

French successfully balances three varsity sports



French (12) shoots against Amundsen on January 25. Basketball is one of three sports French plays. | **Varsity Views**

He is doing it all while balancing the rigors of junior year

by *Tia Rotolo*

Jack French is one of those rare three sport athletes, and he's doing it all while balancing junior

year. Sports have always come naturally to French. "I've been playing baseball and basketball my whole life," he said. Yet, two sports just weren't enough.

At the beginning of his junior year, French tried football for the first time. From the start, French had a natural love for the sport.

Brian Doll, head football coach, saw this from the start. "He came out with such a love for the sport. Watching him play was a great learning experience as a coach," Doll said. "He grew up quickly on the field."

For French, the time commitment of three sports isn't much of a trade off. "I'm very busy most of the time, but it's

worth it," French said.

Playing three sports has helped him manage his time consistently between athletics, school work and a social life.

French didn't hesitate to ensure the worthiness of playing three sports. "I don't have a lot of time to relax, but I would much rather be doing something than sitting around all day watching Netflix."

Even his coaches understand the difficulty in managing three varsity sports. Doll admires French's dedication in managing them.

"It's extremely difficult [to manage three sports]. I give credit to anyone who's doing it. You have to have a structured approach in working out how you'll manage school, family and friends," Doll said.

However, playing three different sports only stands to benefit French. Basketball coach Scott Fricke believes that the different sports have positive effects on each other.

"They definitely benefit French's athletic ability. Football makes French tougher. Playing basketball helps him become better at football and baseball," Fricke said.

The combination of three sports also helps him to build relationships with different people, especially those on the different teams.

Ben Kleinberg, a junior who plays football with French, commends him for his sportsmanship and attitude on the field. "He has a positive attitude

24/7 and he always brings it to the table. He's a total team player," Kleinberg said.

Fricke added, "He's a great kid to have on the team. He gets along with everyone."

His athletic ability is also noticed by his coaches and teammates.

Arham Sheikh, a senior on French's basketball team, said, "He's the Kobe of the team. He was one of the best players."

Doll agreed and added, "People gravitate towards him because he's so likable and reliable. He's such a trustworthy leader."

Billy Fauntleroy, a junior who used to play basketball with French, simply believes French to be an all around great player.

"He has the heart of a lion. He's a fierce athlete who obviously loves the sport," Fauntleroy said.

Of of his many seasons, French contributes most of his success to his current basketball season. "I am still picking up on the offense in football," French said.

French had difficulty attributing his success to one coach in particular. "I don't think I could choose only one of my coaches as the best. They have all had a different, but equal, impact on me," French said.

With his busy schedule, French remains positive towards the future. "Hopefully, I will continue to play sports in college," French said. "Right now, I'm not sure what sport I want to play."

Injuries continue to plague athletes

Injuries may end an athlete's season before it's even begun.

by *Carina Brendl*

In order to play sports, some kids pay a price with a significant injury.

These injuries happen across all interscholastic sports, mostly due to overuse. Specifically, the sports with the most injured athletes are those with the most participants.

"Overall, there really aren't that many kids, percentage-wise, who get injured. It's just that some sports have such large populations, it feels like they have a lot of injuries," said the Head Athletic Trainer, Dale Grooms.

Grooms said that cross country and track, the latter having more than 200 athletes this year, usually produce the highest number of injured athletes.

He added that most sports-related injuries at New Trier stem from overuse and poor mechanics, meaning poor form or technique.

Senior long-distance track runner Juliet Gunther knows what it's like to have injuries from overuse. She has had peroneal tendonitis, an inflammation in the tendons of the foot, on and off throughout her high school career.

Gunther explained that this overuse injury stems from running on uneven surfaces during cross country as well as track practices, where she runs on snow and ice.

On top of overuse, she explained that her injury might also come from the sudden increase of training at the start of the track season.

"Even if you keep up with training in between cross country and track, it's not going to be nearly the amount of mileage, pounding, intensity or speed that we do once the season starts. That's on purpose because you need the rest time," Gunther said.

But this sudden training increase, she added, makes athletes more prone to injury and has left several girls on her team injured at the start of seasons.

To get better, Gunther has to take a couple of weeks off of running. She stretched, did strengthening exercises and improved her form.

"The trainers have done a good job teaching me new form techniques so by implementing those in everyday runs, I'm able to avoid injury," she said.

Gunther's track coach, sports medicine teacher John Burnside, agreed that most injuries on his team stem from overuse.

More specifically, he sees the occasional stress fracture and a lot of injuries in the soft tissue, such as shin splints, sprains and tendonitis.

Finding the sweet spot between pushing the body enough but not too much is a hard and risky task, Burnside explained.

"You really need to overload the body to improve. So you're in that grey area where you overload, but you don't overload too much. The more you overload, the greater the potential benefits, but also the greater the potential setbacks," he said.

Burnside emphasized that each athlete's body reacts differently to this overload. "I have seen kids who I feel will get injured and who don't. I've seen other kids who seem to do everything just right, and they get

injured," he said.

According to Grooms, the majority of injuries can be rehabbed at school with the trainer's help.

He explained that surgery is usually only necessary for breaks or big sprains, which is fairly uncommon for New Trier athletes.

Senior volleyball player Brooke Carlson, however, did have to get surgery for a sports-related injury. She nearly tore the labrum in her shoulder because of overuse.

Prior to her surgery in July, Carlson had to do three months of physical therapy. She had to do another three months after surgery. Now she can play again, but still feels pain in her shoulder.

Of course not all injuries stem from overuse. Contact sports, for example, have the reputation of being a high risk for serious injuries. But Grooms explained that contact sports don't actually create significantly more injuries than other sports.

The school's wrestling team, for instance, doesn't have that many injured athletes. Grooms explained that the coaches do a great job of following and enforcing the rules to keep everyone healthy.

Nevertheless there are some injured wrestlers. Senior Jack Alcantara got cauliflower ear, which happens when the ear is hit and causes the cartilage inside to separate from its connective tissue. The ear then fills up with fluid and needs to be drained.

Alcantara wasn't wearing his headgear when he was injured, which put him at a higher risk. But contrary to Grooms he also said that, "When you're wrestling, it's a contact sport so you're in a lot of grapples with people and your ear just gets hit."

Winter sports wrap-up



Girls basketball huddles up before a game on Jan. 29 | **Varsity Views**

Girls Varsity Basketball

Girls basketball finished a strong season with a record of 27-5. Their loss against Glenbrook South on Feb. 23 ended their post-season run. Notable players include Harvard recruit and McDonald's All-American athlete Jeannie Boehm and Holy Cross commit Kathryn Pedi.



NT Boys S&D placed first in their IHSA sectional on Feb. 20 | **Kinsella**

Boys Varsity Swim & Dive

The New Trier Boys Varsity Swim & Dive team placed fifth overall at the state competition on Feb. 27 at Evanston Township High School. Senior Charlie Gentzkow won the 100 and 200 free in the athletes with disabilities competition.