

# The History of Crescenta Valley High Athletics

By Dr. William C. Thomas, former Principal of CVHS

LA CRESCENTA - Prior to the new high school opening in the fall of 1960, a major decision which had to be made early was the selection of the school nickname and colors. A local sporting goods dealer made up some banners in various uniform colors and these were displayed in a showcase at Clark. The student advisory group also took nominations for the school nickname with "Falcons" and "Highlanders" being the final names on which to vote. The ninth graders at Clark, soon to be the sophomore class, selected the colors and nickname by vote. We were now the Crescenta Valley High Falcons and our colors were Columbia Blue and Navy Blue.

Crescenta Valley High officially opened on September 10, 1960. An enthusiastic new sophomore class found a great deal of building and construction underway: the two gyms as well as the auditorium and music wing were in the final stages of construction and two junior highs were sharing the campus.

With only a tenth grade class it was decided to play a full schedule of the major sports competing with junior varsity teams of the Foothill League schools and other schools as they could be scheduled. This created an interesting situation. A typical junior varsity game normally draws only a handful of parents and friends of the team members. Realizing that CV had strong student, parent and community support, Dr. Thomas contacted the principals of each school on the schedule to let them know that they should expect that CV would have a sizable crowd. Despite the communication the reaction of the visiting coaches, administrators and fans was one of total disbelief as they looked at the CV spectators—often in excess of 2000 with a full drill team, band and song and yell leaders and compared this with the 20 or so people occupying the bleachers on their side of the field.

Gary Hess, coming from Glendale high School, was the first football coach with Todd Thompson and Ted Tiffany as assistants. Mr. Hess, typical of all the coaches involved with establishing the traditions and standards of the athletic program, did an excellent job of teaching both the skills of football and establishing the high standards that has been a hallmark of the CV athletes. The sophomore team, competing with teams generally made up of older students, finished the season with a 3-3 record, including a 34-0 win over Glendale high School.

Following the football season basketball became the sport and again, playing junior varsity teams, where we again stunned the visiting fans by the huge

crowds supporting our team. Coached by Ed Goorjian with Don Duncan assisting, the team ended up with a 7-9 record and gained valuable experience for the years to come. Discipline and team unity were the hallmarks of our basketball team and it was pleasure to watch this highly successful program develop over the years.

Other sports played that first year were track and cross country with John Barnes as coach and baseball, coached by Gary Hess. The baseball team, again playing a junior varsity schedule, had a 10-3 record.

For the second year of the high school the decision was made to join the Foothill League (Glendale, Hoover, Burbank, Burroughs, Muir, Pasadena and Alhambra) and to play a full varsity schedule. Lacking any senior would put our teams at a distinct disadvantage but our coaches felt the competition was important and they could compete respectably.

While CV was obviously handicapped by not having a senior class, we finished the season with a respectable record of 2-6-1 and we were never "really" blown out of any game. The experience gained in this competition put CV on the way to becoming an athletic power.

The high point of the football season was the game against Hoover. With most of our coaches and teachers coming from Glendale high School and the majority of students having older siblings attending or alumni of Glendale, there was a natural healthy rivalry between CV and Hoover. On the day of the game at a huge pep rally at CV, the Hoover yell leaders unveiled a golden helmet trophy that would be kept by the winner of the game each year. They also commented that since CV had no seniors of course Hoover would have it for this particular year but perhaps some time in the future, after CV became a "real" high school, they might have a chance to win it.

No one really thought we could win but when the game was over we had won by a score of 27-13, winning rather easily as it turned out. The Hoover student body was in shock to be beaten by a team made up of only sophomores and junior. While this experience was not a very happy one for Hoover, it was a big boost for the CV program, contributing to excellent student body spirit. That night a number of boys became young men as they realized they could successfully compete on the varsity level. It was great time for the school and a great time for maturity.

Excerpts from: [A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY YEARS OF CRESCENTA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL](#)

Available at:

<http://www.cvfalcons.com/alumni/63Classfolder/billthomashistory.htm>