Errors prove costly for Cabrillo

Seahawks hope Cuellar will return to lineup shortly

By Andrew Matheson
amatheos@santacruzsentinel.com
@amatheos_sc on Twitter

APTS » It wasn’t all bad news for the Cabrillo College softball team on Thursday. Moments after it lost 4-2 in disappointing fashion to visiting Ohlone, the Seahawks learned star sophomore speedster Mikal Cuellar could be soon returning to the lineup.

Cuellar, an All-American center fielder for the Seahawks last season, suffered a partially torn posterior cruciate ligament during a doubleheader against Yuba on March 15 and has been sporting an athletic brace ever since.

“We hope to get her back for the last round of interconference play,” Cabrillo coach Kristy Rosinger said, referring to the stretch of five games that begins April 7. “She has experience,” Rosinger added. “I don’t think she’ll have her speed — maybe half speed. But she can still cover a good amount of ground in the outfield.”

The Seahawks could have certainly used Cuellar’s services Thursday against Ohlone, which took advantage of two costly errors and broke a 2-all tie in the top of the seventh before withstanding a late rally by Cabrillo in the home half of the inning. The Seahawks managed to get two runners on with nobody out in the bottom of the seventh, but Ohlone pitcher Jasiah Gholston retired the next three batters in order to thwart any comeback.

The loss prevents Cabrillo from moving into a first-place tie in the Coast Conference South with idle West Valley. It also snaps an eight-game winning streak for the Seahawks (24-8, 7-3), who left eight runners on base — five of whom were in scoring position.

THE SCORE
OHLONE 4, CABRILLO 2
Up Next: Napa at Cabrillo
When: Saturday, 1 p.m.

Cabrillo College pitcher Taylor Tessier delivers to an Ohlone College batter during their game Thursday. Cabrillo lost, 4-2.

DAN COYRO — SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

FROM PAGE 1

“We’ve struggled a little bit on defense at times,” Rosinger said of the Seahawks, ranked No. 6 in NorCal by the California Community College Fastpitch Coaches Association. “Sometimes we’re sharp and sometimes we’re shaky.”

The defense wasn’t able to help pitcher Taylor Tessier (14-6), whose 0.59 earned-run average coming into Thursday’s tilt was second best in the state. Tessier allowed nine hits while striking out eight and walking one.

“I think I can do better. You can always do better,” said Tessier, who tried to focus on the inside part of the plate with Ohlone’s bigger bats, like McKayla Saavendra, who entered with a team-leading .556 batting average.

Saavendra finished 2-for-3, including a double in the seventh with the game knotted at 2. Haley Keahi followed with a deep fly ball to right that resulted in an error and plated the go-ahead run, while Carrigan James’ sacrifice fly provided insurance for Ohlone (17-11, 8-2), which is currently in second place in the Coast Conference North.

“They were just a really good hitting team,” Tessier said.

Gholston earned the win, allowing two runs on six hits while striking out two.

The Seahawks erased an early 2-0 deficit with three straight singles that never left the infield. Following a one-out walk to Lexi Gonzales, Kristina Mio, Elise Amend and Alyssa Rodriguez each followed with base hits to knot the game at 2.

Mio, a Watsonville High grad, was 2-for-4 with a run scored, while Rodriguez was 1-for-4 with an RBI. Gonzales finished 1-for-2 with a walk and a run scored.

Cabrillo is scheduled to host Napa on Saturday before returning to conference play at Chabot on Tuesday.

“It’s gonna be a fight going into the last round of conference,” Rosinger said. “It makes it exciting.”

Contact Andrew Matheson at 831-706-3272.