

King City Rustler



Members of the King City High School 1974 girls track and field team that was inducted into the Salinas Valley Sports Hall of Fame are: (front row, from left) Bea Chapa, Carmen Chavez, Pam Miller, Belinda Escobar, Jackie Loumaster, Lynnie Harris, Coach Linda Benway, Coach Kathy Carter Lundin, Mary Hayes, Kathy Grav; (back row, from left) Debbie Pitcher, Sandy Ferreira, Kathy Kuchta, Louise Chapa, Cathy Collins and Ellen Hayes. (Contributed)

Featured

Sports

Salinas Valley Sports Hall of Fame inducts 1974 King City High School girls track team

By: **MICHAEL RAMIREZ** 📅 September 8, 2023

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KING CITY – The 1974 King City High School girls track and field team was inducted into the Salinas Valley Sports Hall of Fame on Aug. 26 at the Salinas Storm House.

With the implementation of Title IX in the 1973-74 school year, the Mission Trail Athletic League formed to include girls league championships, along with the boys.

In the initial track season, the Lady Mustangs had no league meets and no one traveled to King City. Coaching the Lady Mustangs were Linda Benway and Kathy Carter Lundin.

“After we went to two meets, we found out we have something here,” Benway said. “At the MTAL finals, we won the championship. We scored 59 points, and that was more than the rest of the league teams combined.”

According to Benway, who shared coaching duties with the Central Coast Section Commission for Girls Sports that included MTAL Representative Barbara Baird, set the track and field standards for event qualifying.

“Seven of our girls went to the CCS qualifying meet and six went to the CCS Finals on May 24, 1974, at San Jose City College. At San Jose, we shared the CCS title with Menlo Atherton with 19 points each. We had two individual champions in Sandy Ferreira in the long jump and Kathy Kuchta with a win in the shot put. They (Lady Mustangs) were the foundation of girls sports at King City High School,” Benway explained. “The tradition of winning was started by them.”

At the State Meet, Sandy Ferreira finished second in the long jump and Kathy Kuchta was fifth in the shot put and won the event at State the following year.

Also competing at State was the 440 relay team of Marie Guidici, Debbie Pitcher, Denise Cornell and Ferreira. Pitcher competed at State in the 80 low hurdles, Carmen Chavez in the mile, and the 880 relay team of Toni Wilson, Pitcher, Guidici and Cornell. The State Meet qualifiers were referred to as the “Sensational Six.”

At the Salinas Valley Sports Hall of Fame dinner and induction ceremony, the Lady Mustang team received a plaque for the school and each team member and coach were given a medal.