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## **Bonita Unified Seniors, Coach Selected for L.A. Rams All-Star Flag Football Game**

**SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE** – The first full year of CIF-sanctioned high school flag football was a resounding success for Bonita Unified schools, with both Bonita and San Dimas high schools making great strides in their inaugural seasons, led by top players establishing themselves as fierce competitors and passionate coaches eager to develop their athletes as winners on and off the field.

Four of the District’s standout seniors will get an opportunity to play one final high school game after being selected for the Los Angeles Rams/National Football Foundation Senior All-Star Flag Football Game, to be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21 at Simi Valley High School.

Ashley Sandmark and Anelly Alba from San Dimas High will join Bonita High seniors Breanna Sandmark and Kayla Heinlein on the San Gabriel Valley/Pasadena roster. They will play against a team of San Fernando Valley/Ventura area all-stars. Bonita High head flag football coach Mike Mann will coach the SGV/Pasadena squad.

“I feel honored to be selected to represent our area’s top athletes as head coach,” Mann said. “My goal for the game is simple – I want these girls to have fun. I want them to soak it all in and embrace the fact that they were recognized by coaches as some of the best flag football players in 2024. They worked hard during the season and now it’s time to showcase their talent and go out there and have a blast.”

Bonita High went undefeated in the regular season and won their first Palomares League title, as well as taking the inaugural Smudge Crown rivalry game against San Dimas High. The Saints shook off the tough Smudge Crown loss, finishing third in the Hacienda League before making a spectacular run in the CIF Div. 3 championship playoffs, where they made it to the quarterfinal game.

“From the beginning of the season you could see the athlete’s determination and enthusiasm,” San Dimas coach Jaylene “Tiki” Jaime said. “Every game these girls gave it their all and it showed on and off the field. Winning our first-ever game and going to round 3 of the CIF playoffs, I am so proud for each and every player and coach. I can’t wait to see what next year has in store for us.”

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# BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

The defining moment of the year for both teams was the inaugural Smudge Crown game in October. The thrilling game became an instant classic, won by Bonita 19-14, but not before San Dimas had a chance to pull it out at the finish, with a potential game-winning touchdown pass broken up in the end zone.

“This season was special to me because I have never had so much fun in any other high school activity than flag football, and I got to meet a team of amazing people who have become my best friends,” Heinlein said. “It’s an honor to represent Bonita in its inaugural season. There are going to be a lot of talented players who will come through here. I’m proud to be taking the first step.”

Flag football nearly doubled the number of teams participating this season, with more than 40 leagues spread out over five divisions, quickly establishing itself as one of the premier girls’ sports at the high school level.

Additionally, for many players, the increased exposure has brought interest from college recruiters across the country, including the Sandmark sisters who, after competing against each other during the regular season, will suit up together for the first time in a flag football game.

“We never backed down and never gave up,” Ashley said. “This season was one that will never be topped. These girls put their all into it and I couldn’t be prouder.”

### PHOTOS:

**BUSD\_ALLSTAR1:** San Dimas High School senior Anelly Alba is one of two Saints flag football players selected for the Los Angeles Rams/National Football Foundation Senior All-Star Game, to be held Saturday, Dec. 21 at Simi Valley High School. Joining Alba is Ashley Sandmark. San Dimas completed their first flag football season with a 13-8 record and made it to the CIF-SS Div. 3 quarterfinal game.

**BUSD\_ALLSTAR2:** Bonita High School senior Breanna Sandmark is one of two Bearcats flag football players selected for the Los Angeles Rams/National Football Foundation Senior All-Star Game, to be held Saturday, Dec. 21 at Simi Valley High School. Joining Sandmark is Kayla Heinlein. Bonita completed their season with a 14-1 record and won their first Palomares League title.

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