

NCAA madness thrives in March

Underdogs step into spotlight as the tournament brings out the best in teams

by David Heiman

On Mar. 11, the 2018 NCAA mens march madness brackets were released.

The #1 seeds this year are Villanova, Virginia, Kansas, and Xavier.

This year follows up a wild year of college basketball; where the top 25 constantly shifted from week to week and there hasn't been a clear top group of teams this season.

‘It’s fun to cheer on the teams that you pick. It enhances the experience and gets you involved during every game.’

“It makes college basketball that much more exciting because you never know who is going to win the tournament,” said senior Lucas Gottshall.

Gottshall runs a bracket that has reached up to 70 people participating.

“It’s fun to cheer on the teams that you pick. It enhances the experience and gets you involved during every game,” Gottshall said.

March Madness isn't just for the people who focus on college basketball. Anyone who has a device can fill out a bracket and do well.

With the plethora of upsets in

college basketball, no one can truly be an expert when it comes to filling out a bracket.

“It doesn't matter if you know a lot about college basketball because anything can happen in the tournament. It's about having fun with your friends and watching college basketball for two days straight,” said Senior Josh Alter.

March Madness is one of those events, like the Olympics or the Super Bowl, that gets fans around the country unilaterally excited for the sport.

Whether it's the first game in the morning on the first day or the final shot in the championship game, the madness is for sure to get you hooked for every game.

The games take place in cities around the country, ranging from big metropolitan areas like Los Angeles, Dallas, and Boston to smaller cities like Wichita, Boise, and Omaha.

The tournament ends in San Antonio, Texas, where the Final Four and national championship will take place. The game will take place in the Alamodome, home of the University of Texas at San Antonio Road Runners.

While it seems obvious that the teams in the #1 and #2 seeds should be the ones going far in the tournament, in reality we have seen teams as low as #11 seeds making the final four and #8 seeds making the national championships.

The 2011 and the 2014 UConn teams were a #7 and #8 seed but were carried to national championships by senior point guards, Kemba Walker and Shabazz Napier respectively.

The unpredictability of March is clear in the opening rounds, where

lower rounds seeds usually pull off upsets. Seeds as low as #15 have won their opening games against #2 seeds; one #15 seed has even gone as far as the sweet sixteen.

That team, Florida Gulf Coast, made national highlight tapes, in 2013, when they beat Georgetown and San Diego State to become the first #15 seed to make the sweet sixteen while showcasing rim rattling dunks along the way.

While we have seen plenty of #15 seed upsets, we have never seen a #16 seed upset in the tournament.

Ultimately, their usually isn't a large discrepancy between #1 and #2 ,the real difference lies between the #15 and #16 seeds.

Every year their are some surprise teams that get into the tournament, and some that get snubbed.

This year, teams like Oklahoma, Syracuse, and Arizona State were considered surprises that made the tournament, but teams like Saint Marys, USC, and Middle Tennessee didn't get a tournament bid because they didn't win their conference tournaments.

The date of the National Championship this year is April 2nd and will be the end of a long road for the two teams that have somehow navigated the wild field.

When one shining moment plays at the end of the tournament, I'm sure that we will all look back and see what an exciting tournament this year was.

Q&A with an athlete: rower Peter Chatain

Chatain reflects on his successful rowing career and his plans for the future

by Lexi Shoup

Q: How long have you been rowing? How did you get into rowing?

A: I've been rowing for 187 weeks plus or minus epsilon. Freshman year my dad suggested that I try out for the NT rowing team so I did.

Q: How long have you been rowing for NT? What's it like being on the team?

A: Everyone on the rowing team is really supportive and fun to be around.

Q: Are you planning on rowing after high school?

A: Hopefully this summer I'll make the Under 23 National team. This past summer I was on the U19 Team that competed in Lithuania. I'm going to row in college.

Q: What do you like about rowing?

A: I take pleasure in rowing for many nuanced reasons, although, to summarize, it's psychologically rewarding to see your hard work lead to success. Also, I like boolin' with the boys.

Q: Were you/are you involved in any sports other than rowing?

A: I used to play hockey freshmen year but having rowing practice from 4 to 7 and hockey from 9 to 11 wasn't healthy so I had to choose.



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Student athletes putting pressure aside for the love of the game

Athletes not letting pressure stop them from succeeding in sports

by Danielle Kurensky

Many athletes feel playing a sport adds pressure to their lives.

However, they continue to play for the community, for the love of the game, for the friendships they form with their teammates, and for the rewarding sense of all their hard work paying off.

While playing a sport, athletes feel pressure not only to succeed in that sport but also to continue to do well in school.

“I think playing a sport adds more pressure because you're expected to do well academically and athletically, and there's very little understanding from coaches on the amount of homework that New Trier classes usually have,” said junior Lexy Hochschild, who used to play volleyball and now runs track.

While student athletes often feel overwhelmed by their schedule during season, Carrie Sowa, a freshman badminton and junior varsity volleyball coach, hopes the sport can be a release for students.

“It should be an outlet to have fun and get great exercise and develop friendships and pursue something they are really passionate about. I hope it is more of at outlet than a stressor,” said Sowa.

While Sowa hopes athletes enjoy playing their sport, she also



Coaches trying to make sports a release to the stress of school, not an extra burden to carry along with it | NT

thinks students being very high achieving attributes to stress felt by athletes.

“I think students try to excel at everything they do, so there is always that inherent bit of competitive spirit that I think all of our athletes feel,” said Sowa.

Senior Sophia Girgenti, a swimmer, agrees that New Trier's reputation and mindset adds to the pressure.

“It takes a lot of time and is really competitive and New Trier is really focused on winning,” said Girgenti.

Additionally many students feel the size of the school attributes to the competitive climate surrounding

sports.

“The bad part about New Trier is that it is so big not everyone will have the chance to do what they like,” said sophomore tennis player Arman Bozkurt.

Sowa agrees that the large student body causes sports to be more competitive.

“It is a little more pronounced here because we are just such a big school and as kids get closer to their upperclassman years it unfortunately narrows down and I think that is where the challenge lies,” Sowa said.

This level of competition causes many athletes to begin playing their sport at a very young age.

“Almost every kid on a varsity

sport started their particular sport during middle school, if not earlier,” said Hochschild.

As sports become more intense, the amount of time spent practicing increases as well.

Most athletes feel the amount of time spent practicing is the most difficult thing about playing a sport.

The majority of athletes spend more than ten hours a week practicing while they are in season.

Girgenti, who spends around 23 hours a week swimming, said, “The hardest thing is definitely the time commitment.”

This time commitment is the factor that most often causes athletes to consider quitting their sport.

“There have been times when I've felt my life would be easier if I didn't play a sport, or have been frustrated with the lack of free time I have,” said Hochschild.

Some athletes though feel like Bozkurt, who believes that while playing tennis takes a lot of time, it actually reduces the amount of academic pressure he feels.

“Actually if anything it took away from [the pressure] a bit and gave me something else to focus on,” said Bozkurt.

‘There’s very little understanding from the coaches on the amount of homework that New Trier classes usually have.’

While playing a sport is a large time commitment, many athletes continue because of the community they build with their teammates.

Sophomore Kevin Hilleslent, who runs track and field, said, “My favorite thing is the friendships you build and my least favorite thing is the amount of time it takes.”

Along with these friendships many athletes enjoy the feeling of a win and getting to see their hard work pay off.

While describing his favorite aspect of playing tennis Bozkurt said, “My favorite thing is the feeling you get when you win because it is an individual sport and it all comes down to you.”