

Not Just Cheerleaders But Champions

By: Lauren Duche
Staff writer

As the Varsity Cheer season started, I didn't know what I was getting into. I was dragged to try out by my current teammate, Abby Jeroue. As a former gymnast with a lingering back injury, my expectations for cheer were low.

Needless to say, I went in with a closed mind, expecting to quit after the football season ended. My opinions of cheer changed quickly after the first summer practice came to a close.

When the first football game ended, I knew this was what I wanted to do for the rest of high school. Cheerleaders aren't just a bunch of gossiping girls that yell at the football games. Behind the scenes, we are a dedicated and hardworking group of people with one goal on our mind: getting the state title back.

Last year, the team landed in fourth place after an impressive round three performance at state finals and it left them wanting more. I wasn't on that team last year, so I didn't know what it meant to want something as bad as you want to breathe.

This year I learned that. The beginning of this season had gone off without a hitch. But as one of our most important competitions of the season came around, we learned that sophomore, Kari Olsen, had come down with pneumonia and couldn't compete.

This was the last thing we needed. The night before the competition, we had to completely change round three and have multiple different people take her place for each round.

Sophomore, Kaycee Blish, was one of these people. Blish was filling in for round two. In the warm up room, minutes before the competition, Blish broke her thumb, chipping the bone and snapping two ligaments. She finished out the competition with her thumb broken and helped lead our team to victory that day.

However, you can't go on with a broken thumb forever. Ultimately, Kaycee was pulled from round three.

At this point we were down two girls and found ourselves re-blocking round three again, for the second time, the night before our BWAC competition at Crosswell Lexington against our biggest rival: Armada.

We lost that day by .3 points, but the funny thing was, we felt accomplished. We were faced with a lot of obstacles this season and I think that it only made us stronger.

We ended the regular season knowing we would have quite the challenge because of the re-blocking and the injuries, but that never stopped us. Districts came and went and even though we were third in the standings, we would be advancing to regionals with the highest round three score in our division.

In what felt like the blink of an eye, we were at regionals. Our round one performance was strong. Our round two was good.

As we prepared for round three however, we started to feel the pressure. The back stunt group went down two counts early and said the wrong words. When we got back to the locker room we were worried we wouldn't make it to states. Our whole season we'd

worked so hard and we didn't think we would make it.

We were relieved when we made it – we placed second – but we knew one thing for sure: that was never going to happen again.

The week of states was a blur. Our coaches pushed us and never let us settle. The whole year we were saying we wanted it, and we did, but something changed that week. I'm no expert – I've been cheering for six months, if that – but it doesn't take an expert to feel the sheer drive this team has. Actions speak louder than words. That week our actions were louder than our words could ever be.

On the day of states, we were focused and gave the best round one and two we ever had ever competed. Coach Kelli had always said practice like it's your last, compete like it's your last.

Well, it was our last and when we stepped out onto the mat, and we knew it didn't matter where we placed. What mattered was proving to ourselves that we could accomplish something truly extraordinary—and we did.

When we stepped off the mat, we didn't have a lot of time to talk but we didn't need words. We just looked at each other, for one of the last times as a group, and we knew we gave it our all.

When we were announced as runner up, we were happy. Of course we wanted to win, but there is more to life than winning. In my mind, we were victorious.

High School Students Reach for Further Success

By: Jacquelyn Loria
Staff Writer

Dual enrollment isn't just a chance to take online college classes, but instead it's also a chance for students to further themselves in their high school career.

Dual enrollment is a program for high school students who want to earn college credit while working towards high school graduation requirements. To get into a dual enrollment class, students must have approval from their guidance counselor and have a minimum GPA level of a 2.0.

While taking dual enrollment, it counts as a college credit (as long as the student passes the course) and carries with the student when they graduate high school. Taking this since it goes towards college is a great opportunity for students to further their success.

Students have the choice if they want to take one class or two through the community college in their county. For example, Richmond students go to Macomb Community College, while Yale

students go to St. Clair Community College.

Aside from dual enrollment, students can also take early college which means they actually go to the college to sit in the actual class, after they are done taking their classes at the high school.

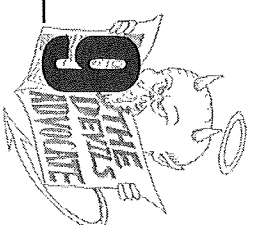
These college opportunities give students a chance to further themselves and become more successful. Students can graduate high school with a year or more of college under their belt.

Dual enrollment helps students realize that college is a lot harder and more in depth than high school. College classes are harder and need a lot more attention. Students cannot be lazy while taking a college class.

These classes are highly recommended for students to take to help push themselves, become better students, and prepare for when they go to college. Some tips to being successful in a dual

enrollment class include the following:

- Attending and being on time for class so students don't miss any assignments or a lecture during the class.
- Completing assigned reading and submitting the assignments online, on time. This helps students to stay on task and not get behind in their work.
- Checking the class website every day for new assignments. Professors update their class websites every day, so it helps to make sure you don't miss a thing.
- Students should plan to spend a lot of time on the assignments. (They can't be done within 10 minutes) Rushing through college work, would result in not getting a good grade. Grades are important and need to be watched carefully.
- Taking the time to study for the exams, tests, or quizzes. These kind of assignments are huge in college and it is important to do good on them.



The Road to Recovery: Sophomore Bailey White has High Goals for Future

By: Brandon VanCorp
Staff Writer

Running is something most people dread. For sophomore Bailey White, running is her life.

"I started track in 7th grade and have loved running ever since," said White. She has always had an interest in running and when she decided to pursue it, she was very successful.

Her 8th grade year she finished first in every individual event she competed in. She had a personal record of 6:03 on the mile run and a PR of 28.7 on the 200-meter dash. White said, "I continued to have a great year and finished first in the BWAC in my races."

Entering 9th grade with high hopes, White wanted to become even better. She started running and working out at home every day for about an hour.

Then in December of 2013, one morning after a day of intense conditioning, while getting out of bed, she heard a loud pop in her hip. "There was a shocking pain in my hip that would not go away," White said.

With the season right around the corner, she continued to train as much as she could. White was able to race in three meets until the pain finally took over. "I had to stop during one of my races because of the pain in my hip," White said. "I

could barely walk, so my mom had to help me off the track."

She went to three doctors to get help for her hip but they all said the same thing: they were unsure of her injury and unsure of the source of the pain. When sent to a specialist, she was told she may have a possible tear in a muscle located around her hip.

White was told to go through an MRI to verify the injury. She had to wait two weeks for the results. "It was a long two weeks because I was worried I would be told I can no longer run," said White.

When the results were in, she was told there was no tear. But the doctors were still unsure of what was wrong.

The doctor said it would be best to not run to help her recover faster. Devastated from the news, White did not want to take the doctor's advice. "I was very upset to hear I could no longer run," said White. "I wanted to keep running, but my parents and doctor wouldn't allow me to."

White was given crutches to ease the pain of her hip when she walked. In the beginning of April, she started going to physical therapy once every other day for two to three weeks. White said, "Physical therapy helped a little and I was able to stop using the crutches." She then started going to a massage soon after once every two weeks.

In November, when the pain became more bearable, White slowly started to train again. "I was very excited to be able to run again," said White. "Soon I was able to train every day again, but I had to keep it to a minimal."

Her hip was getting better and better and she furthered her training. "I started going to a personal trainer every week on Mondays," said White. "We specifically worked on my core and legs."

She began to work out every day and started running on her treadmill at home. White said, "I worked hard but I knew my limits. I stopped when my hip began to really bother me."

Coming into her 10th grade season, White is healthy enough to compete. Her main focus is to just run the mile to create less strain on her hip. "I'm still not completely healthy, so I don't want to overdo it and risk hurting myself more," said White.

At practice, she can do most of the workouts and conditionings but still has pain in her hip. "If the training becomes too much, I stop and take breaks," said White. "I don't like to though. I want to train just as much as the rest of my team, if not more."

Her goal is to get her mile time to around 5:30. She has hopes of beating the school's female record mile time of 5:25.3. White said, "I believe I can reach my goal if I stay healthy and continue to work hard."

Richmond Wrestling Wins 7th State Title Adam Boyd, Roy Costello, and Connor Behem Come Up Big for Blue Devils

By: Christina Thomas
Staff Writer

Seven team state championships.

Five time state runner ups.

A teammate that is the 21st wrestler in the state to get four individual state championships.

The Richmond wrestling program has been built up since 1992 from the help of Coach George Hamblin and Coach Brandon Day.

Coach Day student taught at Richmond in 2002 and came to RCSD to have the opportunity to work with Hall of Fame Coach, George Hamblin. Coach Hamblin asked Coach Day to stay at Richmond to help him continue to build the program.

Coach Day took the head coaching job for the Richmond varsity wrestling team after Coach Hamblin retired two years ago. This was the first year Coach Day won a state championship as head coach.

"It's a great feeling watching the kids accomplish something so amazing," said Coach Day.

"Everyone on our team from the youngest, most inexperienced kid to the oldest most experienced kid are equally important to us and they all share an important role on the

team."

Going into the season, there is only one goal every wrestler wants: A State Championship. This is exactly what Richmond did this year.

Returning from a tough lost the following year against Dundee in the State Finals, Richmond wanted the title more than anything.

"You have to put the time and the effort in," said senior Devin Skatzka. "Wrestling is a team sport; you have to rely on your teammates and have them push you to get where you want to be."

Skatzka said every teammate puts forth 110% every time they step on the mat.

The wrestling team practices two-and-a-half hours a day, six days a week.

"A lot of running, drilling, and yelling takes place during our practices," said senior Adam Boyd.

"Everything we do in practice or that is beneficial towards us off the mats, prepares us for that one goal we all want: a state title."

Other than Dundee, the team had a couple other setbacks they had to work through.

Jordan Adams, a 171-pound wrestler, recovered from a torn labrum

that had occurred the following season. Austin Pawlak, a 152-pound wrestler, had his appendix removed. Connor Behem, a 112-pound wrestler, had a torn meniscus. Anthony Hinojosa, who weighs in at 215, had a knee problem along with Austin Vannatter, a 140-pound wrestler, who had a back issue.

These were all obstacles that the team had to overcome. Even with the setbacks Richmond had encountered, they all had a ton of confidence going into the finals for Division 3 on Saturday, February 28th.

After six matches in the finals Dundee led 16-3. Pawlak won by decision at 152 and Skatzka had a pin at 160.

Dundee now led 16-12 after eight matches. Both Adams and Vannatter fought back to keep two of Dundee's best wrestlers from getting more than a decision at 140 and 171.

Dundee still led 19-12. "More than half the lineup bumped up a weight man, not allowing Dundee to get bonus points in both Adams and Vannatter's match is the only thing you can ask from them,"

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What Is Losing?

Richmond Has Michigan's 21st Four Time State Champ

By: Christina Thomas
Staff Writer

"He's one of the most down to earth people I know," said senior Adam Boyd. "All the accomplishments he has completed throughout his high school wrestling career, yet he acts like it's nothing."

A kid who has wrestled since he was 4-years-old is named the 21st wrestler in the state to win four individual state titles in a row.

Senior Devin Skatzka started off wrestling at Algonac at the age of 4 and moved to Richmond as a freshman to proceed in his wrestling career.

"There wasn't much offered for both my sisters and me at Algonac so it worked out as a whole for the family," said Skatzka.

Skatzka had won a team state championship along with an individual state title at Division 3 his freshman year at Richmond.

He was an individual state champ both sophomore and junior year and was runner ups in the team state finals.

Now, in his senior year, Skatzka will be leaving as a two-time state champion, a four-time state individual champion, and a future commit to Indiana University.

"It's an honor being a four-time state individual champ," said Skatzka. "Not many people have done it; it's a dream come true."

Skatzka has been a role model to all his fellow teammates the past four years.

"I did my part and did what I had to do for myself and my team to get where I am today," said Skatzka.

Skatzka's main goal is to follow in his dad's footsteps and be a national champ and an all-american in wrestling.

"I look up to my dad a lot; he has been my coach my whole life," said Skatzka. "He pushes me past my limits and has made me the wrestler I am today."

Skatzka's high school wrestling career may be coming to an end but his wrestling career in college is just starting.

"Devin will do great things at the college level if he stays healthy," said Coach Brandon Day, the head coach of the varsity wrestling team at RHS.

Along with being a national champ and an all-american in wrestling, Skatzka also wants to go to school to be chiropractor.

Coach Day left Skatzka with this advice: "Don't let anyone get in the way of your goals and stick to the plan. Train hard and focus on getting your degree and everything else will take care of itself."