

Dance team sets record at Nationals

Dance Team placed 10th in national competition in early February

by Claudia Levens

At this year's National Dance Team Championship, New Trier's Dance Team placed 10th in the nation in the "Large Varsity Hip-Hop" division--the highest they've ever placed.

The national competition was held in Orlando, FL, at the Walt Disney World Resort. From Feb. 3-5, over 100 schools from around the country dance in multiple categories including poms, and hip-hop.

Because New Trier attends this competition each year, many of the girls on the team have competed multiple times already. However, Senior Captain Julia Bosco said that this year, there was a pervasive sense of newfound determination among the girls on the team.

She, along with the other two captains, Caroline Campolo and Lily Warner, were determined to foster a cohesive team.

"It definitely felt like this year was a lot more competitive because of how hard we worked and how much we wanted to improve. We all wanted to do better than we did last year and we did. We're really proud of that," Warner said.

Though learning the competition routine started as early as October, conditioning began the previous summer, with team members learning more material, practicing techniques and improving endurance.

The National Competition also requires that ten or more members attend an overnight camp in order to qualify.

When the school year season began, the team competed against surrounding high school teams. Once they received a high enough score,



New Trier Dance Team members practice their routine in the school gym | Varsity Views

they received a bid which qualified them to compete at Nationals in Orlando.

There are multiple numbers that the team learned throughout the season, but the hip-hop dance they performed was choreographed by coach Bryce Curry.

"Although some of the tricks were difficult, we had a lot of fun working together and challenging ourselves to try new things," Bosco said. These new tricks also helped them place higher in the competition than they ever had before.

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Coach Heather Wiggins noted that at the competition, there were several schools that have returned each year, and there are sometimes new teams that they haven't seen before.

Wiggins explained that she and Curry "tried to mentally prepare the girls for performing by encouraging them to not watch the other teams or talk about the other teams leading up to the competition. We feel this helps

them remained focused on their goals as a team, and not distracted by what others are doing."

But Nationals wasn't strictly about competing. In addition to the determination and focus required to perform well, the trip included a lot of bonding. Sophomore member Allie Sharifi said, "We had an entire night dedicated to bonding but really the whole thing was such a great experience, and we all got even closer than we already were."

Wiggins said, "We are together for four days straight. We do team dinners each night, and our seniors lead bonding after dinner, so there's a lot of bonding. It's a great tradition that keeps our team really strong."

After Nationals, the team had only a few more basketball games they danced at.

"I can't believe it's really the end of the road for us seniors, but I'm so proud of the team as a whole and I'm really going to miss it," Bosco said.

"I think our goal was to make it to finals, but we were really happy with how we placed," Bosco said.

"Before we went on the stage to perform, we had one last time to practice, and everyone just zoned in, and you could feel it. The whole team was in sync and everyone wanted to nail the routine."

Girls hockey finishes season after losing game to Latin

Despite efforts, girls hockey closes out season with a 7-2 loss

by Sophia Holt

On Sunday, Feb. 26, New Trier Girls Varsity Hockey played Loyola in their second to last game of the season, losing 7-2.

The game started strong with a goal from sophomore defender Maddie Babnick in the first period, and the offense continued to be strong throughout the game but was outmatched by Loyola.

Sophomore Hayden Snow's strong defense as goalie was also a key aspect to New Trier's defensive effort.

Assistant Varsity Coach Brit Schneiders said, "Snow really played a great game. Loyola definitely got more shots on net and Hayden had some spectacular saves."

Specifically, in the first period, some of Loyola's top forwards, including Tess Dettling and Valerie Caldwell, rushed the net and Hayden "took it like a pro and kept us in the game," Schneiders said.

Junior forward Clare Mulhern also stood out for scoring the second goal of the game in the third period.

It was a great second effort for New Trier to come back against Loyola, even though they weren't able to come back in the end.

"Her shooting in practice in recent weeks has really impressed me, and recently started translating in games," Schneiders said. "She finally got the goal she had been waiting for."

Overall, the game was full of fast-paced play and strong efforts on both sides. Head Coach Nelson Fornberg said, "It was a good, fast paced game. We started off with a lot of energy, and we did a good job the first two periods at limiting their opportunities."

Schneiders added, "Loyola has been a great competitor this year. The puck was in both ends relatively evenly, despite what the score might imply, but they definitely have some fierce competitors on that team."

Previously in the season, New Trier tied Loyola in the Quad header 1-1 in front of a packed crowd with a high-energy back and forth finish.

While the games are exciting for the players, the rivalry makes playing Loyola more difficult.

Senior defender Liza Boscow said, "Loyola is tough competition because of the rivalry between our schools. A lot of the game is in our heads. Having confidence we can win or at least compete with them is a huge part of winning any game."

Senior defender Tay Munson, who will be playing hockey at Colby College next year, agreed, "Loyola is always tough competition. They're our rivals and no matter what the nerves are high for all players on the ice."

According to Schneiders, the team struggled throughout the season to play all three periods of a game to the best of their ability. This was something the team worked on throughout the season, and by the end, "the team really started coming together in the last two months."

Fornberg agreed, "Overall it was a great season against some tough competition. We have a young team who continued to get better, especially in the second half."

"Our seniors did a great job for us all year and really helped bring everyone together and mentor the new players. It will be tough to lose Isabelle Sennett, Tay Munson, Meghan Talbot, Tommy Solberg, and Liza Boscow, but our future for the next couple years looks bright."

While the team had a winning record of 11 wins, 9 losses, and 2 ties over their season, the end of their season with a loss to Latin three hours after playing Loyola was an emotional loss. The team did not go as far into the playoffs as they were expecting.

"We definitely wanted to get past the quarter finals and unfortunately we didn't," Boscow said. "We all wanted to get to the next game, but at the end of the season I felt like our team was definitely at its height of closeness. I just love everyone on the team."

PESO basketball game unites school

Special education basketball match a slam dunk for players and crowd

by Mimi Cassato

On Friday, Mar. 3, during periods five and six, eight senior PESO players had their annual basketball game against Lake Forest.

The PESO (Physical Education Special Opportunities) gym class works with students with special needs. The basketball game came to New Trier 16 years ago, before the current coordinator, Kay Pothast, arrived to NT, but Pothast has kept the tradition alive.

Sophomore Sophie Weix, who participated as a helper in the game said, "A lot of work and preparation goes into making this game possible. Pothast has helped a lot with organization and setting up the whole thing."

Pothast proudly speaks about the recent advancements the game has seen. Since High Five Choir was initiated, the group sings the national anthem at the beginning of the game. This year, members of the Green Team went to support the players along with K.W. students and staff.

Almost every year, the team plays Lake Forest twice, once at home and once away. Pothast explains the similarities between Lake Forest's program for students with special needs and New Trier's ELS program, making the logistics of the game easier to coordinate.

While Pothast has been eagerly organizing the game for many months, the players have been practicing their basketball skills all winter with Special Olympics and in the weeks before in PESO.

"They're excited, everyday we come into class and talk about it," Pothast said before Friday's big game. Along with the players, fans enthusiastically showed their excitement and support for the game by filling the bleachers. Green Team captain, senior Kevin Donahue, said, "The game was really great, we support all of our teams equally and love being able to show that."

The support the game brought for the players was undeniable. Junior Sophia McGowan spends three-to-four periods each day with special needs kids.

"These kids easily reflect off other's energy, and a room filled with cheering peers definitely gives them more confidence and encourages them to play to the best of their ability," McGowan said.

Junior Nick Falter agreed with

McGowan, "I think the support the school gives to the students is awesome, and I think it should be done more often."

Before joining ELS, Falter described himself as "not as comfortable" working with people with disabilities, but after spending three periods every week bonding with the students, his discomfort went away, and he saw the similarities we all share.

Weix, too, said that she values the things she has learned from getting involved in PESO and Special Olympics. "I have created the strongest friendships with some of these students," Weix said.

Like the peer helpers, Pothast's experience in high school with a special needs student completely changed her life.

"There was a student who needed help, and there was no one there to help her so I decided to and it clicked, that was my 'ah-ha' moment," Pothast said.

Pothast also said that the support the school has given the PESO players, "makes things right, how things should be."

Another year of the annual PESO basketball game has come to pass, once again, uniting the school community. The best part of it all was as Mrs. Pothast says, "seeing kids smile."

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