

Upcoming
Varsity Games

Friday Feb. 17

Girls Bowling
IHSA State
@ Cherry Bowl
Lanes

Wrestling
IHSA State

@ Champaign

Gymnastics IHSA
State

@ Palatine High
School

Boys Track Invite
@ Evanston

Boys Basketball vs.
Niles West

Saturday, Feb.
18

Girls Bowling
IHSA State
@ Cherry Bowl
Lanes

Gymnastics IHSA
State @ Palatine

Boys Basketball vs.
St. Viator

Bleach and Shave tradition promotes unity

Bleached hair, bald heads and charity races, all traditions that unify the team

by Katie Kim

Each year the swim team completes rituals to strengthen their unity and team spirit. These traditions show the devotion swimmers have for their team.

“One of my favorite traditions is when the swim team gets to bleach and shave their hair,” said junior swimmer Tommy Hackley.

“I mostly enjoy the bleaching part because most people on the team do it together and so it’s a great team bonding experience.”

Walking in the halls, you may notice a few bald heads mixed in with the crowd of students. When a male student is seen with bright yellow hair or no hair at all, it’s known that he’s a swimmer.

There’s also a reason for the long-lasting tradition. Sophomore swimmer Nick Torre said that the “whole bleach and shave topic is you grow your hair out all season, so that it gets long and is resisting you in the water.”

“So you start training with long hair and racing with long hair. Then, when you finally go bald and shave, you will be flying through the water since there is not as much resistance as you would have with a full head of hair,” he said.

In spite of that, there are multiple traditions that students



Swimmers from several schools lined up for their races during last year's conference meet at New Trier Natatorium. | Varsity Views

outside of the swim teams are not aware of.

Hackley added that there are “other countless swimming traditions.”

‘I mostly enjoy the bleaching part because most people on the team do it together and so it’s a great team bonding experience.’

“One of them is throwing goggles from the middle of the pool and trying to land them on the starting blocks after every practice,” he said.

Another tradition is competing to see who can decorate the locker room the best.

Boys swim coach Joshua Runkle said, “I think my favorite tradition at NT is when we put TED on all our t-shirts. It’s to honor former swimmer Ted Mullin, who passed away from cancer. His family started a foundation at the University of Chicago that is working on treatments and potential cures for Sarcoma.”

Alongside the boys’ swim team, the girls’ swim teams have traditions of their own.

“Some of the big traditions are when the seniors go to the freshmen girls’ houses in the morning to wake them up. Other ones are when we all get together decorate the locker room for senior night. We also do this thing before our big meets where we

all go and get spray tans before the event occurs,” Junior swimmer Belle Zelazny said.

Zelazny explained, “Although it is also really fun to act upon these traditions, the core reason behind all of them is simply to have some quality bonding time.”

Despite the differences in traditions between the swim teams, the root reason for all of them is to create bonds.

“All these traditions are very enjoyable and allow us to bond more and more as a team. Spending time together allows us to get to know each other and then, a brotherhood is created,” senior swimmer Eric Chiu said.

Girls track hurdles into a great season

Girls track starts the season off with an optimistic note after their first meet

by Sophia Holt

Girls track and field kicked off their season with a strong start at their first meet on Thursday, Feb. 9 against Glenbrook South and Francis Parker.

For many of the 209 girls on the track team, this was their first track meet ever. The first two track meets, times and statistics are not recorded.

The purpose of these meets is to show the new girls the structure of a meet, and to get seasoned returns back into the swing of things.

It was, “a new and exciting experience,” said sophomore Olivia Hart. “The meet was more of a starting point to see where everyone is in their abilities and how they can improve throughout the season. The continuous support from teammates motivated athletes to do their best.”

Junior Megan Patterson agreed, “It was our first meet so it was a little hectic and confusing for a lot of people but it was a great start to the season.”

Senior sprinter Kate Holly, said, “Everyone ran, jumped, or threw really well. It seemed like those who were new to track got the hang of how a meet is run and got some great experience.”

Robert Spagnoli, the head



New Trier Varsity senior runner Emily Roemer will be a top competitor on this year's track team. | Varsity Views

varsity girls coach said, “The meet went great. We had a large number of kids compete in all four areas of our team. Everyone was enthusiastic and competed to the best of their abilities.”

Last year, girl’s track qualified several girls for state in events including the 4x400m relay, 4x800m relay, and the 400m.

“Last year we had an amazing season. We won the CSL South, Sectionals and had a large number of All-State athletes,” said Spagnoli.

This season, Holly explained, “I really hope that as a team we’re focused and determined to reach our goals. We want to qualify for state in all our sprint events. While that

is an ambitious goal, it’s definitely achievable, especially with the group of girls we have now. We have so much talent this year, and I think great things are to come of it.”

Spagnoli agreed, “Our team goals are pretty easy. We want to win the CSL South Conference Meet, the IHSA Sectional Meet, and be a top ten team in the state of Illinois.”

Track also gives opportunities for many inexperienced athletes to break into the world of competitive athletics.

“For someone who is doing track for the first time, my hopes and goals for the season is to meet new people and be a supportive teammate. An athletic goal of mine is to push

myself past what I think are my limits and out of my comfort zone, because if I don’t, then I am only cheating myself,” Hart said.

Goals like qualifying for state are ambitious and can only be accomplished by putting in hard work at practices.

“Our practices are not focused on specific meets this early in the season. Our practices are obviously focused on training for the entire season and getting stronger and faster every day. We train 6 days a week for a total of 18 different events outdoors. To be successful as a track and field team you must have depth and be prepared for athletes doing multiple events,” Spagnoli said.