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## Samohi looks sharp in league opener

### Vikings' Gonzalez tallies nine Ks against Hawthorne in 3-0 win

By Daniel Archuleta

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April 14, 2010

SAMOHİ — The Vikings' Alonzo Gonzalez looked very much like Santa Monica's No. 1 starter as he struck out nine Hawthorne Cougars en route to a 3-0 victory on Tuesday to open Ocean League play.

The tall, left-handed hurler came out strong, striking out the side in the first inning on his way to improving his record to 3-2 on the season.

"I was excited out there," Gonzalez said. "We wanted to send the message that we are a force to be reckoned with in the Ocean League."

Gonzalez went six innings before giving way to reliever Andrew Montanari, who earned the save.

The Santa Monica High School baseball team may have improved its record to 8-7 overall and 1-0 in league play, but new Head Coach Sheldon Philip-Guide said he wasn't terribly impressed by his team's performance with the bat. Despite scoring in the bottom of the first to put the Vikings up 1-0, Philip-Guide said that his team didn't do the little things to fuel the offense.

"I hope the kids learn from what we didn't do," Philip-Guide said. "Hopefully we can hit the breaking pitch better."

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He said that making contact on off-speed pitches will be key as the Vikings prepare to travel to Hawthorne Thursday to complete the season series. He noted that as his team struggled to hit Hawthorne's Amador Monarrez breaking ball the Vikings saw a steady diet of the deceptive pitch.

Of the Vikings who did well at the plate were catcher Julien Solomita and outfielder Adam Padilla, who each drove in a run.

On the other side of the diamond, Hawthorne's Head Coach Jeff Hines said that he was impressed with Gonzalez' performance, but lamented his team's inability to hit his fast ball, which he relied on all afternoon.

"He's a good pitcher, but he wasn't throwing his second pitch for strikes," Hines said. "He had good velocity, but that's all he was throwing.

"My guys couldn't get around on it all day."

That was most evident during the fourth inning as Hawthorne mounted its most credible scoring opportunity. With runners on first and second and one out, Gonzalez threw a series of fast balls to Hawthorne's Jose Villalpando as he attempted to lay down a sacrifice bunt. He was successful in inducing a pop-up back to the mound that Gonzalez caught on the fly before dealing to third base, catching Luis Hernandez leaning toward home.

The Samohi victory is a positive step forward as the Vikings attempt to win a league title for the first time since the 2008 season.

"We're just trying to be the best team we can be," Gonzalez said. "With the support of our coaches, I think we can [win league]."

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