





## HIV Infections Cases Surging Among Latinos Gays In Border Towns Most At Risk

Health officials in California and Mexico have detected "alarming" increases in AIDS virus infections among gay and bisexual Latino men moving across the border.

New field surveys of Latino men in Tijuana and San Diego show that rates of infection from HIV, the AIDS virus, are as much as four times higher there than they are in other California cities, according to George F. Lemp, director of the University of California's systemwide AIDS Research Program.

"Those numbers are alarming and shocking, and they come as a real surprise," Lemp said. "While the AIDS epidemic exists so far only in pockets in Mexico, there's a danger that it will explode, so we need to look closely at the behaviors and the centers of infection in both border regions."

Spurred by the survey results, he said, health officials in both countries have speeded an unprecedented joint assault on the problem.

Lemp and a delegation of state

experts on the epidemic have just returned from Mexico City, where they met with Mexican health officials to plan collaborative efforts to pin down the nature and causes of the rise in cross-border infection rates and to increase prevention and treatment services in communities on both sides of the border.

### HIGH INFECTION RATES IN SAN DIEGO

More than 35 percent of young gay and bisexual Latino men are infected with HIV in San Diego, while in Tijuana the infection rate is nearly 19 percent, according to Dr. Juan D. Ruiz of the California Health Department's AIDS office, who disclosed the numbers at a recent meeting of UC AIDS researchers in Sacramento.

Previous studies have found infection rates of about 8 to 9 percent among comparable populations in cities such as San Francisco, Sacramento, Long Beach and Riverside, Lemp said in an interview. In Los Angeles County, however, the rate runs about 16

percent. The study involved nearly 400 men, all volunteers recruited in San Diego gay bars and dance clubs, and in a Tijuana public park known as a cruising spot and center for prostitution. The researchers were members of the Bi-National AIDS Advocacy Project, known as PROCABI in Spanish, which has offices in both border cities.

Detailed results from the new survey were released last week, showing that in Tijuana only 56 percent of the men had ever received any information on preventing HIV infection, compared with 77 percent in San Diego. In Tijuana, 46 percent of the young men had been tested for HIV, vs. 63 percent in San Diego.

Tijuana men were more likely to report that they had engaged in "risky" sex with women and also to have engaged in "risky" drug use — unprotected sex, in other words, while high on drugs.

In San Diego, however, the men in the survey were more likely to engage in "risky" sex only with

other men. Men in both cities reported that their sex with both men and women often occurred on opposite sides of the border, the survey showed.

**CROSS-BORDER HIV PLAN**  
Gov. Gray Davis and Mexico's President Vicente Fox discussed cross-border AIDS problems during visits last year and earlier, and a year ago Lemp and his colleagues began planning joint efforts with Mexican health officials.

The new upsurge in HIV infection rates among Latino men on both sides of the California border spurred the latest visit to Mexico City by Lemp and his colleagues, he said.

The two groups of AIDS experts decided to select two cities in Mexico noted for sending large numbers of men to work in California farm fields and cities, and to pick two California counties heavily populated by Mexican migrants, Lemp said.

In all four locations, AIDS researchers will conduct urgent and detailed surveys of the prevalence of risky sexual behaviors, rates of HIV infection as well as other sexually transmitted diseases, and trends in the emergence of AIDS itself and the availability of prevention and treatment services.

The epidemiological study and the effort to increase services for the migrants will take at least five years of effort, Lemp said.

"The problem is particularly difficult," Lemp said, "because so many of these young men are arriving in a new culture and among people they don't know,

and even if they're not gay, they have left girlfriends or wives back in Mexico and may turn to risky sex with other men — or to women sex workers — just because they have no one else to turn to."

## El Editor

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\* high tech "smart" keys (only available for certain late model cars — much harder to duplicate);

\* tracking devices (if you can find a company offering this service);

\* audible alarms (\$150-1,000).

## Study: Farmworkers More Diseased

A state agency study found that Hispanic farmworkers have higher rates of brain, leukemia, skin and stomach cancers than other Hispanics in California, a phenomenon their union blames on pesticide exposure.

Female Hispanic farmworkers also had more cases of uterine cancer than the rest of the state's Hispanic women, according to the Cancer Registry of California study, "Cancer Incidence in the United Farm Workers of America, 1987-1997."

The study, published in the November issue of the American Journal of Industrial Medicine, doesn't directly link pesticide use to the higher rates of cancer.

Another study will examine what pesticides were used and how long farmworkers were exposed to them, said Paul Mills, the study's author and cancer epidemiologist at the Cancer Registry.

But the UFW believes there is a direct relationship between the chemicals and cancer, said Doug Blaylock, the union's medical plan administrator.

Bob Krauter, California Farm Bureau Federation spokesman, said

that without discounting for family histories and lifestyles, there's no way to prove a direct link.

"Just because workers work in an agricultural setting where pesticides were used, they say, 'We're attributing this to pesticides.' I just don't see the connection there," he said.

Joseph Wiemels, a cancer epidemiologist at the University of California at San Francisco, cautioned that with general population studies like the registry study, "there are so many opportunities for bias because you're roughly putting data together."

The registry used data from 146,581 farmworkers who had been members of the union from 1973 to 1997 and compared it with the state's general Hispanic population.

It found that out of more than 140,000 farmworkers, 1,001 had been diagnosed with cancer from 1973 into 1997, and that there were 59 percent more reports of leukemia and 69 percent more reports of stomach cancers than there were in California's general Hispanic population.

The study found fewer incidents

of breast and colon cancer among the farmworkers than there were in the state's general Hispanic population, but did not offer an explanation for the finding.

Mills said the study's results show the lack of health care and education available to the farmworkers.

The farmworkers were diagnosed at a later stage than most of the state's Latinos, according to the study. Many cancers, such as uterine cancer, are more treatable with early detection, Mills said.

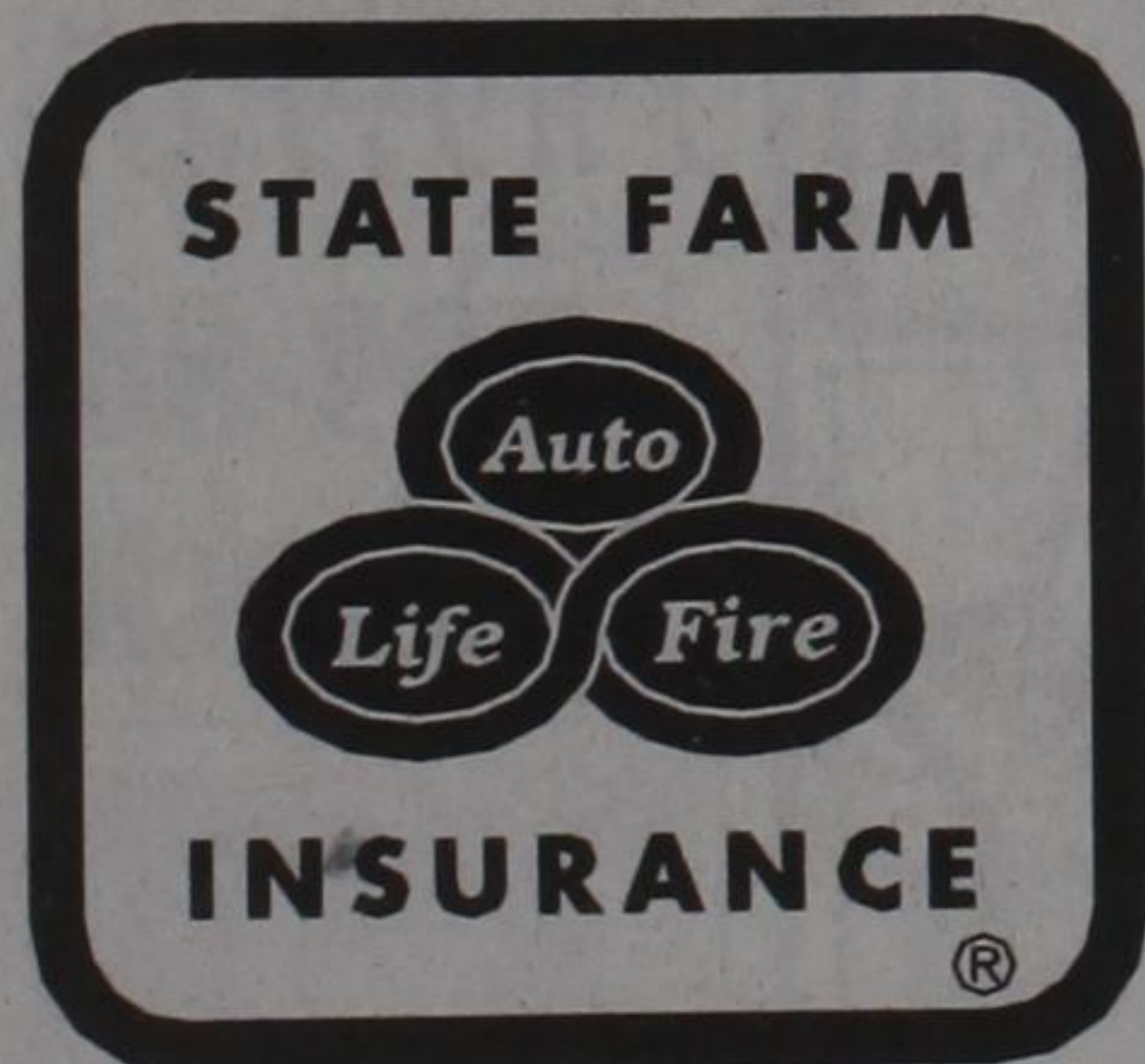
Armando Sanchez, 66, who spent 40 years spraying chemicals on vineyards and citrus orchards in the Imperial Valley, blames the pesticides for his leukemia.

Employers provided workers with gloves and masks, but Sanchez said it was often too hot to wear them. Temperatures often rise above 100 degrees where he worked near Palm Springs.

Krauter noted that rates of pesticide injuries and illness have declined in the past 20 years. In 2000, the state Department of Pesticide Regulation recorded 893 incidents, down 1,201 from 1999, according to a recent report.

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# Woods Seeks First Repeat At Players Championship

Tiger Woods was on the golf course at dawn Wednesday, and not entirely pleased with what he saw.

Tiger Woods will be defending his TPC championship beginning Thursday.



The fairways were soft and wet. His ball picked up mud along the fairways. He dug deep to repair pitch marks on the green. The Stadium Course on the TPC at Sawgrass hardly resembled what Ernie Els referred to as a "little monster."

"It's better when it's firm and fast," Woods said as he walked to the third green. "That's what really separates guys out here. Because you really have to think."

Woods likes a tough test, and that's what the Players Championship is all about.

They call it the fifth major, and in some cases it is even tougher to win than the four majors that make up the Grand Slam.

All but four winners in the 28-year history of The Players Championship have also won a major, which is no coincidence. No one has ever won consecutive titles.

The field is the deepest and strongest in golf, with 48 of the top 50 from the world ranking. The course features the most difficult closing holes in golf - an island green for a par 3, followed by the 447-yard 18th, which played harder than any other hole on tour last year.

"You're not going to scuffle it around here and shoot a good score," Els said. "You've got to

play well to score well."

At the moment, no one is playing better than Woods and Els.

The Big Easy won tournaments in Miami and Dubai, then tied for ninth last week at Bay Hill. Els is so locked into his game that he had the presence Wednesday to stop his practice round after nine holes and head to the range when he felt out of sync.

Still, the advantage goes to Woods, whose game appears to be coming together during his favorite stretch of the year.

He won at Bay Hill last week for his first victory of the season, the only player in contention to avoid bogey over the final nine holes on brick-hard greens.

He is the defending champion at Sawgrass, where last year he closed with a 67 over two days -- nine on Sunday because of rain, nine on Monday under sunny skies.

Oh, yes, and that little invitational at Augusta National is just three weeks away. Woods won the Masters last year, too, becoming the first player to sweep all the professional majors.

"Any time you win on a golf course, you're going to have that confidence when you go back," he said. "If I've done it before, I can do it again. That's the kind of sense I have."

Woods might get his wish for a brutally tough test, beginning Thursday.

Conditions have been relatively dry in March, so the course staff has kept water on the fairways and greens to keep them from baking over the weekend. How tough can it get? Three years ago, David Duval had a 74-73 on the weekend to win by two strokes.

"I shot 150 on the weekend and moved up," Woods said. "If it's hard and fast, this golf course can be one of the toughest we play all year."

Woods has the longest active streak of rounds at par or better at The Players Championship, with eight. He finished second to Hal Sutton two years ago.

One trait that makes him a perennial favorite is his mental tenacity. That was evident last week at Bay Hill, when he let everyone else stumble down the stretch and turned a tight race into a four-shot victory.

"I'm not playing that much smarter," Woods said. "Actually, I'm a better player, so it looks like I'm playing smarter. My shots are

not as bad. I just have more options now, because my game is better."

Those options don't include hitting a 4-iron from the rough, under the trees and over a pond to an elevated green, the shot that doomed Phil Mickelson last week on the 16th hole at Bay Hill when he was only one stroke behind Woods.

Mickelson got his work in early this week, then headed up to Augusta National on Wednesday to practice.

Others in the field include Colin Montgomerie, back in America after initially swearing it off because of heckling at the Match Play Championship.

Montgomerie raised eyebrows

## Mexican Boxing Champion Villanueva Paramo Dies at 89

Luis Villanueva Paramo, whose crushing left-hook helped him hold Mexico's welterweight title from 1932 until 1949, died Saturday of multiple illnesses. He was 89.

Known to boxing fans around the world as "Kid Azteca," Villanueva Paramo had long suffered from liver and kidney problems. He was taken to Mexico City's Jurez Hospital last Monday, where he fell into a coma that claimed his life shortly after 4 a.m. Saturday, longtime friend and fellow retired Mexican welterweight Carlos Montes said.

Villanueva Paramo began his professional career in 1930 and compiled a record of 199-39-4 before retiring in 1957.

The son of a poor shoe salesman, Luis Villanueva was born June 13, 1913, and lived with his parents and 14 siblings in Mexico City's scruffy, densely populated Tepito neighborhood.

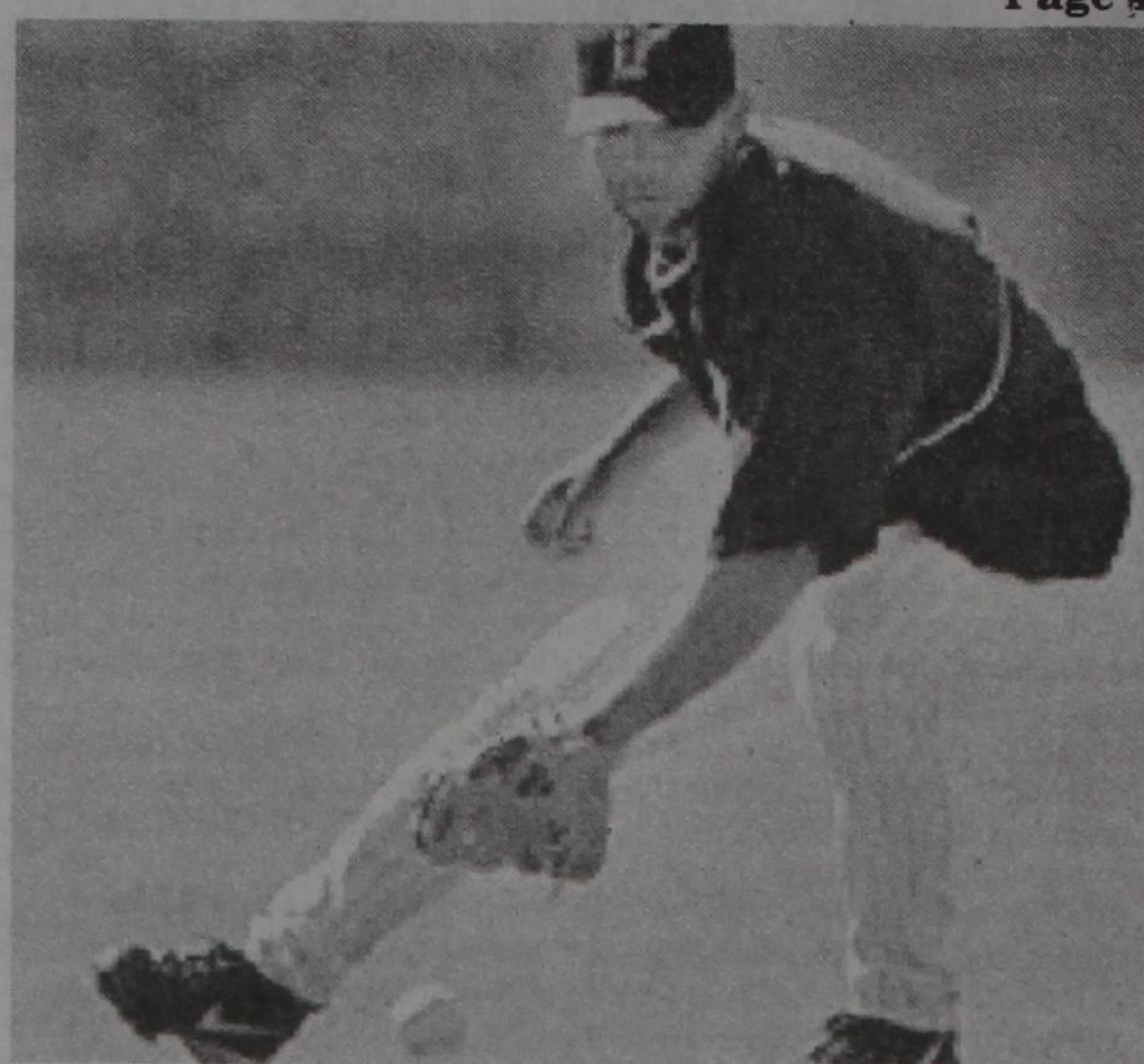
Villanueva Paramo began his career fighting for purses of just four pesos (45 cents) in pool halls and saloons in some of the Mexican capital's poorest neighborhoods. After a string of initial victories, Villanueva Paramo became known to fans as "Kid Chino" or the "Chinese Kid," because he had a darker complexion and wider eyelids than the average Mexican.

A year into his pro career,

two years ago when he proclaimed that everyone in the locker room knew the Bay Hill Invitational was over after the first round because Woods was only one shot out of the lead.

Now, no one is willing to concede victory to Woods until the final round, but his ability -- especially this time of the year -- is not overlooked.

"He definitely has some magic when he needs to really do something," Els said. "He's got that knack. I don't think there's a lot of players that can do that like him. He's really got the throttle when he needs it, and that's probably why he's such a great player."



## Le Tienen Enorme Fe a Alex González

ALEX GONZALEZ aprende a gozar más la pelota y pudiera ser un pez grande en el 2002.

Dicen que la fe mueve montañas y los Marlins de la Florida tienen tanta en su torpedero venezolano, Alex González, como para trasladar una cordillera de un continente a otro.

González, a quien todos le reconocen talento por arrobos, es considerado un jugador al que la falta de concentración le ha restado posibilidades para alcanzar resultados superiores, según algunos entendidos.

Incluso, durante la primavera se rumoró que el equipo podría salir a buscar otro campo corto tan bueno como el guante como González, pero mucho más efectivo con el madero.

Sin embargo, el manager Jeff Torborg, asegura que nunca existió ni la más remota idea en ese sentido, porque el venezolano sigue siendo un hombre de toda su confianza para guardar la llave del infield.

"Llevo muchos años en las Ligas Mayores para saber lo que brilla y lo que flo", expresó Torborg. "Este muchacho vale en oro lo que pesa, porque no hay ningún aspecto del juego que no domine".

"He visto a pocos con las cualidades que él posee", aseguró el manager. "Si alguien habló de un cambio en torno a él, estaba soñando".

Por su parte, el venezolano, de 25 años, no ha dejado de soñar con una buena temporada, donde se le reconozca como uno de los mejores torpederos del béisbol de lujo. Un sueño que tiene la forma de un Guante de Oro.

"Espero tener una excelente campaña y estar entre los candidatos al Guante de Oro en la Liga Nacional", reveló el short-stop de los peces. "He entrenado mucho en la primavera y mis compañeros me han demostrado una confianza increíble".

"Este año quiero establecerme de manera definitiva como uno de los mejores en la posición" dijo el jugador.

Todos en los Marlins le han puesto una mano de apoyo en el hombro al joven torpedero, pero su compatriota, el nuevo coach de tercera base del equipo, Ozzie Guillén, sobresale en este sentido.

A principios de la pretemporada, Guillén comparó a González con varios grandes de todos los tiempos en la posición. Algo que, *continúa en la pagina 5*

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