

[A] A SHARP DIVE Senior Evelyn Xie surges towards the ball. Xie closely tracked the ball, predicting where it would land in advance before diving towards it. After losing two close sets against Mountain View High School, Monta Vista won the third set but was defeated in the fourth set. Photo by Dana Yang

[B] READY TO RECEIVE Seniors Evelyn Xie and Evelyn Yang stay low on the balls of their feet, prepared to move quickly relative to the ball. Their knees were bent to allow them to quickly maneuver in any direction needed. Photo by Dana Yang



[C] GAME ON The team high-fives one another after scoring a point. The team celebrates after each point, maintaining their camaraderie. After winning two sets against Homestead High School, MVHS lost its third set but returned to defeat HHS in the fourth set, winning 3-1. Photo by Dana Yang

GET THAT HIT Junior Kiana Mark jumps up, preparing to execute an attack on the other side. As outside hitter, Mark ran both the offense and defense from the front and back rows. Photo by Dana Yang



MAKING THEIR MARK

Examining Kylee and Kiana Marks' journeys playing volleyball

Sisters Kylee Mark and Kiana Mark were immersed in volleyball from as early as their elementary school years. According to junior Kiana Mark, she had tried a variety of sports, but none of them "clicked" with her until she discovered volleyball in third grade. Three years later, in her fourth grade, freshman Kylee Mark was inspired by her sister and picked up the sport as well.

"Since my sister is older than me and was the reason I started volleyball, she [had] a big influence on me," Kylee said. "Watching her throughout the high school season before I was in high school showed me that [volleyball creates] such a fun environment, so it influenced me to also play in high school."

According to the sisters, they have always unfailingly braided each other's hair before a game. Kiana's mother braids Kiana's hair, while Kiana braids Kylee's hair in turn. Afterwards, Kiana takes the wheel when driving to their games, and they listen to hype music along the way, particularly the song "Ready For It?" by Taylor Swift.

Outside of club and school volleyball practices, the sisters attend private lessons and work out together. Their shared practices are important in order to improve their connection and tacit understanding when playing their respective positions.

"We have to really form a great setter-hitter connection. It's clear through practicing and doing privates with [Kylee] that we're both

working hard," Kiana said. "And since we're working really hard together, we're able to improve our connection, as well as our trust in each other on and off the court."

Although Kiana was injured mid-season and was unable to attend some of the games, she cites her favorite game out of the ones she played as the match against Lynbrook High School. MVHS, which had previously lost to LHS, emerged victorious a month later during a rematch. The sisters expressed their pride towards the team's improvement, which demonstrated their ability to improve and recover from challenges.

When reflecting on the past season, both sisters agree that the team has made tremendous progress as a whole. "We've grown a lot. There's a clear difference [between] our first game and our last game. We were able to gain more trust in each other, and there were a couple new faces on the team," Kiana said. "We were able to connect and grow closer to each other as the season went on, and it definitely showed on the court."

Kiana plans to continue her volleyball journey after high school, whether that entails being recruited or playing in a club at certain colleges. As a freshman, Kylee is unsure if she will play volleyball after high school, although she believes she will at least continue with volleyball for the rest of her high school career.

A PERFECT SPIKE Freshman Kylee Mark swings her hand towards the ball, angling her hit towards the ground on the opponents' side. Mark played as setter, a position in which she took every second contact and drove the offense. Photo by Dana Yang



[F] A LIGHT TOUCH Junior Samantha Tong uses her fingertips to tip the ball over the net. Also called dinking or dumping, tipping was used to add a surprise element to the defense. As a middle hitter, Tong was responsible for blocking the other team's hits and executing quick attacks. Photo by Dana Yang

[G] IN IT TO WIN IT The team puts their heads together in a huddle. Before each game, the team gathered in a huddle to improve their mood and relax. Photo by Dana Yang



[H] HARD BLOCK In order to prevent the opponent's ball from entering their side of the net, Junior Ashley Yang blocks the ball. By jumping up with her arms fully extended, Yang effectively caused the ball to rebound and end up on the opponents' side. Photo by Dana Yang

[I] EYES ON THE BALL Junior Chloe Chen bends her legs slightly and bumps the ball. This basic pass was used to rally the ball to her teammates, who would later execute an attack. Photo by Dana Yang

PRE-GAME RITUALS

Members share their must-dos before a game



"I have to make sure I get a good warm up, or else I feel horrible during the game. [Without it] I feel like something's out of routine, and something's going to go wrong."

ASHLEY YANG (11)



"I always have to do my hair. I do it the same way every time, by slick[ing] it back so that it doesn't get in my face. I also always listen to 'Meltdown' by Travis Scott before every school game."

LEAH DESAI (10)



"I normally just talk with my teammates, and we come up with a game plan and warm up."

EVELYN YANG (12)

VICTORY TUNE mvhs vs. opp.

LOS GATOS
JV: 0-2
V: 1-3

MOUNTAIN VIEW
JV: 2-1
V: 3-2

LOS ALTOS
JV: 2-1
V: 3-0

PALO ALTO
JV: 2-1
V: 1-3

GUNN
JV: 2-1
V: 3-1

CUPERTINO
JV: 2-0
V: 3-1

MOUNTAIN VIEW
JV: 0-2
V: 1-3

LOS ALTOS
JV: 1-2
V: 3-0

PALO ALTO
JV: 1-2
V: 0-3

GUNN
JV: 2-0
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