

Boys basketball squeaks past Loyola with OT win

Basketball hopes to gain momentum after crucial win

by Charlie Burton

In front of a full house, the boys basketball team ground out an overtime win, beating Loyola Academy 56-54.

Loyola Academy's senior forward and Maryville University commit Ramar Evans missed a contested three in the last few seconds in order to seal the win for New Trier.

Although Evans missed his final shot, the Rambler still had an unbelievable game, scoring 20 points including a step-back three-pointer to cut the Trevians lead to 56-54.

Guard Kevin Cunningham also had a big night for Loyola scoring 14 points and snagging five rebounds.

"Our biggest plan for Loyola was to limit their shooters," said senior captain Joe Akason, "We needed to stop Evans from getting good looks and we knew if we played good defense our offense would suit follow."

The Trevians put the game in the win column with clutch free throws in overtime.

Sophomore Spencer Boehm and Junior Andrew Kirkpatrick both tallied two points from the line in the extra session, but the biggest tosses belong to Senior Teddy McGregor who made two free throws in the last minute to put New Trier ahead 56-51.

Kirkpatrick lead the scoring for New Trier with eleven points and four assists.

"My role on the team is to get guys open shots," said Kirkpatrick, "playing in front of this big a crowd, some teams can get selfish, but I think the crowd gave us a boost of energy."

New Trier also got a spark of energy off the bench from 6-foot-5 senior James Connors who knocked down two three pointers late in the



Sophomore Ciaran Brayboy shoots unguarded lay-up | Varsity Views

second quarter.

Connors also had a huge three pointer with 3:31 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter to put the Trevians up 47-46.

"Shooting the ball is definitely one of my strengths," said Connors, "Loyola is always a huge game for us and they have beaten us the past few years so it was awesome to beat them especially on their home court."

This win was particularly sweet for this years returners because Loyola knocked the Trevians out of the playoffs last year and the loss was in the back of the players minds during the game.

"This game was a must win for us," said Akason, "We needed to win for our own team's confidence and to beat one of our fiercest rivals."

Connors agreed with Akason. "This was one of the most important games of the year. We wanted to come out with a lot of energy and match their physicality, but it was awesome to finally get the win against these guys."

Sophomores Ciaran Brayboy and Spencer Boehm had a big game for the Trevians, scoring a combined

18 points, with 10 rebounds and two assists.

The two 6 footers have been a steady influence for the Trevians all year long.

Senior guard Aaron Peltz also helped the Trevians with his hot hand. Peltz nailed an extremely deep three-pointer late in the second quarter to cut New Trier's deficit. The senior ended the night with 7 points and 4 rebounds.

New Trier has had an average start to the season, but they are hoping that this upset win will give them momentum as they start conference play.

"We know we have a good team when we play the way we are capable of playing," said Akason, "We hope to make a deep run in the playoffs this year and improve on our season from last year."

New Trier hopes to improve their record as they play Glenbrook South at home on Friday, December 2.

The Trevians will then play Evanston on December 13 in one of the biggest rivalry games in Illinois High School Basketball.

Fencing starts season on point in tournament

Eight NT fencers place in top eight at Catholic Memorial Invitational

by Emily Wong

Saturday, Nov. 19, the varsity and JV fencing teams competed in the annual Catholic Memorial Invitational, with eight individuals placing in the top eight of their divisions.

The tournament, like all fencing competitions, was divided into pools by gender and three weapons: epee, sabre, and foil.

This invitational was the team's third meet of the season but was the first for several fencers.

"This is the first time we take our JV team to a tournament so they can get some experience in a real competition," said senior captain Isabel Greiner.

"There is a wide range of experience at this tournament, from people who have never fenced in a real competition before, to people who have fenced on varsity for four years," she said.

While rookies got their first taste of competition, varsity fencers used this invitational as an opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses at the start of the season.

"The most important goal going into this tournament is assessing where each individual fencer is," said Greiner. "This is the tournament where each person can look for ways that they can improve themselves."

Despite it being early in the season, head coach Colby Vargas said that all of the team's fencers still performed very well.

"Our results were really good, especially considering we are only three weeks into practice," he said.

The team's most significant victories came from senior epee fencer Katie Shia and senior sabre fencer Matt Kim. Both Shia and Kim took 2nd place in their divisions. Each division was made up of at least

70 competitors.

The team was also proud of the efforts of their beginners. "A lot of rookie fencers did really well in the tournament," said Shia. Freshman Aryoman Patel impressed by coming in 6th in men's foil, a pool of almost 90 fencers.

While they were obviously well-equipped for their matches, the team tried to mentally prepare going into the competition. "We focused on staying calm under pressure, keeping our eyes and minds open and learning from the competition," said Vargas.

Shia agreed, stressing the importance of strategy. "All of us already have the basic skills down, like parrying. It's more tactical skills," she said.

In addition to mental presence, the team knows that they have a lot of work to do to improve over the rest of the season. "We have good technique and form, and our conditioning is getting there, but we need to train against elite fencers who use more complex tactics," said Vargas.

Shia highlighted the necessity of knowing the tendencies of specific teams prior to starting a match.

"Our main competitors are mostly Stevenson fencers, and they have very physically strong arms," she said. "We're working on avoiding combat fighting, but more just learning how to get out of their attacks."

Greiner didn't identify a specific goal for the team but instead explained the distinctions between individual fencers. "It's hard to talk about team focus in future competitions because each person has individual strengths and weaknesses," she said.

"However, we want to work on placing as many people as possible in the top eight and working hard to improve our teammates. So, when we reach Conference and State, we will be at our individual best ability and our team will place well overall," she said.

Greiner and the rest of the team will next be competing in their first day of Conference on Saturday, Dec. 3 at New Trier's Winnetka campus.

NT athletes feel pressure to prioritize practice over health

Demanding athletic schedules get the best of varsity players

by Sophia Holt

New Trier Athletics has a strong competitive reputation with over 120 state championships under its belt.

However, this reputation has student athletes feeling pressure to give 110%, often prioritizing athletics over homework, sleep, and health.

Some New Trier sports, such as track and field, have very strict participation policies that make athletes feel pressure to come to school when sick.

Senior and varsity track and field sprinter Kate Holly said, "Due to the attendance contract, we can only miss 10 practices in the whole season (Feb-May), so you have to choose carefully which ones you miss." This contract makes track and field runners strategize how many days they can allow themselves to be sick.

The must take into consideration other reasons they might have to miss practice, such as doctor's appointments or family responsibilities. This creates a, "fight through the pain mentality," Holly said.

Track and field athletes are not the only New Trier athletes who feel pressure to come to school when sick. Jenn Kirby, a junior on the varsity field hockey team, explained, "We had a big game coming up so I went to school for two days with a 102 degree fever."

According to New Trier Nurse Colleen Sheridan, there are no specific guidelines for students considering staying at home sick, but the health staff, "strongly encourage any student with a temperature of 101 degrees or over to stay home."

However, some students are coming to school anyway. Junior swimmer Grace Rogers agreed, "I have jeopardized my health for swimming. I've been sick a couple times but I wasn't able to miss practice. I made myself more sick by going to practice instead of getting

better."

Sheridan understands this conflict student athletes have and suggested that, "If you're really sick, I represent health, I think you should stay home and not participate in your game."

"But, if you're marginally sick, and can be very good about taking care of themselves so that they're not infecting someone else, I can understand where students can participate. It makes sense."

Not only do students stay at school sick to attend games and practices, but they often feel pressure from coaches to come to school even if they are ill.

Senior and varsity softball player Gillian Gossard explained, "If it's a big game and you usually play then the coaches tell us that we need to be at practice. In softball, only nine players can play in the field at once and normally they are the same nine every game. So, if you are one of the nine and you miss practice, you throw everyone off and it makes our coaches stressed."

Head Varsity football coach

Brian Doll explained that deciding if a player can play or not is tough, "Some players lose starting spots, and it is common for a player out to get behind. It's fair to the team that the players who are prepared have the opportunity to play."

Girls varsity badminton coach and Assistant Athletic Director Deborah Ofcky added that it is important to consider the entire team when making these decisions.

"Say you are sick and you play doubles, now I have to figure out what I'm going to do with [the sick student's] partner. We want to reward the students who were at practice with playing time. If you're home sick, obviously we don't know if you'll be better in time. Then I have to decide if it's fair for the kid who is there to not play."

Athletes also feel pressure from New Trier's reputation to come to practice injured or sick. Junior and varsity soccer player Nicole Kaspi said, "NTGS has won three state championships in a row. It's not an easy thing to do and it requires an intense amount of time and work to

get there. It's a lot of pressure having that reputation. I feel I'd be letting my team down if I missed practice."

Senior and varsity gymnast Ally Smith agreed, "Gymnastics isn't one of New Trier's most decorated sports but we're getting a lot of new talent this year from the freshman and sophomore classes. With the new talent, there's a lot of pressure to do better in competition than we have done before."

Smith continued, "New Trier tries to emphasize academics first and then athletics, but it is very hard to think of it that way with our demanding schedule and pressure to perform at our best ability athletically."

Many coaches agree that they want athletes who are dedicated to the team. Ofcky explained, "In the end, I want kids on my team to prioritize being at practice and they're the kids that get to play. It's tough, and sometimes the student might not think it's fair but we're treating everyone the same."