

## Locals treated to All-American clinic

Micetich and other softball stars give back to community by helping youth



Pioneer pitcher Bailey Micetich watches Rachel Tadlock pitch during the youth clinic on March 16. (Courtesy)

Many years ago, a pocketful of no-hitters and a softball scholarship to San Diego State, Bailey Micetich was just another budding softball star among many who participated in Woodland girls fast pitch.

Now, with all of the accolades her softball career has given her, Micetich and her All-American 18-Gold traveling teammates gave back to the community on March 16 when 65 locals in Woodland girls fast pitch participated in a softball clinic at Recreation Field.

Kristen Tadlock, a fast pitch board member, was approached by Linda Merrida - her former softball coach - with the idea of a clinic, and it was received with all smiles.

Gold-18, coached by Bryan Merrida, instructed girls from ages 6-to-16 on a cold, windy day that was received well enough that supporters hope that next year there will be a repeat performance.

Bryan Merrida took the coaches and players through typical outfield and infield drills along with a coaches clinic to help coaches and put out new strategies.

Tadlock was most impressed with the members of Gold-18's collective character.

"They had great all-around personalities and I was super impressed with the outgoing-ness of the girls," she said. "Their main thing in their speeches was that the younger girls need to become great people and then great athletes."

The locals were also treated to tutelage from Gold-18, which is made up from some of the top talent in the area.

Gold-18 qualified for the Gold Nationals last summer, which only 64 teams qualify for nationally.

Members of Gold-18 have committed to schools like Memphis State, Oregon, Boise State, Arizona Western Junior College and Inderkum's Tanya Holguin has verbally committed to the same school as Micetich, San Diego State.

"I think a lot of the players in attendance saw all the skills that we are trying to teach and realized that it took a long time for these girls to get to where they are," Linda Merrida said. "They all started when they were young, too."

The Gold-18 players earned community service hours for their efforts and all of the proceeds from the event were donated back to Pioneer's softball program.