

Upcoming
Varsity Games

Saturday,
April 15

Girls Soccer Varsity
Invite

Badminton
Featherfest

Boys Tennis
@ Prospect High
School

Baseball @ Prospect
High School

Sotfball vs. Sanburg

Monday, April
17

Baseball vs. Maine
East

Girls Water Polo vs.
Fenwick

Girls Lacrosse vs.
Glenbrook North

Tuesday, April
18

Boys Lacrosse vs.
Deerfield

Boys Water Polo vs.
Maine South

Varsity baseball ready for redemption

Varsity and JV return from team bonding and tournament in Nashville to kick off season

by Jack Soble

Baseball season is underway, both in the major leagues and here at New Trier, and the Varsity and JV baseball teams kicked off their year with a trip to Memphis, Tennessee.

They had a mostly successful trip, going 2-1 in Varsity and 0-1 in JV, and off the field they had time to bond and work towards establishing the cohesiveness that is vital to every baseball team.

Head Coach Mike Napoleon, in his 14th season as the varsity leader, was not shy in praising "The Land of Elvis's" hospitality. "The fields we were at were great and Rhodes College let us practice on their field," he said.

The players, like Senior Outfielder Matt Kann, enjoyed a productive trip as well. "Memphis was good. We had a few games, but the point down there is to come together as a team and make sure we're all pulling in the right direction and I think we did a good job doing that."

According to Napoleon, in addition to going bowling, paintballing, and disc golfing, they spent a rained out day at the world's largest Bass Pro Shop. But now that they're back in town, it's right back to

business, working towards achieving their goal: a state championship, their first since 2009.

"We all believe that's an achievable goal," said Senior Catcher Dylan Horvitz. "Our whole team had busy offseasons working hard and getting stronger and better."

New Trier is looking for redemption this season, after making it all the way to the super sectionals but falling to St. Charles North, by a score of 4-3, in walk-off fashion. One game short of the state tournament. For that reason, Senior pitcher Jack French says that the team has a chip on its shoulder.

"So far we have worked hard and have gotten better every day, but we still have a lot to prove to the rest of the state and to ourselves. We haven't proven anything yet."

Horvitz agreed, saying their play thus far has been "inconsistent."

Napoleon, however, feels confident in his roster. "We have six position players back from last year's super-sectional team, along with 3 pitchers with experience. Our expectations are high with a lot of 2nd and 3rd year players on the team."

Joining that group is 6'4" first baseman, Junior Anthony Calarco, who was on Varsity last year as a sophomore but dealt with injuries for much of the season.

"I've gotten to know the team pretty well, we are a very tightly knit group," he said.

Along with Calarco, the Trevians' lineup remains potent. Kann hit .352 with 32 RBIs. Horvitz was and still is the team's power bat,



Varsity baseball team poses in Nashville after spring tournament | Napoleon

setting the bar for home runs with six. Senior Outfielder Eric Nicholas is their speedster, with 21 steals.

The pitching is strong as well, although it's missing its ace from last year, left hander Ben Brecht, who graduated. French, Senior Closer Jack Falk, Senior Starter Peter Schuldt lead the staff this year. Falk was dominant last season, going 8 for 8 in save opportunities and posting a nearly impeccable 0.68.

"I've coached a lot of these guys for the last four seasons, summers included. I know them very well. I feel they are very comfortable with me," said Napoleon. He felt that on the Memphis trip they had some "nice family bonding." Horvitz agreed. "It was a great opportunity to create

some team chemistry."

In addition to team bonding, the Trevs have been working to get better, "whether it be 5:45 AM practices or lifting," said French. The team believes they're on the right path, but as Kann put it, "We've had some big wins but a couple losses too, We've got a lot of work left to do but everyone on this team believes we have what it takes."

All indications are that they do, and they have an itch for redemption that can push a team over the top.

Kann said it best: "After our loss in the super sectional last year, everyone's doing everything it takes to make sure that it doesn't happen again."

Badminton prepares for annual Birdie Bash

NT hosts fundraiser to support Corbin's Legacy

by Rebecca Lee

The badminton teams will show a fun time for a good cause at the Fifteenth Annual Birdie Bash.

On Apr. 17, from 5 to 6:30 PM, the players of the freshman, JV, and varsity badminton teams will be stationed in the gyms.

Any student or faculty member will have the opportunity to challenge any player to a 15-minute match for only five dollars. Those who do not wish to play can simply make donations and cheer on others.

"Birdie Bash is really fun because it's a fundraiser where our team members' families and friends come to challenge us, so they get a chance to experience competitive badminton while also helping us support a [good cause]," explained senior Julia Matyjas, co-captain of the varsity team.

When the badminton teams first began the tradition of the Birdie Bash fifteen years ago, they chose to donate to research on multiple sclerosis, a cause that they cared for personally.

"An assistant badminton coach had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, so that was the cause that we took on. A couple of years ago, she stopped coaching because of the disease, and she thanked us for all of our years of service," explained Assistant Athletic Director and Badminton Head Coach Deborah Ofcky.

Both last year and this year, the badminton teams chose to contribute all proceeds to Corbin's Legacy.



Captain Julia Matyjas (left) and teammates will volley to raise funds at annual Birdie Bash on the | O'Connor

Although Corbin's Legacy does different work, the cause remains deeply personal for Ofcky.

"A few years ago, I taught a young lady who played golf at Glenbrook North, and my husband was her golf coach. Her mother, who I have been very good friends with for twenty five years, started Corbin's Legacy," said Ofcky.

As its name suggests, this organization, which is centered in Phoenix, Chicago, and Harlem, seeks to continue the legacy of Corbin Leafman.

As a school teacher she "made it her mission to never let a child go hungry. She was known for always walking through the lunch line holding up a \$20 bill to make sure that the cafeteria lady knew that none of her students were to go without a hot meal," according to their webpage.

Corbin's Legacy works to address the needs of children whose families cannot afford supplies, meals, and even medical attention.

Joan Leafman, director of Corbin's Legacy, explained, "We have assisted children nationally with every kind of help you can imagine. Food, medical exams, eye glasses, medications."

Members of the badminton teams feel passionately about using their positions to support such a remarkable cause. Matyjas said, "We live in an area that's generally very well off and I think it's important to give back to others and the community through organizations like Corbin's Legacy."

Although Corbin's Legacy works with a number of other institutions and groups, "I personally appreciate the hope, optimism, and commitment to making change for good that [these] high school students have," said Leafman.

Birdie Bash brings together students, faculty members, and family members both within and outside of the New Trier community to perform service work.

"Last year, I played Principal Denise Dubravec," recounted varsity co-captain Caroline Christopher.

Last year, New Trier badminton also challenged other Central Suburban League teams, all of whom also donated.

Other New Trier athletes can also contribute. "the JV boys tennis team came to challenge our varsity team at Birdie Bash last year. It was fun to play each other and show them what badminton is really like," said Matyjas.

This night of games is fun and even competitive. "It's a chance for us players to show that badminton is a legitimate sports. It's fun to challenge those boys in our KW classes who claim they can beat us and then prove them wrong," said junior Maya Malecki, who plays on the varsity team.

This year, Birdie Bash will continue to raise funds for a worthy cause. "It's amazing. It's kids helping kids," said Ofcky.