the two best inside players in the league."

The Gauchos opened up the scoring on a Bunton jumper, but the excitement was too much for the student section as they hurled hundreds of tortillas onto the floor, prompting the referees to call a technical foul on Williams. Cal Poly junior Mike Wozniak, who finished with 14 points, hit both free throws to tie the game, and the momentum pushed the Mustangs' lead to 11-5 before Santa Barbara was able to turn it around.

"If we lose tonight's game by one, how would we have all felt?" Williams said. "I don't think you want to give the other team anything. I know I don't want to give people two points — I'm too stingy. I love the crowd, I



JASON SCHOCK/DAILY NEXUS

A PASSING GRADE: Junior Derrick Allen dishes out one of his two assists in Saturday night's victory over Cal Poly. It was the final home game for the Gauchos' season.

love the enthusiasm, but I think our crowd needs to enjoy the effort the players are putting on the floor and get all the excitement out of that entity. Hopefully next year, the tortilla thing is a thing of the past. We said early in the year that it's a new time for Gaucho basketball. Some of the old traditions need to die. I think that's one of them that needs to die. I think its time has come and

gone." Cal Poly was led by freshman Jason King, who turned in a career-high 18 points to go with six boards in the absence of starter Ben Larson, who sat out with a dislocated finger. Freshman Jeremiah Mayes added 15 points and five rebounds — all offensively — while the Mustangs' leading scorer, sophomore Chris Bjorkland, who came in averaging 18.5 ppg,

was held to nine points. But Bunton wouldn't let anyone spoil his last evening in the Dome. He threw down a monstrous dunk while being fouled early in the second half, putting the Gauchos up nine after he completed the three-point play. That set UCSB in cruise control as Cal Poly didn't score for three mi-

See **FINALE**, p.3A

The Beat Goes on for #19 Gauchos

By **STEVE WENDT**
Staff Writer

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif. — It seems almost unfair.

The #19 UCSB women's basketball team lit up two more Big West Conference opponents last weekend by a total of 65 points to raise its record to 21-3 overall, 13-0 in the Big West. The Gauchos dismantled the University of Nevada last Friday night 91-50 in Reno and continued its scoring spree Sunday afternoon at Cal Poly with a 84-60 drubbing of the host Mustangs.

The win over the Wolf Pack was really over before it started. UCSB carried a 29-point lead into the half, with four Gauchos pouring in double figures. Junior Kristi Rohr led all scorers with 20 points, but was by no means the star of the game.

"Everybody played real hard," UCSB Head Coach Mark French said. "We were all focused and went out and took care of business. We played great on both ends of the floor and shot the ball well. We played every aspect of the game really well in the first 20 minutes of the game."

"One of the keys for us was to get the ball inside to Kristi," French said. "She did a really nice job and she was able to seize the moment so to speak."

Sophomore Erin Buescher poured in 19 points and grabbed six rebounds. Junior

point guard Stacy Clinesmith, who carried UCSB with 34 points vs. UN in last season's conference tourney, added 17 on an electric-perfect performance from the field. The All-Big West performer shot 1.000 from the field with four-for-four from behind the three-point arc.

Freshman Kayte Christensen also impressed with 14 points and 10 rebounds vs. the Wolf Pack. It was her second double-double in her young career at UCSB.

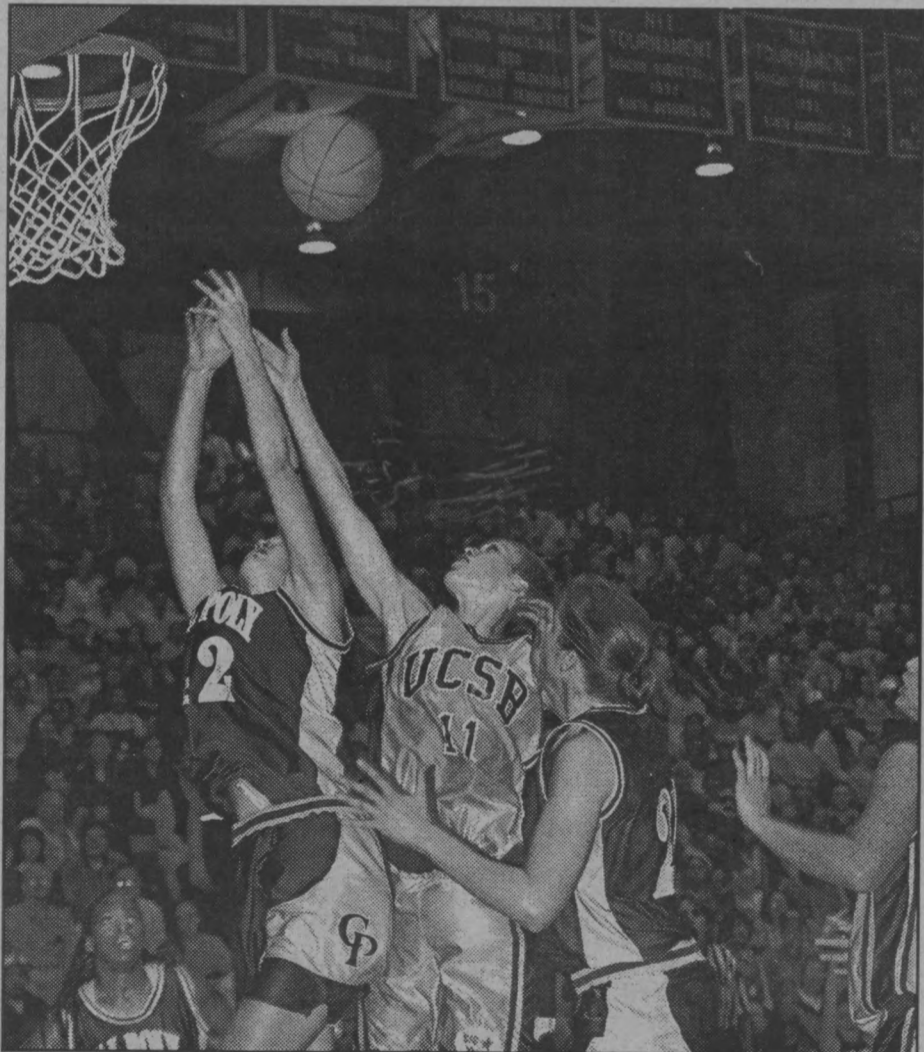
"[Christensen] will not only be a great player in our program, she will be a great leader," French said of the Alturas, Calif., native. "She has got a tremendous fire to excel, and she's acquired quite a bit of credibility for herself out on the court."

The Gauchos, who have won 28-straight Big West matchups dating back to a January loss to Nevada over a year ago, used balanced scoring and an outstanding offensive game from a player who usually doesn't look to score too often to blow past Cal Poly 84-60 in Mott Gym.

Sophomore Nicole Greathouse poured in a game- and season-high 17 points, including three treys for Santa Barbara. The Ventura native joked that her offensive game has been stifled by her good friend — and recently anointed All-American by one publication — Erin Buescher.

"Watch out, offensive threat now,"

See **HOOPS**, p.3A

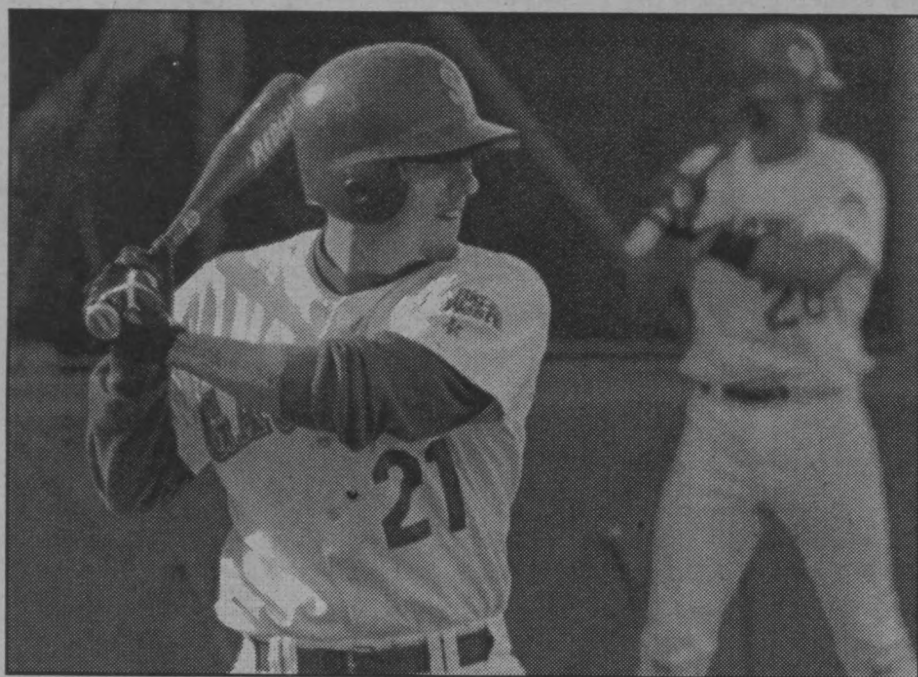


JASON SCHOCK/DAILY NEXUS

ALL-AMERICAN: Sophomore Erin Buescher was already named as an All-American by one publication. She proved it this past weekend by scoring 19 and 18 points.

Sporting Events Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
No events scheduled	Men's volleyball vs. Loyola Marymount Thunderdome 7 p.m.	Baseball @ Westmont 2 p.m.	Women's basketball vs. UCI 7 p.m. Men's basketball @ UCI 7 p.m. Softball vs. Virginia 1 p.m. Swimming Big West Championship @ Belmont Plaza thru Sat. Men's gymnastics @ UCLA 7:30 p.m.	Softball UCSB Invite thru Sun. Men's volleyball vs. Pepperdine 7 p.m. Men's tennis vs. UCI 2 p.m. Women's water polo vs. UC Davis 4 p.m. Baseball @ Pepperdine 2 p.m. Women's tennis @ St. Mary's 2 p.m.	Men's gymnastics vs. Stanford 7:30 p.m. Women's basketball vs. CSUF 7 p.m. Baseball vs. Pepperdine 1 p.m. Women's water polo Gaucho Tourney thru Sun. Men's basketball @ CSUF 7 p.m. Women's tennis @ UN 11 a.m.	Men's tennis vs. Virginia 12 p.m. Women's gymnastics @ CSUF Women's tennis @ UOP 10 a.m.



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

HARD LACOUR: Senior Bryan LaCour was a hard out this past weekend for Santa Clara. He helped the UCSB baseball team win two out of a three-game set.

UCSB Mauled by Powerful Bruins

BY JUSTIN MAUCH
Staff Writer

The #15 UCSB men's volleyball team played host to Mountain Pacific Sports Federation rival UCLA on Friday night at the Thunderdome, and the #1 Bruins defeated UCSB in four games 7-15, 16-14, 11-15 and 3-15. The Gauchos (4-6 overall, 3-6 MPSF) hit a paltry .190 for the match, while the Bruins (11-2, 8-1) hit .299, .180 below their average. The loss to UCLA was the first loss at home for Santa Barbara this season.

"They [UCLA] get their hands on so many balls and they transition so well, it makes things very difficult," UCSB Head Coach Ken Preston said. "They control the ball very well defensively."

The Gauchos remained close in the first game, down 7-8, but then the Bruins went

on a 7-0 run to win. UCLA continued to outplay the Gauchos in the early stages of the second game, but Santa Barbara came back from a 0-6 deficit and won the game in dramatic fashion.

After the emotional win, Santa Barbara found themselves down in the third game 3-10, then battled back to within two points (9-11) before succumbing to a relentless Bruin offense. The fourth game was ugly for UCSB, as it hit .040, compared to UCLA's .389 clip. After the score was tied at 2-2, the Bruins went on a 13-1 run to win the match.

"It was a little disappointing finish," Preston said. "I thought we deserved a little better in the end. I think we came back well a couple of times during the match. We were passing the ball very well until the last game. [Junior] Chris Komer had a nice match, [junior] Andy Tomkinson came in and blocked

See VOLLEY, p.3A

Gauchos Take Two of Three

BY MARVIN GAPULTOS
Staff Writer

Root, root, root for the home team.

The bleachers of Caesar Uyesaka Stadium are reserved for parents of ball-players, students and fans of baseball. However, this past weekend the rowdiest of Gaucho fans sat not in the stadium, but behind the center-field wall while rooting for the UCSB baseball squad, much to the chagrin of the Santa Clara Broncos.

The support of the fans in center field was well-

received by the Gauchos, who picked up two victories in the three-game series against Santa Clara.

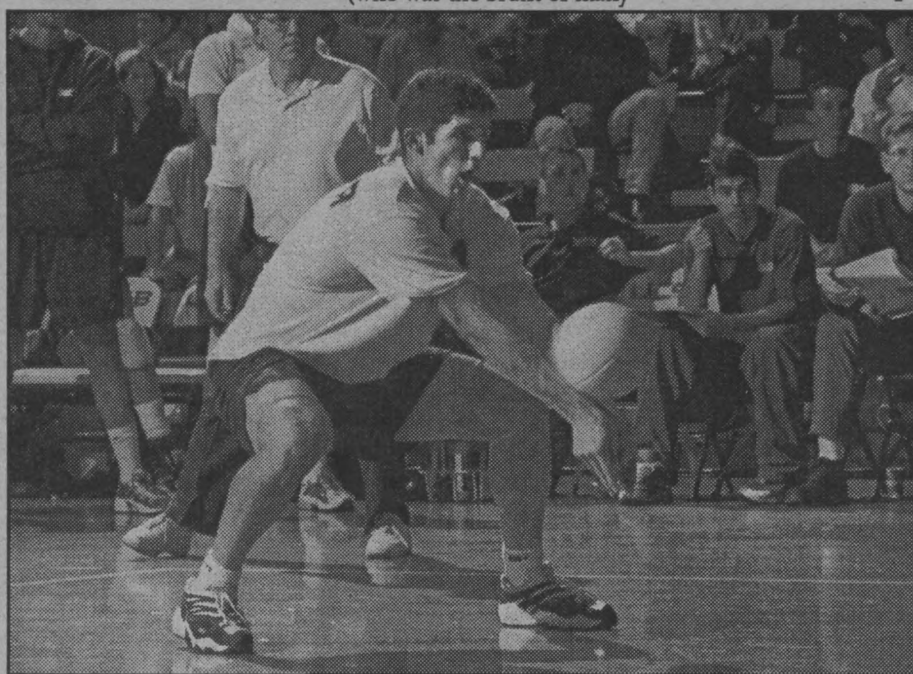
"The fans in center field, all the fans, they really helped us out this weekend," junior pitcher Gabe Neboyia said. "They pumped us up, and the team just wants to thank them."

Despite the fan support, the Gauchos (8-6 overall) were not able to overcome the Broncos in Friday's contest. Santa Clara (2-8) jumped out to an early lead in the first when junior center fielder Elliot Wheeler (who was the brunt of many

anti-Bronco chants by Gaucho fans) drove in a run on a pop-out.

With a 2-1 lead heading into the fifth inning of action, Santa Clara touched UCSB for five runs, upping the count to 7-1. The Gauchos wouldn't go down quietly though, in their half of the inning they also pounded out five runs. Sophomore shortstop Jeff Bannon led off for UCSB with a base hit. Bannon crossed the plate after an RBI single by senior right fielder Brad Wright. Sophomore third

See BASE, p.3A



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

WHEN I GO A JOAQUIN: Freshman Joaquin Acosta digs a low shot Friday night against #1 UCLA. The #15 Gauchos lost in four games to the powerhouse squad.



WOMEN'S HOOPS

Thursday, Feb 25
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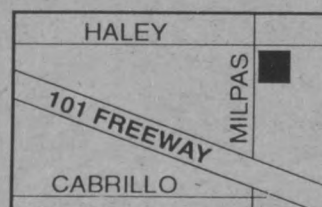


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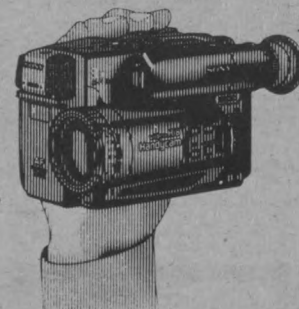
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BASE

Continued from p.2A

baseballer Dave Molitor drove in two more runs that inning on a single, and senior catcher Bill Duplissea also had a two-RBI single to move the Gauchos within one run 7-6.

After getting nailed in the wrist by a pitch the previous inning, senior first baseman Bryan LaCour stepped up to the plate in the sixth with a full count and belted a two-run home run to left field. UCSB was now ahead 8-7, but that lead would last for only a short period as the Broncos moved ahead in the seventh 9-8.

In the bottom of the ninth, UCSB was down 10-8. Freshman designated hitter Tyler Von Schell cut the Bronco lead in half with a solo home run. However, Santa Barbara was unable to come back, losing the game 10-9. Senior David Uris picked up his second loss of the season to equal his wins on the season. Uris pitched 6.1 innings and allowed 10 hits and nine runs (seven of them earned).

"It was a frustrating [loss]," UCSB Head Coach Bob Brontsema said. "You got to hope nine runs will win that game, and unfortunately it wasn't enough."

Saturday's affair was a productive one for Santa Barbara, as it shelled out a whopping 22 hits. Nine Gauchos batters reached base, and the fans behind the

outfield wall received three souvenirs as three Gauchos went yard in the 15-7 victory over Santa Clara.

Sophomore Bing Cain allowed seven hits, four earned runs, and struck out four. Cain notched his third win of the year after five solid innings of work. Freshman Chris Quiroz picked up his third save, allowing four hits and no runs in 2.2 innings.

In the fourth inning, Bannan delivered a solo blast to center field, giving Santa Barbara a 4-1 lead.

"We swung the bats ex-



Gabe Neboyia

tremely well," said Bannan, who finished 3-4 from the plate with two RBIs. "Today just showed that our team doesn't just depend on one guy. Today we had eight or nine guys produce for us."

Duplissea went yard in the bottom of the sixth with a solo blast that cleared the scoreboard and a portable building beyond the left-field wall. Senior DH Gene Lenzi got into the long-ball action with a three-run homer in the seventh.

Contributing to the Santa Barbara hit-fest was sophomore second baseman Chad Peshke who went 4-5 from

the dish, driving in one run; Wright hit 2-5 on the day with an RBI, and LaCour batted 4-6 with 3 RBIs.

Sunday's contest was of a different pace as Santa Barbara took the rubbermatch in a low scoring 3-2 victory. Junior hurler Neboyia pitched the entire game for his second win of the year.

"It was an extremely well-pitched game," Brontsema said. "The thing I liked the most was that Gabe was smelling it at the end of the game. He wanted to be out there and he was having a good time."

The righty allowed one earned run on nine hits, and struck out two.

"I always want to be in there," Neboyia said. "I love to pitch, and today that's what I did. I didn't have a lot of my stuff, my fastball, so I just slowed it down and started throwing strikes. I felt I was in the groove and good things happened."

The key offensive play of the game came in the eighth for the Gauchos. With two runners on and two out, Von Schell stepped up to pinch hit for his first at bat of the game and drove in what turned out to be the game-winning run with a single to center field.

"This whole weekend our guys played their roles really well," Brontsema said. "[Von Schell] was preparing from the sixth inning on for that spot and he came up with a big hit."

FINALE

Continued from p.1A

notes, and the Gauchos built their lead to 12 points with 13:56 to go. Bunton was clearly the go-to guy being bigger than anyone Cal Poly countered with.

"I felt like they didn't really have anybody that could



B.J. Bunton

stop me if I got going," Bunton said. "I just wanted to get the ball and take it at them as much as I could."

Schneider added, "Bob's done a terrific job with this team. His two seniors deserve a lot of awards also. Bunton, I don't know if he'll be player of the year, but he'll be up there."

VOLLEY

Continued from p.2A

the ball well and [junior] Kevin Collins played well."

The Bruins (11-2, 9-1) were led by junior quick hitter Adam Naeve and senior quick hitter Danny Farmer. Naeve had 16 kills on top of 10 digs and four assisted blocks. He hit .387 for the match. Farmer tallied 14 kills, 13 digs and maintained a hitting percentage of .333. UCLA also managed 12 ser-

vice aces, which was a season-high.

"It was a good match for us," UCLA Head Coach Al Scates said. "Chris Komer had some really nice blocks on us in the first couple of games and we didn't see Kevin Collins the first time we played them, so it was a completely different team. Komer has improved their blocking and Collins was beating the middle blocker all night. I think we can learn something from this match."

Outside hitter Collins led the Gauchos offensively with 24 kills, but nobody else had more than seven. However, UCSB was able to out-block the Bruins 11-10, led by Tomkinson's three assisted blocks, and managed to top UCLA in solo blocks 5-3.

"We played pretty good," said Komer, who had four solo blocks. "We had a lot of intensity and I thought our emotion was key. The crowd was great."

HOOPS

Continued from p.1A

quipped Greathouse, whose season high had been 13 vs. Wisconsin. "Cal Poly left me open and Erin was giving me some good passes ... it's about time, you know, she's becoming really selfish."

All joking aside, Buescher had a solid game herself, with 18 points. Sophomore Rachele Rogers tossed in 10 points while Christensen grabbed a team-high eight

rebounds. Greathouse cleared seven boards.

"Greathouse was balling out there today," Rogers said. "But today I don't know, we didn't really play 40 minutes as a team out there."

"I thought we had kind of a mixed bag out there," French said. "We had some people that were clearly focused and some that weren't; we need to take care of that."

UCSB will finish its regular season at home and will

try to become the first Gauchito team to go undefeated in conference with contests vs. UC Irvine on Thursday night and Cal State Fullerton on Saturday night. An additional milestone will be passed with the first point scored by Buescher. She will become the third Gauchito to reach the 1,000 career-point plateau this season. Buescher, however, will become the first player in Santa Barbara history to accomplish the feat before her junior season.

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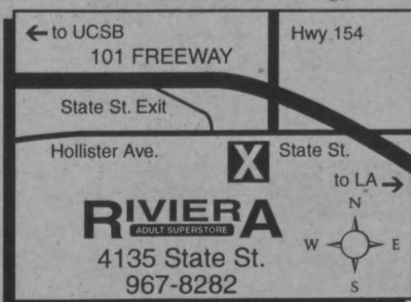
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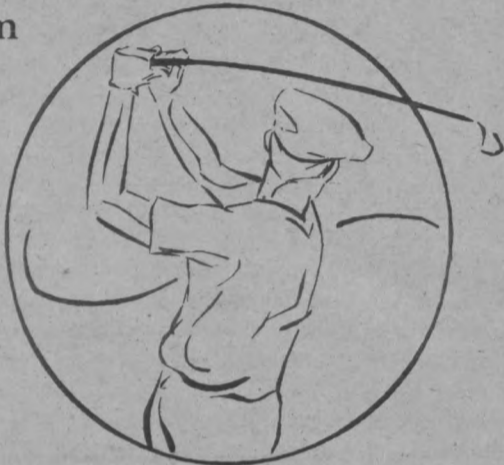
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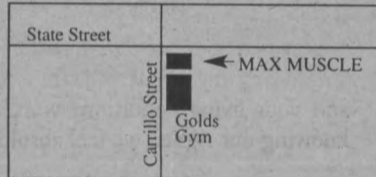
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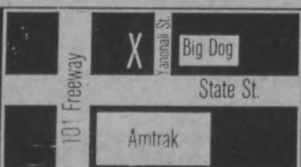
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