

SPORTS



Mo' money, mo' problems

Naomi Prale
Sports Editor

For any truly talented high school athlete, the lure of professional sports looms large. Money, fame and adoration are powerful incentives. The thrill of making a lot of money to play games that one would no doubt play anyway is a seductive enticement. Flashy sports cars, shiny jewelry, beautiful dresses, lucrative endorsement and red carpet appearances make the world of professional sports a goal to which one aspires.

However, most of the time athletes do not end up being as successful as the media present. According to *Sports Illustrated*, almost 80 percent of National Football League Players end up near bankruptcy within two years after they retire. In the National

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Basketball Association, 60 percent of former NBA players end up broke within five years of retirement.

The wasting away of millions of dollars due to bad investments, overspending and poor financial planning is a major problem. Starry-eyed student athletes do not see the flip side of the glamour of professional sports: rich athletes who eventually end up bankrupt. The media only portray athletes as confident and financially sound. If they can spend thousands of dollars on showy gadgets and clothing, then they should have enough money to at least provide necessities for themselves and their families.

Earlier this month, Yahoo! News published an article profiled a variety of pros who lost their fortunes. These include former Chicago Bulls star Scottie Pippen who lost \$120 million in his career earnings due to bad business ideas. He blew \$27 million in bad investments and spent \$4.3 million on a corporate jet. No wonder the notoriously stingy ex-Bull is called "no tippin' Pippen" by local restaurant employees. Lucky for Pippen, he is better known for on-court defense than his business sense.

Professional golfer John Daly revealed in his autobiography that he gambled away \$50 to \$60 million away in career earnings over 15-year span. Once, he lost \$1.65 million in five hours at slot machines at a casino. He lost \$1.2 million in two and a half hours at a one casino in Las Vegas. Recently, the bank foreclosed on his \$1.6 million home.

What about former NBA player Randy Brown? Best known for his work with Chicago Bulls from 1995-2000—he provided valuable energy and aggressiveness for the Bulls' "three-peat" during the 1996-1998 seasons—he is not on Yahoo!'s list, but according to *Chicago Sun-Times*, the Chicago native offered to sell his three championship rings after filing for bankruptcy in 2009, the result of bad investments.

The Yahoo! article cited the famous quotation by four-time NBA all-star Latrell Sprewell, who once turned down a three-year, \$21 million dollar contract from the Minnesota Timberwolves. His excuse? "I have a family to feed."

The media only portray athletes as confident and financially sound

Unable to find other suitors, Sprewell left the NBA in 2005. Despite having made \$96 million during his career, he lost his \$1.5 million dollar yacht, and his \$5.4 million house went in foreclosure in May 2008. That is one hungry family.

According to the Yahoo! piece, the king of all squanderers is former boxer Mike Tyson. He lost a fortune estimated at \$350-400. He spent \$4.5 million on cars, \$500,000 on a 420-horsepower Bentley Continental SC alone. The Bentley featured lamb's wool rugs, a phone and a removable glass roof. He house sported a \$2 million dollar bathtub, and he spent \$140,000 for two Bengal tigers. It is easy to see why Tyson filed for bankruptcy in 2003.

I could go on for pages. The idea here is that while professional athletes may have smarts on the court/field, when it comes to managing money, most are clueless.

Any blue chip high school prospect with professional aspirations would do well to learn from these cautionary tales.

Softball splits nonconference tilts

Dan Machalinski
Staff Writer

The girls varsity softball team dropped its season opener on March 18, losing 2 to 1 to St. Ignatius.

Senior outfielder Maggie Kearns drove in junior co-captain and catcher/infielder Joanna LeFevre, for the team's lone run while hard luck loser, senior co-captain and pitcher Julie Schwenk gave up two unearned runs to take the loss.

However, head coach Stephen Ramseyer found the silver lining in the defeat.

"We lost, but when we looked at, we hit well, our pitching was good, [Schwenk] did a good job, and they scored two unearned runs," Ramseyer said.

LeFevre agreed that her team "played some great defense."

Fellow co-captain and senior Kelly Kleppin (IF) echoed her coach and teammate's sentiments.

"We could have won," Kleppin said.

Kearns added that her RBI "felt really good" and that she hopes "it means good things for the rest of the season."



Shelby Peters slaps the ball against St. Ignatius.
Photo by Sarah Espinosa

The varsity team also consists of seniors Sarah Espinosa (outfielder), Lauren Shimanovsky (C) and Jennie DiJohn (IF); juniors include Casey Nakawatase (OF), Lauren Robak (OF), Shelby Peters (OF), Jenny Coursey (IF, P), Laurie DiJohn (IF), Sabrina Dimaria (OF) and Lauren Papucci (IF).

Varsity assistant coach Nicole Reynolds detailed preparations for the season.

"We did a lot of open hitting and open throwing; the kids did team lifting, and a lot of the kids played travel ball," Reynolds said.

Shimanovsky added that she believes that all of the off-season work will pay off.

"We definitely have a lot of potential, and I expect a lot out of the team this year. [The team consists of] all juniors and seniors who have varsity experience. We know what is expected of us, and I think we will

be able to get the job done," she said.

Monday's game against Deerfield resulted in a 10-4 win, with Schwenk pitching.

Following Thursday's game vs. Leyden, the Lady Wolves play today at Elmwood Park at 4:45 p.m.

Netmen serve season-opening victory

Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

The boys varsity tennis team kicked off its season with a victory over Notre Dame (4-1) on Tuesday, March 23, starting its season with a record of 1-0.

Head coach Brad Wilson expressed enthusiasm on the win.

"At the first match of the year, it is always hard to change from the way we practice to the way we play, but we were aggressive and everybody kept their composure," Wilson said. "We also moved our feet pretty well."

Junior co-captain Daniel Langer echoed Wilson's sentiments.

"It was a great start to the season," he said. "We hope to con-

tinue winning."

The team is also led by senior co-captain Vova Zverkovsky. Additional team members include seniors Vikas Auluck, Avi Schneider and Weipand Jan; juniors Pero Jovicic, Tony Christian-sen, Kevin Schorsch, Edmund Phan, Ryan Marohn, Muhammad Ul-haj, Jason Katez, Antonio Kim and Bradley Shulman; and freshmen Simon Kim and Robert Marohn.

Schneider said that the team is "working on getting quick on [its] feet at practices."

"This will help us get to the ball faster," he added.

Following Thursday's game vs. F.W. Parker, the Wolves play next Tuesday, April 6 against Wheeling at home beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Girls track sprints its way to state meet

Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

The girls track and field team wrapped up its indoor season on March 20 with a second place finish at the Whitewater Invitational at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater out of 28 teams. That effort came just two days after the team captured second place at the Central Suburban League Invite at Glenbrook South.

Led by senior co-captains Megumi Hoshi and Natalie Chavez, as well as junior co-captain Kimberley Mercado, the team earned two first place finishes in its first three meets. The meet at home on Feb. 17 against Niles North, Hersey and Mather earned West a first place finish with 65 points.

A following home meet on Feb. 24 resulted in a third place finish against Highland Park, New Trier and Roosevelt High School. West earned 55 points. Another notable finish was on March 2 at home against Deerfield, Maine West, St. Ignatius and Loyola. The varsity earned 67 points, which was enough to grab first place.

Those performances were followed up by a fourth place finish in the 27-team field at the Hononegah Invite at Hononegah High School on March 6.

Chavez said that she feels that the team has vastly improved since last year, which is reflected by the fact that last year the team settled for eighth place at the same meet.

At the Hononegah Invite, junior sprinter Kellion Gordon was awarded Most Valuable Player for the meet after placing in four events, establishing meet records in the 55-meter dash (7.32) and the 200-meter run (26.21).

Gordon is not unfamiliar with accolades such as the one she received at Hononegah. She is a returning state medalist who placed second in the 200-meter dash and fourth in the 100-meter dash at last year's state championship. So far this year she has claimed the 55 meter dash record (7.26) and the indoor 400 meter dash record (59.98).

Head coach Mark Medland is extremely pleased with Gordon's accomplishments so far and is looking forward to seeing her times drop once the transition to outdoors is made.

"She helped us out not only individually, but also as team with her strong performances on the relays," Medland said.

Medland specifically commended Gordon's effort in the 1600 meter relay at the Whitewater Invitational where she caught up to leader even though she was 15 meters behind when she received the baton.

Other individual scorers at the Hononegah meet included Hoshi, who grabbed second in the 800-meter run (2:27), and Chavez, who scored second in the 400-meter dash with a time of 62.47 seconds. Chavez finds herself approximately two seconds away from qualifying for state, but said that she is focusing on qualifying for the Indoor Prep Top Times Invitational.

As the indoor season now fades into the rearview mirror, the athletes look forward to moving outdoors.

"I am really excited for the outdoor season because that is when I want to start hitting the state qualifying times," Hoshi said.

Senior mid-distance runner Asha Mannancheril said that the team is concentrating on having many competitors in the state championship.

"We have an outstanding team in both running events and field events, and we want to qualify as many girls to the State meet as possible" Mannancheril said.

Medland also hopes to get several competitors to state, but for him the road doesn't end there.

"Qualifying is one thing, but being a finalist [at the state meet] is another thing. So the goal will not only be qualifying for the state meet, but making it to finals as well," Medland said.

As for the rest of the season, Mannancheril speculates that the team's unity will help them reach their goals.

"Everyone is always up and cheering for every girl who is running, jumping, hurdling, pole vaulting or throwing. With the help of our great coaches, I know that we will have yet another great season."

WestWord

Baseball team hopes to repeat '09 success

w Adriana Zalloni
World Editor

The varsity baseball team defeated Wheeling High School 8-4 on Friday, March 19.

The players expect to continue on the winning path, according to senior infielder Jimmy Xamplas.

"We are looking to start off [the season] right where we finished last year," Xamplas said. "There is no reason why we shouldn't have another 20-win season this year."

Last year, the team finished with a final record of 28-8, and head coach Garry Gustafson coached his 300th win. Both the team members and Gustafson expressed confidence in this team's ability to fill the graduates' cleats.

"We had a very senior-oriented team last year, with 11 of the 12 seniors moving on to play college baseball," Gustafson said. "With that being said, new faces bring new excitement."

Senior pitcher Tyler Rosell agrees.

"Winning has been a tradition in Niles West baseball, and we don't plan on stopping that," Rosell said.

According to senior catcher Eric Jensen, the team's strength lies in the pitching.

"Our pitching looks amazing. That is going to be the best thing we have going for us," Jensen said. "I think we are going



Daniel Kluss pitches against Payton.
Photo by Naomi Prale

to have the most struggles at the plate though. We have to really work on our hitting. If our bats come around, we should be a very good team."

Senior outfielder and co-captain Peter Jimenez believes the

trick lies in bringing it all together.

"Our team is looking solid defensively and we have some good pitching as well," Jimenez said. "We just have to work at bringing our defense and offense together on a game to game consistency."

Junior outfielder Nick Wheeler agrees.

"We can rely on pitching and defense to win the game," Wheeler said. "I know that our hitters will step up and put runs on the board."

To back up such optimism, the squad will need to mature quickly.

"We have got some young guys that are going to be on the field this year," Xamplas said. "We are going to need every single one of them to step up."

Senior Daniel Kluss (P) shoutout Walter Payton on Monday for a score of 9-0.

Other team members include senior co-captains Dylan Lovering (IF) and Tyler Pazik (P); seniors Daniel Kluss (P), Steven Stock (OF) and George Curran (IF), juniors Ryan Olen (IF), Brandon Fleites (P), Mike Leftakes (IF), Harry Smyrniotes (OF), Tommy Atiyeh (OF), Dino Davros (IF), Jake Zuckerman (catcher) and Kenny Blanchard (P). Sophomore Jason Megar (OF) and freshman Kyle Colletta (SS) round out the team.

The Wolves play Mather at home tomorrow at 11 a.m.

Boys track ends winter season, turns attention outdoors

w Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

The boys varsity track and field team wrapped up its indoor season last Friday, March 19 at the conference meet, finishing in fifth place. Senior co-captain and jumper Danny Lohan was invited to compete at the indoor prep top times, a competition where some of the elite track athletes in Illinois compete, at Illinois Wesleyan tomorrow, Saturday, March 27.

Head coach Chris Vivone expressed excitement on competing outdoors. He said the indoor season "helped [him] decide who our top [athletes] are going to be in outdoor."

On March 5, the Wolves faced stiff competition at the Niles West Invitational, placing second against Maine South. Vivone was pleased with the team's performance.

"Although we [finished in second [place], we competed well and it showed us exactly where our [athletes] need to be," he said. "We are definitely in the right direction, because everyone is working hard."

Lohan finished in first place in his event, as did junior sprinter Santiago Ochoa in the 50-meter dash, senior co-captain and hurdler Kimo Bajamunde in the 55-meter low hurdles, senior co-captain and sprinter Gabe Nash in the 200-meter dash and the NW relay (senior sprinter Chico Hill, junior sprinter Seve Loubriel, Ochoa and Nash) in the 4x1 lap (each school's dimensions are different) relay.

Nash attributes the relay's success to "training hard and supporting each other."

"Our success really depends on our baton passing and how well we work together," he added. "If someone runs a bad leg, it is up to the others to help pick up the slack."

This is the second season that the relay is running together, Nash said. "We all have the same goals of breaking the school records, so that is just more motivation for us to work with."

The team's success garnered it 138 points, losing by 30 points to Maine South.

On Feb. 27, the Wolves competed in the Suburban Meet II at Niles West, placing second next to Loyola. The team finished in fourth place in the Dan Phillips Relays at Evanston High School on March 12.

Vivone said the key to the team's success in the future is maximizing practice time.

"We need a good week of focused practice," Vivone said.

According to Vivone, the sprinters and jumpers are doing well.

"We have some good sprinters and jumpers, but are a little weak as for our throwers and mid distance runners," he said.

Despite this throwback, Vivone said that the athletes are "doing everything I ask of them, however, as a team, we just need better effort."

Senior thrower Angelo Tripkos agrees.

"The talent is there, however, we need that extra effort to push us over the top and make us that all around good track and field team," he said.

Senior co-captain and distance runner George Davros echoes Tripkos' sentiments.

The time to peak is in late May when we [compete in the] conference and sectional [meets]. The times will come and so

will the victories," Davros said.

Senior co-captain and thrower Dimitri Tripkos expects the team to keep working hard.

"The [track] program is designed so we have our best times and marks outdoor for conference. Our team is still building its

strength and once we reach our prime I think we will be surprised," he said. "We have the talent, we are just trying to evade early injuries and make sure to peak at conference outdoor."

The Wolves will compete next at the Andrew Invite at Victor J. Andrew High School on Saturday, April 3 at 10 a.m.

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SPORTS

Boys gymnastics focuses on attaining season goals

W Rexly Penaflorida II
Editor in Chief

Heading into Tuesday night's non-conference triple meet with Highland Park and Deerfield, the boys varsity gymnastics stood with a 2-1 record (1-0 Central Suburban League South). They also finished sixth place at West's Foerch Invite on March 13 with a score of 101.85.

Led by head coach Steve Foerch, senior co-captains Brendan Melnick (horse, parallel bar and rings), Dmitry Ramirez (horse) and George Deamont (floor exercise, vault, parallel bars, high bar, rings and all around), the squad is "a sleeper team right now and we should blossom in the next month or so," Foerch said.

The team is also comprised of seniors Anthony Suarez (floor, vault and parallel bars) and Ryan Zimmer (floor exercise and vault); juniors Chris Williams (floor exercise and vault), Rafal Krolczyk (horse), Elias Shiheiber (floor exercise, vault and high bar), Tyler Smith (floor exercise), Roman Kim (horse) and Hantac Chang (vault, parallel bars, high bar and rings); sophomores Casey Mahoney-Muno (floor exercise, vault, high bar and rings), David Imakarimov (rings), Josh Nicolasin (rings) and Ari Lazar (horse, parallel bars and rings).



Brendan Melnick competes on the horse.
Photo by Sarah Espinosa

The team won its first dual meet on March 4, defeating Evanston Township 113.5-97.50, followed by a 110.2-72.6 non-conference drubbing of Maine East.

However, the team's only loss had to hurt, as it came at the hands of district rival Niles North by a 118-113 count.

According to Melnick, one of the toughest challenges that the team currently faces is that there are not enough solid scorers to push the team into the 120-point range.

Zimmer (floor exercise and vault) concurs.

"The team now realizes that in order to win meets, we need to pick up the pace; losing to North woke up a lot of guys."

Foerch also addressed the elusive 120-point mark.

"Right now, we are just taking baby steps towards that goal," he said, adding that the team has reached the 120-point goal every season and that this year would not be any different.

Deamont echoed his coach's confidence and added that the team needs to be more aggressive.

"Sometimes it is that emotional uplifting that separates a win from a loss," he said. "There is no defense in gymnastics, only offense, so a fired up team makes all the feelings of doubt go away."

The team will compete next tomorrow at the Rolling Meadows Invite at 4:30 p.m.

Lady Wolves remain optimistic despite rocky start on pitch

W Adriana Zalloni
World Editor

Despite kicking off the season with a 1-3 record, the varsity girls soccer team is confident in the team's ability to get back on track.

"We got off on a rocky start," senior forward Amanda Ko said. "We will bounce back."

The team defeated Maine East 4-3 on March 18, but lost to Prospect High School 2-0 on March 15 and to Deerfield High School 3-0 on March 16.

Head coach Brett Clish expressed optimism for a successful season.

"The girls have worked very hard in the off season in order to have a successful season this year," Clish said.

This year's team will include 15 returning players, including

senior co-captains, forward Danya Snowsky and midfielder Allie Guiang and junior co-captains, goalie Arlene Bueno and defender Nicole Moy.

Other seniors include: midfielder Katarina Sostaric and forward Carolyn Masterton. Juniors include: defenders Becky Hawk, Nicole Poskrobko and Jessica Nianick, midfielders Jenny Cornici and Jane Ro, and forward Cheyenne Farrell. Sophomores include: defenders Marina Sostaric, Heather Koder and Lizzy Nguyen and midfielders Maggie Swanson, Liz Troyk and Nicole Ostro. Rounding out the team is freshman forward Molly Kleppin.

Moy asserted confidence in the girls' ability to have a successful season.

"I think we have already stewed up some good chemistry to add to our success," Moy said.

Guiang shares Moy's optimism.

"We look forward to coming together as a team to win more games than last year, and just play better soccer," Guiang said.

The Wolves next compete the Tuesday after break at home against Glenbrook South at 4:45 p.m.



Becky Hawk defends against Maine East.
Photo by Irfan Qurashi

Roche looks forward to inaugural season at volleyball helm

W Daniel Friedman
Staff Writer

At tomorrow's Maine East tournament, the boys volleyball team will begin its 2010 campaign under new head coach Andrew Roche.

Roche, who formerly coached the junior varsity squad, replaced Jenifer Sinnick. Last year, Sinnick guided the team to the regional championship game, a mark that Roche said that he aims to match and improve upon.

Although the captains have not been decided as yet, Roche said that he already sees leaders emerging in practices.

Specifically, he commended junior backrow specialist Patrick Cristi for his "exceptional work ethic" and senior outside hitter John Kim for the "intensity that he brings to practice everyday." According to Roche, these leaders will be the key to whatever success the team achieves this year.

Such success will be a challenge for this year's team. They will have to match up against stifling competition in the Central Suburban League South (CSLS), what Roche describes as, "at least the second most difficult conference in the state." The pre-season rankings by the *Chicago Tribune* put the CSLS's Maine South as the number one team in state.

Senior Albert Kim (OH) added that the Wolves must also face "the usual elite teams such as New Trier and Glenbrook South."

Other senior team members include middle hitter Paul Kim, David Park (MH) and Brian Steffen (BS/OH). Other juniors include Arben Cuca (OH), Mikko Jimenez (BS), setter Ray Laguit, Paul Nasui (MH), Patrick O'Connor (S), Yonas Tekeste (MH) and Patrick Zelazko (OH).

Besides the treacherous strength of its schedule, the team faces other challenges that may prove even more difficult to

overcome. For instance, Kim notes that this year's squad's average height is much less than last year's team, which can be a critical shortcoming in this sport.

"Our defense, digging and passing will have to be perfect for us to keep up with much taller teams. Also, we need to keep the game at a fast pace, which should surprise our opponents," Kim said.

One of the first goals that Roche has set is to improve the team chemistry.

"Our expectation is to get everything we can out of them and

for them to get together as a team. If we get that, then everything will take care of itself," Roche said.

However, Kim doesn't believe that this will be an issue later in the season.

"Our chemistry seems to be improving a lot on and off the court," Kim said.

Roche expressed excitement about the season and about his new role.

"The guys have been working really hard, and I am ready for the season to begin."

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