

## Three Stars of the Week

**Autumn Kalis, Senior**



Kalis scored 20 points in the Dundee-Crown Holiday Tournament. She averaged 10 points per game and finished with a team high 14 assists in the tournament.

**Tino Malnati, Senior**



Malnati has become a leader for New Trier in his second year on varsity basketball. He has led NT to three straight wins, including a 14 point win over CSL rival Maine South.

**Emma Rohrer, Sophomore**



Rohrer led the Trevians by finishing first overall at the Brinkworth-Munich invite in Evanston on January 9.

## Regional finalist Stinehart in a class of his own

He hopes to continue to compete while attending Princeton

by *Kate Holly*

From the first time he stepped onto the ice at just four years old, senior Eric Stinehart knew skating was something he wished to pursue.

On that day, Stinehart had accompanied his older brother on a school outing to a hockey rink, and while he was too young to actually play hockey, he still dared to tackle the ice. Even after everyone had exited the rink, Stinehart stood his icy ground, and 14 years later, he retains that mindset.

Figure skating is a year-round sport with qualifying competitions nestled in these winter months which ultimately lead up to the national competition in January. Training for these competitions requires daily practice throughout the year.

"I practice for about an hour in the morning and an hour and a half to two hours during the afternoon in the school year. In the summer, I usually skate three to three and a half hours a day," Stinehart said.

Since practice dominates time in the day, Stinehart has a modified New Trier schedule to allow for a better balance between his academics and athletics.

"It's tough. This year, I leave after 6th period to go skating. I don't have a lunch, and I miss advisory most days," he said.



Stinehart dedicates the majority of his time to practice on the ice | Facebook

Stinehart's sacrifices are well-recognized by his coach Denise Myers. Myers has been working with Stinehart for three years and has been coaching figure skaters for over 30 years. In the past, she trained other skaters from New Trier, but Stinehart is currently her only New Trier skater.

"Eric has a passion for the sport of skating," she said. "He has a great appreciation for music, and his musicality shows through his skating. He is athletic and artistic, which is an awesome combination."

Stinehart also has a major appreciation and talent for music.

He plays the viola in New Trier's symphony orchestra and is a leader in the service club This is Our Music. The club rehearses chamber ensemble music weekly and performs at local retirement homes.

In addition to orchestra, Stinehart also juggles a challenging course load. Barbara Joyce, Stinehart's junior AP English teacher, said, "He always did stellar work. Even with all his commitments, he submitted everything on time."

Stinehart's academic qualifications also extend to his position as National Merit Semifinalist after receiving an

exceptional score on the PSAT his junior year.

Despite the challenge of finding a balance, Stinehart has achieved several great feats in the skating world, many of which have been recognized by local publications.

This past September, the Glencoe Anchor published a segment on his completion of the United States Figure Skating Association's senior level, which under 1% of USFSA students achieve.

As a freshman, he won 2nd place nationally at the intermediate level. The following year, as a novice, he earned 1st place at the Upper Great Lakes Regional Championship and 3rd place in the Midwestern Regionals. This year at Regionals, Stinehart said he received his highest score overall, which was a big personal accomplishment.

After high school, Stinehart said he wants to continue skating and is hoping to compete in collegiate competitions.

"I hope that Eric continues to skate and that skating is always a part of his life," said Myers. She also explained that in college, Stinehart would have the opportunity to compete at the Collegiate Championships.

Meg Jansen, a former skater and friend of Stinehart said that he is an incredibly dedicated athlete.

"I have known him for so long and I can honestly say that he has such an amazing drive and passion for the sport," Jansen said. "When he is on the ice, he is just mesmerizing."

## Badminton remaining a female exclusive sport

Not enough interest throughout Illinois cited as the main issue

by *Arjun Thakkar*

New Trier offers a variety of athletic opportunities for both males and females to join. From rowing in the fall to track and field in the spring, there's an activity for everyone. However, there's a sport at New Trier that only girls can play: badminton.

But why isn't there a boys badminton team at New Trier? Each IHSA-sanctioned sport is determined based on interest relative to the 759 public high schools in Illinois. "The threshold for boys badminton is about 65 member schools--roughly 10%--willing to say, 'we will enter a state tournament sanctioned by the IHSA.' There just doesn't appear to be enough interest [in boy's badminton]," Athletic Director Randy Oberembt said.

The struggle to make badminton an official sport isn't unique to the activity. "Most of our sports originated as clubs or activities, then expanded into official athletic varsity status. Rowing was a club beforehand, but then in 2007, it became an athletic sport, even if it isn't IHSA-sanctioned," Oberembt said. He cited field hockey, lacrosse, and fencing as other sports New Trier competes in even when the IHSA doesn't endorse the activity.

Even though the sport has never been official, there once was a boys badminton club at New Trier. Head Badminton Coach Deborah Ofcky explained how the club didn't last



Despite not being an official boys sport, badminton has remained a fan favorite among NT students | Melancon

more than a couple of years due to sporadic interest levels. "We've had interest that has fluctuated over the years. Around six years ago, we had a boys club team, but since no other schools competed officially, there weren't any outside opportunities for us," Ofcky said.

While it seems as though there isn't enough interest in Illinois to turn boys badminton into an official sport, enthusiasm for the sport is certainly present at New Trier. "Badminton is a pretty light sport, and many guys really want to play it. It's unfair that the school doesn't give that opportunity to us," senior Lance Madanguit said.

The female badminton players are also confused as to why there isn't a team for guys. Junior Badminton Player Georgia Cienkus said, "It's weird that there isn't a boys badminton team here, since most sports at our school have both a male and female team."

Sophomore Faith Chen also played badminton last year, and while she would support the initiation of a male team, she also recognized why some guys don't show interest in badminton. "There is a common stereotype that badminton is a 'girly' sport, and since there is the perception that girls aren't good at sports, many guys might think that badminton isn't 'hardcore' enough for male athletes."

Although many male students play other sports that require a commitment that prevents them from participating in other activities, some of these athletes would be willing to take up badminton as well. Sophomore Kirk Stewart is currently a cross country and track athlete who also wants to play badminton at school. "I'd actually consider dropping track and field in favor of playing on a badminton club or team," Stewart said.

If a team were to be formed, then the issue of access to resources

could prove to be an issue. Oberembt described how access to gyms wouldn't be an issue due to the two school campuses. "Since we have the equivalent of two high school campuses, we have some opportunities to restructure where teams play and give everyone a gym space. Northfield is vacant in the fall for other sports to use."

The season of the sport could produce additional conflicts. Boys tennis currently plays in the spring, but if badminton were offered, athletes might struggle choosing between the two, which could prevent some guys from trying out for tennis. "The options have to be weighed out carefully," Ofcky said.

Ultimately, it comes down to whether or not students are interested. Madanguit said, "If there's not enough student support, then there's no reason for schools to fund the activity, even if some think it's really enjoyable."