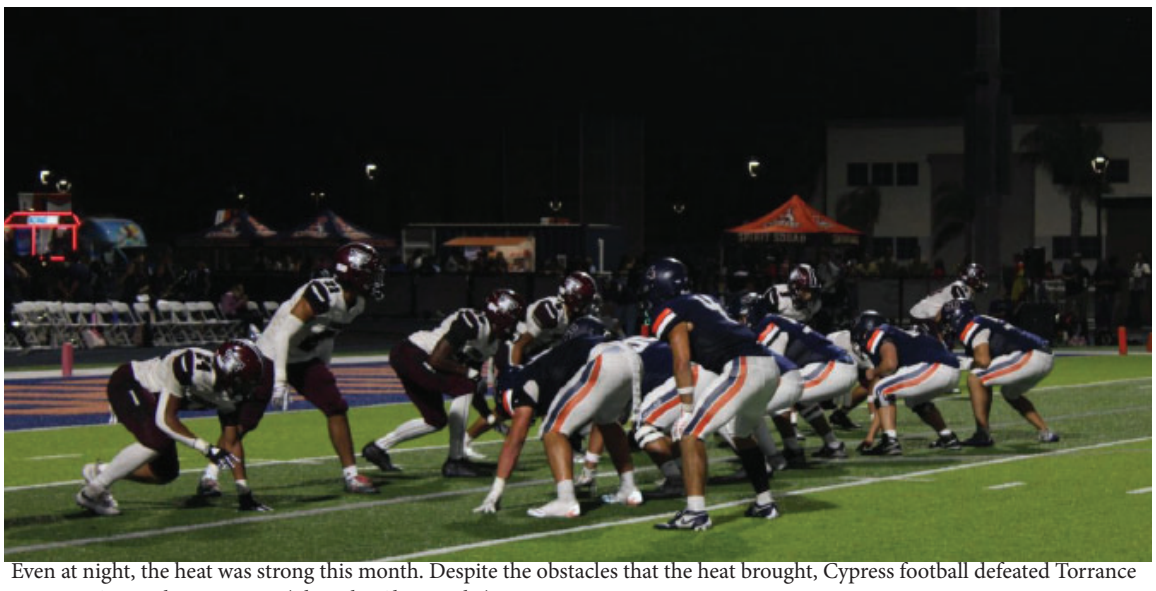
CENTURION SPOTLIGHT

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Athletics Adapt to Massive Heatwave

By Leslie Choi, Front Page Editor



Even at night, the heat was strong this month. Despite the obstacles that the heat brought, Cypress football defeated Torrance 21-19 on September 11, 2026. (photo by Chioma Ibe)

Extreme heat gripped Cypress as the school year began, inflicting consequences on Cypress High sports. From August 24 to August 28, the weather consistently remained at ninety degrees and above all week. Later on September 9, temperatures spiked to a whopping 106°F. This cancelled many sports games and practices throughout the time period, taking a toll on Cypress athletics.

The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature Device determines when practices or games must be cancelled. Cypress High Athletic Director **Sean Pfeiffer** explained it calculates temperature, air temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle, and cloud cover/radiation. There are five ranges. "As you move through the ranges, there are escalating restrictions. For example, football practice may simply add more rests and water breaks; in more extreme stages, athletes cannot wear their shoulder pads or helmets. When we reach black, there is no outside activity." Despite its impacts on athletics, Pfeiffer has accepted the restrictions. "It is a setback and has a negative effect, but if it saves one person from a heat stroke, it's worth it," he said.

"We missed a majority of our practices because of the heat," said **Allie Kim**, captain of Cross Country. She added, "These days will definitely have an impact since running requires a lot of practice." Right after the heat wave, cross country bounced back into action at the Pathadley Invitational on September 5, 2026. "We've had harder practices with harder workouts and running more than usual to jump back," she said.

Head Varsity Coach **Rick Feldman** and his football team also faced some difficulties, however, the football team stayed hard at work, even when the heat forced them to go back inside. "We just try to take advantage of different things. If we miss a day on the field, we spend extra time in the classroom preparing for the next opponent," Feldman explained. Football quickly jumped back into action, destroying Brea 24-12 on August 28.

Girl's volleyball practices and games are still ongoing despite the temperature, but that doesn't mean that the heat hasn't had an impact. **Katrina Sokolowski** said, "We don't have AC in the gym, so it's already really hot in there with just the two fans that we have." During the heat wave, Sokolowski motivates and helps the team to stay strong and hydrated. "I always bring extra water and Gatorade for me and my teammates. We also always text reminders to stay hydrated, especially before a game."

Coach Feldman gives advice to all Cypress athletes and teams. "This isn't the first time we've had to deal with heat. We just have to bounce back and get focused again. That's what we concentrate on. Be focused and give 100% effort all the time," he said.

Club Rush: Inside and Out

By Jino Cruz, Business Manager

This year Cypress High School held Club Rush, beginning on August 31st, for students to publicize and promote their clubs/organizations. Club Rush—a school wide event where students get to promote and present their organizations to the Cypress High community—took an interesting approach this year.

ASB adviser, **Sarah Binford,** along with the Associated Student Body and club commissioners, decided that Club Rush this year should be both at the quad and indoors because she wanted to give students options. This decision helped a majority of students, since some clubs wanted to be out in the quad, while others wanted to be inside. For Binford, this event as a whole provides students with opportunities to get involved with things that interest them, and gives them a place to gather outside of their classes.

Brian Ramirez, science teacher and adviser for many clubs, such as Filipino, Interact, and Biology Clubs, said that Club Rush allows the student-led organizations to gain more members and enables students to connect with the ones that interest them. Ramirez thought that the interactions between people, the enthusiasm of the students, and the creativity of the clubs was great to see. Along with the community of Cypress during Club Rush, Ramirez also noted that holding it in the classrooms and outside made the event more inviting to students. "I believe along with making it more accessible, being indoors also provides a bit more of a personal interaction between students versus outdoors," Ramirez said, highlighting the benefits of having Club Rush inside and out.

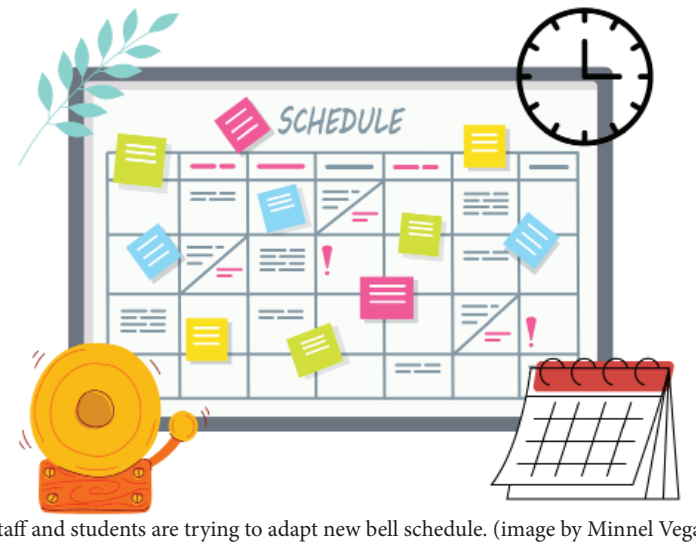
Many students at Club Rush enjoyed it being both inside and out this year. Senior **Nghi Lam**, president of Vietnamese Student Association (VSA), believed that letting the students have an option between being out in the quad or being inside helped with publicizing their clubs and increased their opportunities to gain new members. Lam liked that people who stopped by their booth were "actually interested, taking pictures, and asking questions about the club." Club rush also helped the VSA board members build a deeper connection between one another.

Senior **Joey Martinez**, vice-president of MedEd connect, a club that helps connect students with opportunities and resources that relate to certain fields in the medical pathway, thought that Club Rush was extremely helpful for publicity and gaining members. It also allowed the board members to educate the students about MedEd, she stated, "Overall, [Club Rush] was a success for MedEd, and I'm really glad how it turned out this year!" Martinez thought that there was a big difference between the amount of publicity between the quad and inside the classrooms, but the hallways being less crowded and chaotic was a plus for her.

Freshman **Claire Kim** experienced Cypress's Club Rush for the first time. Kim thought that Cypress had a lot to offer compared to Lexington Kim is thinking of running for a position during her sophomore year, when she is more comfortable with the clubs. Club rush concluded on September 4th, and during the event, students were able to work together, discover new clubs, and find exciting opportunities for involvement at Cypress.



Clubs such as Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) made photo frames to publicize online. (photo by Reina Takagi)



Staff and students are trying to adapt new bell schedule. (image by Minnel Vega)

New Bell Schedule Debuts

By Minnel Vega, Editor-in-Chief

Cypress High School recently changed its bell schedule for the 2026-2027 school year. The new schedule moved the late start day from Thursdays to Mondays; Check-and-Connect is only on Tuesdays and Fridays, and a Mindfulness break was added to the Tuesday-Friday schedule. Students have wide-ranging opinions about the bell schedule.

The school changed the schedule because of the "redesign process," in which the school meets with parents, staff, students, and community members to discuss any changes Cypress High School can make to become better for everyone. Senior **Jasmine Umayam** said, "Having a late start early in the week gives less motivation to continue throughout the week."

Some students don't like having to memorize a new schedule each day. Junior **Yashika Patel** stated, "I don't like how the bell schedule is different every day." Senior **Ava Kim** agreed, "I like mindfulness because I can take a break in between classes. But I can't memorize the new schedule."

Apart from students, the new schedule affects teachers' lesson plans. Since each class is a different length, staff now have to plan their lessons depending on how long each class is. **Principal Jennifer Brown** explained, "In a lot of ways it's definitely more work for the admin because we cover Mindfulness so teachers can also get mindfulness time. It's a little bit more difficult not having Check-and-Connect every day because it's harder to get information out in the school."

Brown reminds us all, "This is not necessarily something we're going to do forever. But we said we're going to try this out." Students' opinions remain divided as they adjust to the new bell schedule.

Meet Cypress High School's Aspiring Entrepreneurs

By Lauren Kan, Layout Assistant

A new wave of student entrepreneurs at Cypress High School is sharing an inside look at what it takes to run their businesses. Their passions and skills shine through in the form of a variety of services, including professional mentorship, custom nail design, and permanent jewelry and henna.

Juniors **Sahana Karthikeyan** and **Ethan Chiu** are developing Hustle Grid, a student start-up network that provides a platform for students to promote their business and access entrepreneurship-guidance classes. Hustle Grid has been in the works since December of 2025, but the partners are anticipating its official launch sometime during 2027.

After seeing her peers struggle with the rocky beginnings of their own start-up businesses, Karthikeyan felt inspired to develop a means of solving that issue. "We take you all the way from ideation to growth," said Karthikeyan when asked about Hustle Grid's purpose.

Chiu recognizes the necessity of Hustle Grid, especially within the budding community of aspiring student entrepreneurs. "I know many of us students like to sell things, [but] it's kind of hard to find an audience," he said. Hustle Grid's founders intended to incorporate a solution for this in their business idea, in which they offer students a webpage where they can market and govern themselves, as well as sell their own products to the outside world. In the future, they hope to see Hustle Grid widely used throughout the school district and implemented in AUHSD's CTE programs. "It's really important to expand, because you don't [realize] the true value of a business until you give it opportunities to grow," Chiu said.

Junior **Veleda Vatcharasumphu**n showcases her artistic skill through nail design. Her services range from regular polish to gel extensions. Vatcharasumphun's talent for nail design stems from a love for the arts. She started practicing nail design at ten years old and, once she perfected her craft, began doing nails for other people. In the future, Vatcharasumphun intends to keep her business as a side hustle, as she plans to pursue a career in medicine instead. By making nail design a part of her daily life, she finds a fulfilling way to turn her passion into a reality.

Vatcharasumphun's advice for aspiring entrepreneurs is "Just do it. You never know what will come out of it. Sometimes it'll be better than what you expect. There might be struggles, but you will overcome them. Your business will bloom!"

Senior **Haya Elannan** is the owner of Chic by Haya, a business that provides permanent jewelry and henna services. Elannan aimed to create a business that offered an exciting experience to her clients. She wanted to give people a way to spend their money for a positive reason. Where Elannan lives, there are many Arabs who appreciate henna and are willing to pay for her services. In response to the market demand, she felt inspired to pursue henna and permanent jewelry.

In the future, Elannan sees her business growing into a large franchise and hopes to hire her own employees. She enjoys making her clients happy, especially engaging in conversation with them. "I have full-blown conversations with my clients. They become my best friends," Elannan said.

Elannan faced financial challenges at the beginning of her business, mainly due to the expense of supplies. "The first order of supplies was up to $600 on chains alone," she said. However, she asked her parents for a loan and supported her entrepreneurial journey with that. Eventually, she managed to pay them back with the money she earned. Elannan credits her better understanding of finances and banking to Chic by Haya. "It's the reason I have a bank account now!"



Nails done by Veleda Vatcharasumphun. Henna and permanent jewelry done by Haya Elannan. (photos by Veleda Vatcharasumphun and Haya Elannan)

Class Of 2027 Kicks Off Senior Sunrise at Seal Beach

By Lauren Kimura, Layout Editor and Reina Takagi, Editor-in-Chief



Seal Beach's shore was filled with seniors, like Chloe Wong and Taryn Imai, capturing this milestone forever. (photo by Reina Takagi)

On August 29, 2026, Cypress High School seniors gathered at Seal Beach to partake in the much-anticipated tradition of Senior Sunrise. At around 5:30 a.m., the class of 2027 gathered at the shore to capture this once-in-a-lifetime memory.

This morning, filled with photos and re-connection, allowed these seniors to celebrate the start of what is to be their last year of high school together. "For me, the most memorable part was going with a bunch of friends and taking pictures, especially at the pier," Senior **Danielle Gaceta** said. She mentioned how she took many Polaroid and digicam pictures, determined to capture the moment forever. Many other seniors did the same, including **Tresta Jadoc**, who emphasized the sentimental value of it all. She shared that taking pictures was "a good way to make sure you have something you can look back on."

With graduation fast approaching, seniors are beginning to realize just how little time they have left together before they go their separate ways. For Senior **Cruz Medrano**, the early-morning wake-up he and his friends endured for this event became a clear reminder of just that. "All of us being tired and sharing that feeling made me realize that this is the last year we'll all be together," he said.

Although this event wasn't sponsored by the school and was announced through a student-run Instagram account, Principal **Jennifer Brown** acknowledged the importance of such traditions. She noted how these events help build community and connection because "when kids come to school, they learn about the traditions and it becomes something people look forward to." When asked about why Senior Sunrise was not school-backed, Brown said, "We have to meet certain requirements with insurance and safety protocols while non-school-sponsored events don't have to do that."

Now that Senior Sunrise has marked the true beginning of senior year, there's only so much time left for the class of 2027 to enjoy high school. Whether it be attending more dances or joining new clubs, seniors are intent on making the most of their final year before they part ways on their own endeavors.



Seniors, Pryce Chanthavy and Jasslyn Kwong, gathered at the shore of Seal Beach to take pictures. (photo by Reina Takagi)



Students Katrina Sokolowski, Rylee Buras, and Nia Howard use homemade photo-frames around the beach. (photo by Reina Takagi)



Seniors enjoyed the early morning with friends as groups of students gathered to take photos. (photo by Reina Takagi)

Senior Backpacks Flood Cypress' Campus

By Jerry Tran and Sofia Velasco

Seniors at Cypress High started wearing children's backpacks as a trend to embrace the nostalgia of their younger years. This trend has been going on for a long time, and no one knows when it actually started. It gained popularity after it drew a lot of attention on social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. **Adrian Patdu** has a Bluey backpack. The bag is based on an Australian animated television series made for kids. Recently, popular themes included kids' movies and TV shows like Bluey, as well as superheroes such as Spider-Man. Other students such as **Mahi Patel** and **Raya Allison** are matching. Patel says, "She and I are best friends! We talked about it and learned that we both liked Curious George growing up." Student Charlotte Kay's backpack holds more meaning than just being her favorite show when they were younger. Kay and her mother have had a fondness for butterflies for a long time. "I've liked [butterflies] too since I was a kid," she said. Many students participate in this as a fun way to end their last year of high school.



Many seniors wear backpacks that represent their childhood. (photo by Jerry Tran)



Adrian Patdu poses with his Bluey backpack. (photo by Jerry Tran)

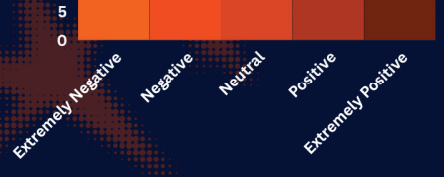


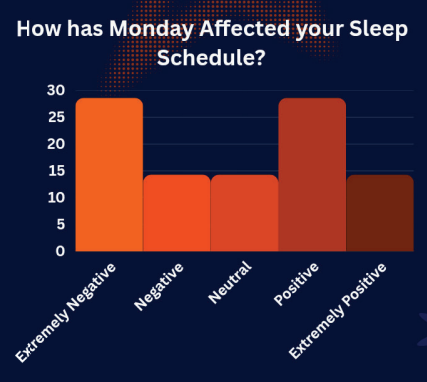
Charlotte Kay flaunts her butterfly backpack. (photo by Jerry Tran)

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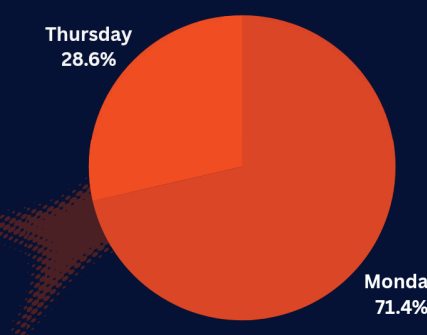
Students Versus Late Start





"I think Thursdays are better because [you become] well rested in the middle of the week instead of... feeling [tired] for the rest of the week."
-Anonymous

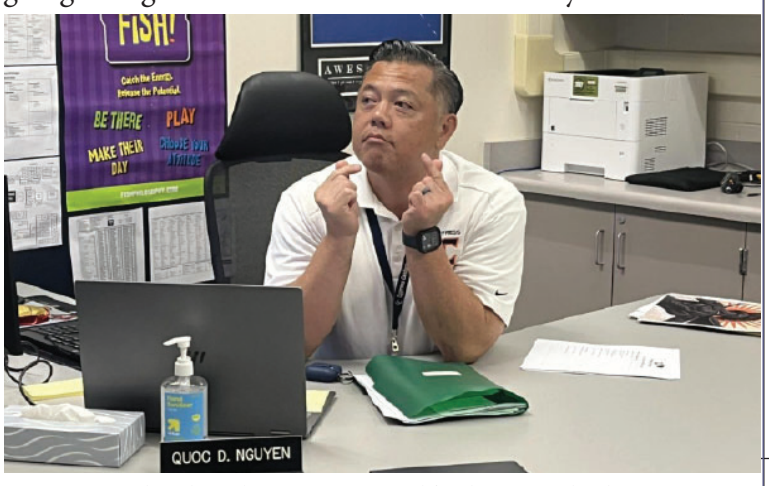
"Mondays feel like a slow drag out of bed instead of a hit the ground and run. That's not what life is going to give you... It's not good for students to get up like that during the start of a week. (It can be challenging for parents... to accommodate for these changes)"
-Anonymous



Introducing New Assistant Principal Mr. Nguyen

By Jino Cruz, Business Manager

Cypress High School welcomes some new staff this year! **Quoc Nguyen**, the 9th grade assistant principal, said that being at this school is very exciting, to him, "the culture on campus, the community itself, and all the athletics," make this school a very unique one. Although Nguyen has been an administrator for 10 years, he finds transitioning to a new environment a challenging yet enjoyable process due to the amount of students, teachers, and staff. At Cypress, Nguyen makes the students feel more included by getting as many students involved as possible with the different events, like club rush. For Nguyen, getting involved in these types of things is only good if a person puts enough effort into it, "You're only going to get as much as you put in." Nguyen states. Nguyen thinks that the class of 2030 have been amazing so far, "All the kids I've met have been awesome, many of them have been really polite and just good students." **Michael Mikuni**, a math teacher at Cypress, believes that Nguyen is doing a great job so far. Mikuni says, "He's very approachable and whenever I've had a conversation with him, he's able to communicate well." Sophomore **Ruckus Maldonado** shared that Nguyen is a big help on campus, not only for staff, but also the students. "He's helped me a lot with things, like when I'm doing things around campus, he's always a big help." Nguyen advises the freshmen to "take things slow," and "don't grow up so fast since high school flies by, and in no time they'll be seniors."



Mr. Nguyen is the 9th grade assistant principal for the 26-27 school year. New to Cypress, Nguyen enjoys the challenge of a new environment. (photo by Jino Cruz)

Cypress Welcomes New A.P. Bernhard

By Annie Paccione, Layout Editor



The new Vice Principal Mrs. Bernhard, gets settled into her new role at Cypress High School. (photo by Annie Paccione)

Cypress High School's new Vice Principal **Ann-Marie Bernhard** is excited to be back on campus and reconnect with students and staff. Before returning to Cypress, Bernhard spent 15 years teaching math before she stepped into a different administration role that eventually led her to become an assistant principal. Even though at first she considered attending medical school to become a dermatologist or anesthesiologist, she found her passion in education.

Building trust with staff, students, and families is one of her biggest priorities. She believes that open and honest communication is the key to a strong relationship. Bernhard said, "Having open and honest communication and being transparent with what's going on is the number one step to build that trust." She hopes to continue communicating with the Cypress community and creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable and supported by her.

As she starts the 2026-2027 school year, Bernhard's main goal is to learn as much as she can about Cypress and the staff. Being new on campus is her current role; she compares the experience to being a new student herself. "I feel like a new student as well," she said. She is looking forward to new activities and being a part of them.

For Bernhard, one of the most important parts of working in education is seeing growth and change in everyone, not just the students. She enjoys watching people learn, grow, and expand while continuing to learn herself. Her favorite part of the job is seeing her students' journey, especially this senior year. She formerly worked with many of them when they were seventh graders at Lexington Junior High.

As she continues to grow in her new role, she hopes to inspire her students to stay true to themselves and follow their dreams. Her advice to her students who want to become leaders is simple: "Always be yourself." She motivates her students to keep a strong moral compass, stay focused on who they are and what they want to accomplish, and never lose sight of who they are .

New English Teacher Transfers From Anaheim High

By Chioma Ibe, Social Media Editor

The new teacher in room 305 is **Michelle Almaraz. Almaraz** taught at Anaheim High School and Sycamore Junior High School before coming to Cypress High. She went to college at Cal State Fullerton and majored in English. She came to Cypress looking for a change, a new environment and is very happy with what we have to offer, "Now that I'm here, I'm happy." So far, her favorite part about working at Cypress has been how eager most of her students are to learn and the support she has received from the teachers in her department,"The teachers in my department overall have been very welcoming and helpful." English department chair **Hiba Taylor** said, " We are happy to have her as part of our team and we know she will be a valuable member. Her experience and her wealth of knowledge will be valuable to the English department."



New English teacher Mrs. Almaraz said so far, everyone at Cypress has been welcoming. (photo by Chioma Ibe)

Love At First Purchase

By Ryan Aslop, Comic Illustrator



Adam Brewer's Journey

By Emily Mundala, Student Activities Editor



Freshman Adam Brewer's Little League team went all the way to the championship. (Photo by Emily Mundala)

Freshman **Adam Brewer** had a summer to remember after his Little League team traveled to Michigan and won the Junior World Series Championship. The game was filled with a lot of pressure. "I was definitely nervous going into it," Brewer said. Despite the nerves, he stayed focused and hit a home run during the championship game, helping his team win the title. "I think one of the team's biggest strengths is that we lift each other up," Brewer said. The team's support continued after the championship. After winning the title, the team celebrated this big win together by riding around the city on a double-decker party bus. After spending so much time practicing and competing together, this celebration gave the team a chance to relax and enjoy their huge accomplishment. Now, Brewer is bringing that experience with him to Cypress High School, where he is playing for the baseball team this season. He throws around 90 mph, which makes him a welcome addition. Although this is his first time playing on a high school team, Brewer already has the experience of playing in a championship game and handling pressure. With his Junior World Series experience behind him, he hopes to carry what he learned this summer into his high school baseball career.

Next Steps for Mr. Barnett

By Lily Souvannasane, Copy Editor



The new ASB Technician, Mr. Barnett, transferred from Oxford Academy this year (photo by Lily Souvannasane)

This year, Cypress High School has gained several new members of the staff/faculty, one of them being the new ASB Technician, **Xavier Barnett**. After working at Oxford Academy for four years, he decided it was time for a change. So this year, he moved over to Cypress.

While he's enjoyed it so far, the job comes with its challenges. At Oxford, he was wellintegrated with the campus and its people. Being at all of their dances and interacting with all of the students and staff, he was a part of their everyday scene. Now, he has to start from scratch in a new environment.

At this time, he's still getting used to the new atmosphere of his work. Much of it has been a challenge and reward. Fortunately, it's been a pleasant experience for him. The students and staff in the office have shown him kindness and respect to help him get accustomed to his new position. As the year goes on, he has gotten to know everyone a lot better and has begun forming good relationships with them.

This job is a stepping stone for Barnett's path into the educational field. In the next couple years, his goal is to get his teaching credentials and become a high school English teacher. He plans to take online courses for his certification. To him, it's just what feels right. He stated, "I think it just suits everything that I've done, and it'll be a great transition for me."

GTA 6: The Game The Entire World Is Waiting For

By Noah Cornejo, Comic Illustrator/Equipment Manager



GTA V, an action-adventure game released in 2013, is finally getting a continuation set. (photo by Playstation.Blog)

On Thursday, August 27, Netflix and Rockstar games released an extended look at GTA 6, instantly fueling excitement among gamers worldwide by showcasing new mechanics, upgraded graphics, and fresh information about the highly anticipated game. GTA 6 was first announced in December 2023 through a teaser trailer, beginning a long wait for fans, eager to learn more.

Since the first announcement, Rockstar Games has released very few updates or status reports about GTA 6's development. Because of this, the extended look gave fans some of the most detailed information about the game so far. One of the biggest highlights was the upgraded graphics, which give the game a more realistic look with detailed environments, characters, and animations.

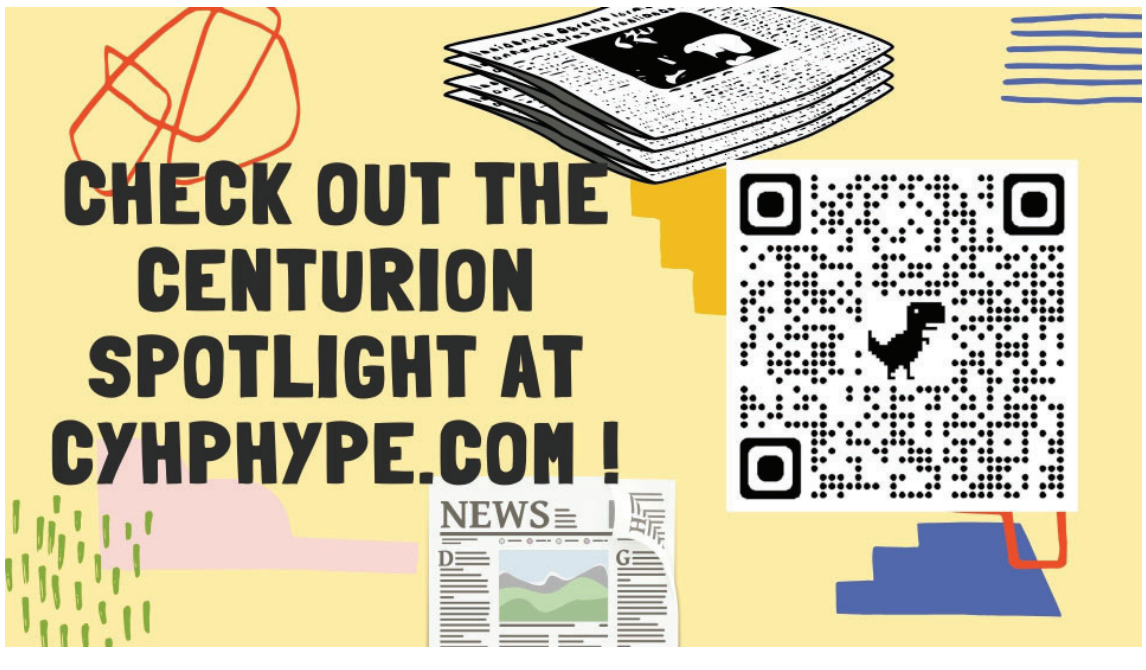
In addition to the improved graphics, the extended look showed off new mechanics players can expect in GTA 6. Players will be able to switch between Jason and Lucia during gameplay, allowing them to experience the story from both characters' perspectives. The game also features a more interactive world, with activities such as basketball, scuba diving, jet skiing, and racing. Another major change from its predecessor is a more detailed interaction system and an honor system inspired by Red Dead Redemption 2. These additions show how much Rockstar is trying to make GTA 6 feel more immersive than previous games.

Another major part of the extended look focuses on the two new characters, Jason and Lucia. The footage revealed more about their relationship and gave fans a clearer idea of how they will work together, who they are as people, and what their personalities are like. Rockstar describes the pair as being forced to rely on each other after a job goes wrong, causing them to flee across the state of Leonida.

Although many people are excited about GTA 6, some fans believe GTA 5 had an impact that will be difficult for the sixth installment to match. Senior **Lyndon Wong** said, "I'm excited for GTA 6, but I don't think it will ever compare to how GTA 5 fundamentally changed the norm for video games."

Aaron Dominguez, however, has a more positive outlook on the game. Dominguez said, "GTA 6 will definitely revolutionize gaming as a whole. It'll make every other gaming studio have to up their game." While Wong is more skeptical about the game living up to its predecessor, Dominguez thinks the new game could have a major impact on the gaming industry.

With the extended look giving fans new information, GTA 6 has once again become one of the biggest topics in gaming. Through its new gameplay features, improved visuals, and focus on Jason and Lucia's relationship, fans now have a better idea of what to expect from the game.



NBA 2K27: A New Addition

By Vianna Vo, Business Manager

Basketball fans have something new to play this year. NBA 2K27, the newest game in the NBA 2K series, allows fans a chance to play as their favorite NBA stars or create their own basketball player. The game was released on September 4, 2026, by 2K and Visual Concepts. It is available on PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X|S, PC, and Nintendo Switch 2. This year's cover athletes include Victor Wembanyama, Caitlin Clark, and Derrick Rose. One of the main changes in NBA 2K27 is the gameplay. The game adds new moves for players, including new dribbling and layup controls. Defense has also been improved to make games feel more realistic. The game uses real NBA footage to help create player movements. Another popular part of the game is MyCAREER. In this mode, players can create their own basketball player and work their way through a basketball career. The game also adds new ways for players to play with their friends. The game also includes different eras of basketball. Players can experience different time periods in NBA history and see how the game has changed over the years. This gives players a chance to learn more about the history of basketball while playing. However, not everyone agrees that the new game is worth buying. "I don't think NBA 2K27 is worth buying because the contests are off," Junior **Javaun Purnell**, a student who plays the game, said. Shot contests are an important part of the game because they allow defenders to make it harder for opponents to score. When players feel contests are inconsistent, it can make defense more difficult and frustrating. Some players still enjoy the new features. Junior **Frank Amo** explains, "My favorite feature in 2K27 is the City." The City gives players a place to explore, compete, and play with friends. The mixed reactions show that NBA 2K27 has not impressed every player. For players who care about realistic gameplay and strong defense, small changes to mechanics can have a big effect on whether the game feels worth the price.



Victor Wembanyama on the Standard Edition cover of NBA 2K27 (photo by Courtesy of 2K)

Spider-Man Brand New Day: A New Beginning Of Evolution

By Emma Sanes, Features Editor

After Spider-Man: Brand New Day's debut on July 30th, 2026, its all-time ranking skyrocketed, now ranking as the third-biggest theatrical movie after Avatar and Avengers: Endgame. The release set several milestones, starting with being the first Spider-Man movie ever to hit $2 billion. Secondly, it was the second-fastest movie ever (19 days) to reach that mark, trailing Avengers: Endgame (11 days).

In the movie, Spider-Man (Tom Holland) begins to feel changes in his body a mutation. This mutation, which fans call 'metamorphosis,' starts with organic webbing and evolves into a stable balance between man and spider, including night vision, increased strength, and advanced healing. Meanwhile, Peter Parker and Dr. Bruce Banner (Mark Ruffalo) form a father-son dynamic reminiscent of the bond between Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) and Peter Parker. A key aspect of this duo is Bruce Banner's disapproval of the mutation, which he views as a curse. This mirrors his own struggle with The Hulk, as he believes restraint is the key to success—the complete opposite of Spider-Man's view after Jean Grey spoke to him. **Myranda Cortez** says, "That's what I like best about Spider-Man: no matter the struggle he might face, his motto still stands: 'With great power comes great responsibility,' which makes him relatable and hopeful for humanity."

Joell Edwards is a big fan of Spider-Man because of his willingness to help and his nonjudgmental attitude toward anyone, villain or hero. Edwards says, "The movie was full of surprises, with unexpected characters appearing that people didn't think would be in it, like Jean Grey." Jean Grey (Sadie Sink) was the antagonist of the movie, initially acting as a hidden threat and later having a huge impact after lashing out due to the death of her sister. Though Jean Grey was featured in Spider-Man, she is also known from X-Men as the host of the Phoenix Force, an entity representing life and rebirth and with her powers, she is portrayed as godlike. Now, with Spider-Man: Brand New Day still being the center of attention, the film is expected to leave theaters between mid-September and early October 2026, marking the end of its 60-day theatrical run since its July 30 release.

Dolly Parton: Another Legend Remembered

By Harinii Nagarajan, Student Activities Editor



Dolly Parton was known for her acting and especially her country songs. (photo by Harinii Nagarajan)

American singer/songwriter and actress Dolly Parton passed away from cancer on August 25th, 2026, having lived a full 80 years of a music-filled life. Through her famous songs, such as "Jolene," her work with the Imagination Library, and other charitable efforts, Parton influenced many people and left her fans grieving.

The news of Parton's passing came as a shock. Many were surprised and quite upset by the incident. Parton's sister Stella Parton stated in a CBS Mornings interview that the singer was "at peace" and "definitely prepared."

Junior **Sophie Cheng** said that she "felt really bad" when she heard about Parton's passing. Cheng went on to talk about Parton's kindness, noting the fact that Parton "donated books to kids who didn't have education in the Appalachians." Sophomore **Ingrid Mortensen** states that Parton "inspired me to be the best person I can." She also mentions how Parton was the one to kick off the "country music trend"

Parton was born on January 19, 1946, in Sevier County, Tennessee. She was the 4th child out of 12. Her family had always been musically rich. Parton began her vocal career by singing at church. Encouraged by her Uncle Bill Owens, she played for radio with the guitar skills she had picked up. At the age of 13, Parton had written a single called "Puppy Love," which took her to greater heights when she moved to Nashville. Parton wrote over 3,000 songs in her time as a songwriter.

Parton changed music in many ways. She curated many crossover hits such as "Here You Come Again" and "9 to 5" from traditional country to mainstream pop music. Her songs expressed deep emotions through storytelling styles. Parton was quite the experimenter; she explored combinations of disco pop, bluegrass, and rock - unafraid of failure.

In her final interviews, Parton noted that she focused heavily on caring for her husband, Carl Dean's illness, before his passing in 2025. She admitted that she may have neglected her own health while caring for her husband. Parton was laid to rest at Woodlawn Memorial Park and Mausoleum in Nashville, beside her husband.

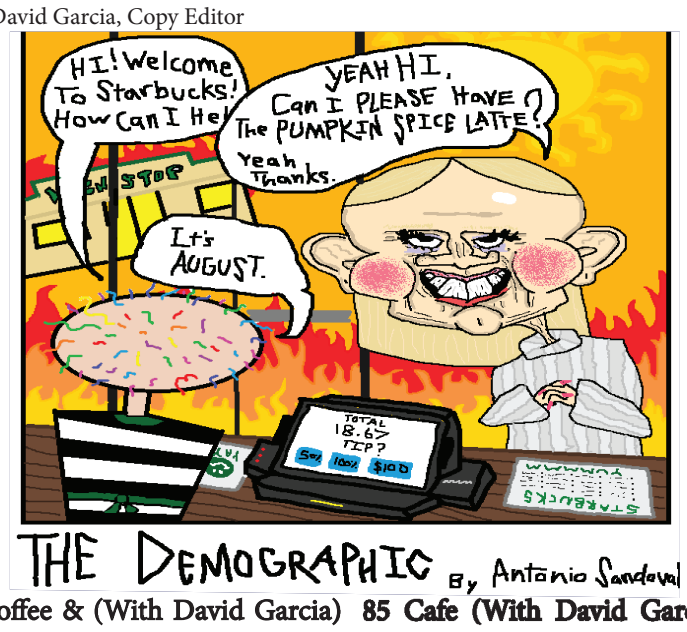


The 2026 version of Spider-Man became the highest grossing movie of all time (domestic box office.) (photo by Variety.com)

Pumpkin Spice: Innovative or Basic?

By Antonio Sandoval, Opinion Editor and David Garcia, Copy Editor

For generations, the infamous pumpkin spice has been a staple when it comes to festive drinks. Most notably, Starbucks has been a titan in the pumpkin spice industry, which naturally attracts copycats who want a slice of the pumpkin spice craze each year. As the Autumn season approaches, pumpkin spice enthusiasts have endless options to fulfill their needs. This begs the question: Who has the best pumpkin spice-themed drink?



Starbucks (With Antonio Sandoval)
Considering Starbucks is the most infamous, high standards were set. Upon ordering it, you first realize that it's going to cost a pretty penny for a grande, costing $6.95. Upon receiving the iconic drink, it is very aesthetically pleasing, displaying a nice color, whipped cream, and pumpkin spice sprinkled on top. Upon tasting it, though, the taste is more reminiscent of a workday than a breezy Autumn day. It's not bad but just tastes like a regular cup of iced coffee; the pumpkin was not prominent enough to be noticeable. The atmosphere of Starbucks is something familiar to most: calm, cold, and dim, but that cannot displace the fact that you spend $7 for mediocre coffee.

Taste:	3/5
Atmosphere:	4/5
Price:	3/5
Total Score:	3.3/5

A SHADOW OF ITS FORMER SELF



Starbuck's Iconic Pumpkin Spice Latte. (photo by Antonio Sandoval)

Cassi Gonzales' take on pumpkin spice is that it is the perfect and optimal drink to enjoy the Autumn season. Autumn has always been her favorite season because of Halloween, her birthday, and the clothes she gets to wear because it isn't so "fricking hot," in her words. She first tried this delectable drink a year ago, upon taking the first taste, her brain said, "Mmmm!" Her favorite place to get her pumpkin spice fix is Starbucks. She says to those who don't enjoy pumpkin spice, "You're missing out, just shut up and drink."

Coffee & (With David Garcia)
Coffee & what? We may never know. Coffee & is currently offering its pumpkin spice latte. The price is $7.00 straight, certainly not something your wallet wanted to deal with daily, especially considering the medium size of the drink. The latte looked delicious, and the atmosphere was certainly cozy, along with the smells of matcha and MacBooks. Taking a sip, the pumpkin spice flavor was certainly quite impressive, without a doubt a refreshing reminder of autumn falling into place.

Taste:	4 / 5
Atmosphere:	5 / 5
Price:	3 / 5
Total Score:	4 / 5

WOULD RECOMMEND, CHECK IT OUT!*



Coffee &'s Take On The Pumpkin Spice Lattes. (photo by David Garcia)

Tadeo (Nacho) Guerrero has more of a moderate view on it, he says he's more of a matcha guy. He says, "It wasn't that bad, but I wouldn't go for it every time," though something he did enjoy about it was the cinnamon, reminiscent of the horchata he's always loved.



Nacho Guerrero, pumpkin spice moderate. (photo by Antonio Sandoval)

85 Cafe (With David Garcia)
85 °C Bakery Cafe, located on prime real estate next to Cypress High School, is a popular destination for perfzormative men who seek pastries and drinks. The pumpkin spice latte, this time with a whipped topping, is currently their fall-flavored offering. The price is similar to Coffee &; it costs $6.44, not outrageous by any means, but not something you'd purchase every day. The flavor must be complemented, this time made possible with the aforementioned whipped topping, along with lots of cinnamon, providing a perfect blend of fall. The atmosphere was a little more crowded, but certainly not mediocre by any means.

Taste:	5 / 5
Atmosphere:	4 / 5
Price:	4 / 5
Total Score:	4.3 / 5

WOULD RECOMMEND, WORTH YOUR TIME



85°C's Take On The Pumpkin Spice Latte. (photo by David Garcia)

Undoubtedly, pumpkin spice has a cultural impact and on what it means to be a festive drink. There's no doubt that its stardom will remain as long as Autumn keeps coming and the leaves keep on turning orange. Even if it keeps getting hotter, pumpkin spice will still remain and be constant as the supreme Autumn drink.



Cassi Gonzales, pumpkin spice enjoyer and advocate. (photo by Antonio

Block Schedule: Good or Bad?

By Sonia Gupta, Entertainment Editor

Cypress High School is exploring a possible change to a block schedule for upcoming school years. The school wants to explore new options to see which schedule fits students best and tested out block schedule on September 16 and 17, 2026. Block schedule organizes the school day into fewer classes that last longer, usually 90 to 120 minutes, and can vary by A/B Block as alternate days or 4x4 Block that consists of four classes per semester.

Principal **Jennifer Brown** explained, "What we're doing is we're discovering different schedules and things to see what will be most beneficial to our students and staff." Brown truly believes that people should have a say in any changes to Cypress.

With added minutes to classes, block schedule allows for more time to daily learning experiences for students. Dr. **Daniel Lieu**, assistant principal at Cypress, stated, "Ultimately, we want them to have rich, learning experiences where they have the time to do projects or hands-on activities." Block schedule provides the ability for students to go in depth in certain subjects they're passionate about.



A possible change to the schedule makes students question the block schedule for upcoming school years. (photo by Sonia Gupta)

On the other hand, the shift from a traditional schedule to block schedule will impact students. Lieu adds, "For the students, it's a big shift in how you engage in the learning. For teachers, it's a shift in how you teach for your students." Extending classes by at least 40 minutes affects student's performance and overall school adjustability. The question is, are these effects positive or negative?

Brown emphasized that teachers will have to change their instructional styles, "Quite frankly, if we don't shift our instruction to match block schedule, then that's just a brain melt for everybody, because nobody wants two hours of sitting there listening to someone talk."

Additionally, there are concerns on the impact block schedule would have on student activities such as Associated Student Body (ASB), Journalism, Yearbook, and athletics. From testing out block schedule on September 16 and 17, students were able to see a glimpse of what their school experience would be like.

Freshman **Abigail Helm** said, "It was hard to sit in a class for two hours. The schedule makes things more confusing and I'm more likely to forget when things are due." A different schedule every day could make it confusing and difficult for students to keep track of assignments.

After having the same schedule for most of her years at Cypress High School, Senior **Liana Arcilla** said, "Block schedule offers more flexibility because things can be taught with greater care. I still favor the previous arrangement I followed for three years, as I appreciate leaving school early each day."

As Cypress High School considers a block schedule for the upcoming school year, staff and students wonder how it will affect their daily lifestyle further on.

Girls' Tennis and Coach Paul Kick Off the New Season Strong

By Grace Song, Entertainment Editor

The Cypress High School Girls' Tennis team kicked off the new season with a strong 4-1 varsity record. The team is working towards its goal of winning league and advancing further in CIF.

Head Varsity Coach **Joseph Paul** says the team's balance has been one of its biggest strengths so far, particularly in doubles. "This season, the girls are really playing well together. Our doubles are really strong, and overall, our team is really balanced."

With a league title in mind, Cypress will face strong competition throughout the season. Paul identified Orange Lutheran as the team's toughest competition this season due to their highly-ranked tennis players.

For varsity player **Vivienne Vanderby,** however, being on the team is about more than just competing. As the team's current singles 2 player, she said she really enjoys "the atmosphere of being on the team."

The positive atmosphere is also something JV players enjoy about being on the team. Allison Park, a sophomore, and team captain, said the team's support for one another has made the season enjoyable. "We help each other and grow stronger together," Park said. Her goals for this season are to "have fun, try to make a lot of memories, and to win the most I can."

Sophie Cheng, a junior and another captain on JV, says her favorite part about the team is, "the people and how we all support each other." She added that she enjoys "tennis and being able to win."

JV Coach **Chris Johnson** is focusing on building a more competitive mindset among the players. One of his goals for the season is to see more intensity and confidence on the court "I would like some more aggression on the court," Johnson said. "I want some fierceness, some agility …. An ace on our serves would be fantastic as well," Johnson said the team has maintained a positive attitude, with players enjoying themselves while competing.



Cypress Girls' Tennis competed against Orange Lutheran High School in September. (photo by Grace Song)

Girls Volleyball: Setting the Stage for Repeat

By Emma Sanes, Features Editor



The freshman team, practiced hard for their upcoming matches in the Molten Classic. (photo by photo by Emma Sanes)

Girls' volleyball defeated El Segundo on Saturday, August 15, 2026 (3-1), marking their first win of the season. Last year, they put in the work and represented Cypress High School with an overall record of 25-10.

h. **Katrina Sokolowski** (12) sees this year as her opportunity to step up as a leader and a teammate, learning from mistakes in the past 5 years of playing volleyball. She hopes to pass down the wisdom former seniors shared with her about being a "good teammate and an incredible player," helping lowerclassmen experience true volleyball culture.In addition to her high school career, she achieved major success last November by winning the 2025 CIF State Division 2 Championship, where she delivered 15 kills.

Alyssa Niebres (10) serves as the varsity libero at Cypress High School. Having earned a spot on varsity as a freshman, she has navigated the high-stakes environment over the past two years, reflecting, "It's a big step up for me; now I have more chances than from me being a freshman." Despite the pressure, she thrives on the routine of moving from the classroom to the court with a desire to win. Reflecting on her journey, she noted, "it made my love for volleyball grow."

Alex Griffiths, coach of Cypress High School's volleyball team, says that the team is the best they have ever been. They are a community, from boys' volleyball to girls' volleyball, and include other sports such as cheering on different teams. She began coaching for that reason, as she says, "Growing up, I had great female mentors, and I ended up loving coaching because of that. I had my downs, like when I got cut from my team, but then I realized the only way to get better is to step outside your comfort zone." She speaks highly of how if someone tells you no, that doesn't mean you should back down. Her girls and boys are her number one priority, and she always makes sure to put them first. By putting them first, she hopes they learn from their mistakes last season, and she aims to instill a competitive culture in the program and ensure they are prepared to be student-athletes. As for their upcoming games, if you would like to support Cypress girls volleyball go see their next game against Molten Classic on Saturday September 26 at Lakewood.

Flag Football: Teamwork Leads To Success

By Juliet Scruggs, Sports Editor

Cypress varsity flag football girls are ranked 61st in Southern California, with a record of 5-3. They have been working hard to climb their way up to CIF. They have already pushed through two major tournaments in the first month of their season. One game that specifically highlighted their skill was a big win in the Chargers x Oakley Tournament.

The tournament featured a very tense match as the girls won 13-12 against Warren High School. The feeling after the win was partly pride and part relief, considering the fact that Warren is ranked 22 in all of Southern California. Junior **Kailey Tilson,** who has been playing since she was six years old, pointed out that she "has always had her teammates by her side to help her," showcasing the strong teamwork and trust the girls have.

As the season continues, the majority of our varsity athletes already have colleges in mind, not just for flag football, but other careers they want to pursue. For example, linebacker **Allison Scherer** is looking forward to trying to get into an SEC school, like University of Alabama, or Tennessee.

Now, in the peak of their season, the girls' teamwork is shining through. As Scherer added, "It's a lot of responsibility, but flag football is just so fun. Especially the team bonding and overall element of it." The girls show true compassion in their teamwork, and solidarity for the game.



Our Varsity Flag Football girls have a record of 5-3 so far. (photo by Juliet Scruggs)

Girls Golf Back Into the Swing

By Elise Arechiga, Sports Editor

The Cypress Girls Golf season has begun, with two matches already in the books. The team is getting prepared for a busy upcoming week. Last year, the team was able to compete in CIF in Victorville at the Bear Valley Country Club, finishing off with a record of 5-8-1. Coach **Susan Metry** has been the coach for the Girls Golf team at Cypress High School for the past five years. Previously, she led five Varsity girls to CIF, **Chole Wong**, **Sunny Hong**, **Airlia Leung**, A**irica Leung**, and **Kate Zapanta**. "I see that happening again this year," she added. Metry explained that last year's season was a challenge, since they were put into a higher league.

She anticipates an amazing season, "I love the kids this year, they are a warm, friendly, kind group of young ladies. I feel fortunate to be working with them," she said. The biggest challenge for the girls this year is the extreme weather. The heat is negatively impacting the girls' schedule, with many matches being cancelled. "The hot weather is killing us; we are trying to just get out there for practices and games," Metry said.

Sunny Hong, a Junior Varsity player in the Cypress Girls Golf team since freshman year, said, "Last year was like the best season we ever had, we won the entire thing!" She has been playing since she was 10 years old, and fell in love with the game at first sight. Hong has such a strong passion for the game, even through the challenges of the last season, she said she managed to enjoy herself and persevere. " I do have hope we will make it back to CIF."

Hong was one of the few girls who made it to CIF last year, and even though Cypress did not end up winning, she sees a bright future for the team. When the nerves before a match start to get to Hong, she finds it relaxing to chew some gum and refocus. Everyone can use this piece of advice, chewing gum could relieve the stress before any big game test and of course matches on the golf course.

Assistant swing Coach **Pete Dodosh**, who has been helping out the Cypress Girls Golf Team for the last seven years now, said, "It's always fun to see the players start off at the beginning of the year… It's always a pleasure to see growth, because it's such a difficult sport." He truly enjoys golf and helping out the girls however he can. Coach Dodash sees potential in all the girls and is excited for this new season as well. " From what I've seen so far, it's a really dedicated team," he stated.

There is a promising season ahead for the Cypress Girls Golf team and hopefully all their hard work will pay off soon.



Sunny Hong and Chole Wong warm up before the match against Sunny Hills. (photo by Elise Arechiga)