**MCPS APs beat national average**

By RENEE PARK and SHERRI GENG

MCPS outperformed the nation in Advanced Placement (AP) testing performance and participation, according to a 2005 CollegeBoard report. In MCPS' graduating class of 2004, almost 40 percent of students — twice the state average and three times the national average — achieved passing scores of three or above on at least one AP exam during high school.

In 2004, Blair showed a significant increase in AP participation with more students taking AP exams than ever before. In 2003, 510 Blair students took 1,288 AP tests; in 2004, 582 students took 1,528 exams. Most colleges require a score of at least three for a student to receive credit.

Despite a drop in the average AP score and the percent of passing students, 86.9 percent of Blair students scored threes or above. Blair students surpassed the MCPS average of 75.9 percent and were outperformed only by Poolesville (88.2 percent) and Whitman (90.4 percent).

This year, Blair administration has implemented a new AP Potential program to identify students with the aptitude to do well on AP tests based on a study conducted by the CollegeBoard. The study shows a strong correlation between AP exam and national AP participation in Advanced Placement (AP) testing performance and participation, according to a 2005 CollegeBoard report. In MCPS' graduating class of 2004, almost 40 percent of students — twice the state average and three times the national average — achieved passing scores of three or above on at least one AP exam during high school.

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Sudan: a crime against humanity

UN drops the ball on world crisis

Genocide (noun): the systematic and planned extermination of a race, nation, culture, or class. Merriam-Webster dictionary. Events like the Holocaust and the genocides in Rwanda and Somalia bring to mind horrifying images of violence and death. The International Court of Justice, however, has not been able to stop these atrocities — rape, murder and displacement — that have been perpetrated daily by the Sudanese government and militias. These same atrocities — rape, murder and displacement — have been retaliating against each other. The SPLA has kidnapped and troops to Sudan.

The UN has failed too many times to act in similar internal conflicts in Rwanda and Somalia. In Rwanda, almost one million people perished in a period of 3 months. In Somalia, the All Africa Conference on National Reconciliation, a body that has been deliberating that finds that the Sudanese killers have not been interested to exterminate the thousands who have been slaughtered and that the murderous militias and their victims are not from distinct different ethnic groups. Whether or not genocide (as defined by international law) exists in Darfur, horrible atrocities against humanity have been committed and the country now has one of the lowest life expectancies in the world at 42 years, according to Global Renaissance.

The UN has released its report that has made a war crimes tribunal no longer a possibility, it is instead up to the UN to recognize the horrors in Sudan for what they are — the atrocious war crimes tribunal no longer a possibility, it is instead up to the UN to recognize the horrors in Sudan for what they are — the atrocious

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An unfair penalty for Blair ice hockey

By ARMAN ROSEN

An opinion

Although the Blair Community Ice Hockey Team was down 9-0 late in its Feb. 20 playoff game against Howard High School, defeat was far from the minds of its players. The Blair team was always in the game and was able to come back and win with a lopsided score, 9-2.

The Blair hockey players have their reasons to believe that they weren't rooting for an eventual loss at all. They had some form of insurance, just like every Blair baseball or soccer player. Yet unlike baseball and soccer, hockey competes on private property, not being lessened in liability for MCVs. However, liability is a moot point since a school can deny all potential legal responsibility for their athletes by having them sign waivers or making waivers a requirement for club recognition. Senior hockey player Graham Mathews thinks this is a fair compromise for the ice hockey team. “It’s our choice to play,” he says. Since the team is already holding up their end, before each season, every Blair hockey player signs a waiver with USA Hockey. The organization provides oversight for the league in which Blair participants compete. The waiver releases all affiliation associations and local associations involved with the league from liabilities. USA Hockey makes it clear. The play, and not a “local association” such as MCVs, is responsible for his or her own well-being.

Do the right thing

The folly of MCV’s bellicose over nonexistent liabilities and future hypothetical lawsuits has been enough to convince some schools to reinterpret or simply ignore County policy. Four MCPS schools provide links to their ice hockey team’s web site from their homepages. Both Bethesda Chevy-Chase (B-CC) and Walt Whitman high schools include their ice hockey teams in the school yearbook.

Although B-CC Principal Sean Bulson does not formally recognize his school’s hockey team, he allows them in ways the Blair administration has not. And any recognition is better than outright rejection, especially when the rejected is such a unique part of the Blair Community. For the last several months, the Blair ice hockey team has given a winning product, a team with a devoted following that we should be proud to call our own.

What’s more, they have scored their goals and won their games the fair way and not the easy way. The administration cannot ignore or exclude a team that takes open ice hits and body checks in Blair uniforms, especially when it has asked for nothing more costly or complicated than inclusion in the yearbook and the opportunity to announce game times over InfoFlow. Although the season is now over, it is still the time for the administration to reassess its stance toward the team and for MCPS to reconsider its special committee. There’s ample opportunity for them to rectify this mistake this off-season.

OP/ED

Stupidity is really hard to dodge

By DEAN GREENE

Hamor

Elementary school is a wonderful place, full of life lessons learned from being part of the new world for the first time. While still probing young minds to grow into something different, the idea of grade-school lessons is taught on the blacktop, as red rubber projectiles fly towards kids’ heads at the speed of sound, providing an enjoyable game of dodgeball. Also called “The Sweet Science,” this game involves hurling rubber gym balls at the opposing team’s kids, brutally eliminating them until none remains.

For decades, educators used the “Sweet Science” as a means of not only improving hand-eye coordination and cardiovascular health but also stressing important scientific principles like gravity, velocity and natural selection. Yet, the sport enjoyed by countless kids in countless playgrounds for countless years has recently come under fire across the country. Parents, educators and physical educators “experts” now say that dodgeball is “too violent and damaging to kids’ self-esteem.” It all went downhill in 1992, when Neil F. Williams, a physical education professor at academic powerhouse Eastern Connecticut University, released his “Physical Education Hall of Shame” book. The book features an escape-lease pamphlet. Although B-CC Principal Sean Bulson does not formally recognize his school’s hockey team, he allows them in ways the Blair administration has not. And any recognition is better than outright rejection, especially when the rejected is such a unique part of the Blair Community. For the last several months, the Blair ice hockey team has given a winning product, a team with a devoted following that we should be proud to call our own.

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The Blair Community Ice Hockey Team huddles during a playoff game on Feb. 15 at Wheaton Ice Rink. Photo by Hannah Thresher.
Should MCPS put BMI on report cards?

In an effort to further the nationwide crusade against obesity, school districts in Pennsylvania, New York and Texas have advocated adding a student’s Body Mass Index (BMI) to his or her report card. BMI is a commonly used equation that determines an individual’s body fat relative to his or her sex, height, weight and age. Supporters of the policy argue that both parents and students need to be more aware of childhood weight problems, while opponents counter that a student’s weight is a private, non-academic issue.

Monica Huang says YES: Schools should fight obesity

An epidemic is spreading amongst the American youth with no sign of stopping. Fries, ice cream, lack of exercise and television, among other culprits, are leading to an array of health conditions ranging from high blood pressure to heart problems to death. Kids today are more overweight than ever, and obesity among boys and girls has quadrupled in the last 25 years, according to the American Obesity Association.

It is the responsibility of a school system to educate its students, whether it be in chemistry, algebra or personal health. The future of our youth rests in the hands of our schools. Therefore, it is MCPS’s duty to teach its students about obesity as a means of both promoting healthy habits and combating obesity. Parental obesity is not an easy topic to discuss; however, parents need to know whether or not their child is overweight.

Parents should be informed about their child’s BMI, and the school is the best and most logical place for this to start. MCPS should adopt legislation similar to that of other districts requiring schools to put student BMI on report cards. Provided that the information remains confidential by mailing report cards home, such actions should be taken now to raise personal health awareness.

Taking students’ BMIs is a fairly easy fix. Parents can then see if their students have weight issues. Since expensive medical evaluation is not needed, MCPS can use BMI to estimate the obesity levels of its students. “BMI is the quickest number to tell people where they are,” says Rockville pediatrician David Kett.

Although BMI may not be 100 percent accurate, it gives parents an approximation of their child’s health condition. With more information at their disposal, parents can better deal with their child’s health.

A strong correlation exists between high childhood BMIs and high adult BMIs years later, says Kett. Schools should do everything possible to reduce childhood obesity, thereby lowering the risks for future health conditions such as diabetes, cancer and osteoarthritis — all medical conditions associated with increased BMI levels.

The American Obesity Association supports the addition of such a proposal arguing that it is not the school’s place to tell parents that their children are overweight. But providing parents with information on their children’s health in the form of BMI is similar to giving information in health problems over which students are taught about abstinence and contraceptive use.

An academic advancement of a student’s health would help solve a growing problem, similar to schools teaching about sexually transmitted diseases.

It is not enough, however, to give a student’s BMI to parents and expect them to interpret it on their own. Schools should also send parents information on obesity and give healthier lifestyle suggestions. This can be accomplished through voluntary one-on-one conferences with parents, students and the school nurse.

Also, MCPS should introduce a more rigorous health curriculum with units on obesity and healthy eating. An increase in physical education requirements should be considered to force students to be more active. MCPS can look for guidance to programs like Pennsylvania’s East Penn School District, which since 2002 has seen an 18 percent drop in the district’s number of overweight students.

Roxana Hadadi says NO: Weight is a personal matter

An A in English, a B in math, a C in history and another A in Spanish. But in that new category on the top of the report card — what is that, a $12 in... obesity? The BMI, a new attempt by state legislation to bring the battle against obesity to a fresh front, is an understandable but misguided attempt to improve student health. MCPS should make the logical decision and reject the addition of BMI onto student report cards, leaving the private subject of a child’s own obesity to students and parents — not students, parents and schools.

Although an alarming number of children and young adults in America are obese — according to the American Obesity Association, approximately 30.3 percent of children are overweight, and 15.3 percent are obese, while 30.4 percent of adolescents are overweight, and 15.5 percent are obese — this does not allow for schools to take a non-academic role in their students’ lives. The entire concept of including BMI on report cards demonstrates a breach of a student’s non-scholastic private life on the part of schools. Although schools instruct students on non-academic subjects such as sex education, they simply educate and inform; they do not pass judgment by giving students a “grade” on their sexual behavior. The job of MCPS (especially through report cards) is to focus on the academic performance of a student; personal characteristics have no place under the judgment of a school district.

It is the responsibility of a school to teach children, not grade them on their eating habits. In a culture preoccupied with skin- ning children’s bodies, schools are constantly bombarded by media attention that focuses on the popularity and success of those who are average. The majority of students who are overweight or obese are aware of their weight problems, and they often need the added stress and anxiety of being “graded” on their health. As Adelaide Robb, Medical Director of in-patient psychiatry at Children’s National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., described on a CBS News Online forum, “Kids who are overweight have great difficulties with self-esteem. Shaming kids by telling them they are fat is no good.” Were MCPS to assign an academic slant on a non-academic issue such as weight, even more health problems could arise, leading to lowered self-esteem, depression or eating disorders in children.

In addition, BMI is only one factor in determining a person’s health, and it is flawed in the respect that it does not take into account the height and weight, or body mass, body frame or muscle mass, according to http://www.healthgoods.com. In fact, it is to say that MCPS calculated BMIs will uphold all four measures — weight, height, age and gender — that are important in determining an accurate BMI and giving parents the whole truth about their child’s weight?

Instead of adhering to the original equation, schools might take shortcuts that would measure only body height and weight, skewing results and giving students inaccurate numbers.

The duty of school districts is to educate students. Instead of wasting tax dollars on an effort that would inaccurately “grade” students on a personal issue, funding for health education in public schools should be increased. Schools should include more classroom instruction on healthy habits and send information to all parents about exercise and good eating habits. MCPS should strictly leave private discussions about individual students’ health problems to those students and their parents, not to their school nurses or administration.

Through these proposals, MCPS can combat a variety of problems that will be more effective — and less intrusive than a BMI “grade” in keeping students healthy.
What is your favorite store in downtown Silver Spring?

My favorite store in downtown Silver Spring is Potbelly’s! I absolutely love their sandwiches, but the best part about it is it seems like it is locally run, instead of a chain. I really like the atmosphere: dim, comfortable... it’s nice.

-sophomore Bridget Egan

What is your favorite video game? Why?

My favorite video game has to be “Kingdom of Hearts.” I like the game because it shows many of the Final Fantasy and Disney characters. It is really quite interesting to make a combination of childhood characters and role-playing characters into one game.

-freshman Cassie Cummins

My favorite video game is “ESPN 2KS,” because I can be my favorite all-star and make my team go to the playoffs.

-senior Scott Nunes

“Super Mario G4” is the greatest game of all time. The characters are incredibly cool, the game is easy to learn but hard to beat, and there’s a certain freedom in running around and getting stars, mushroom-lives and free rides on the friendly penguins.

-freshman Priyanka Gokhale

My favorite video game is “Need for Speed Underground II.” I like the cars and the fact that you can add parts to your car to better its performance.

-senior Erick Pena

What do you think about the inclusion of condom use and homosexuality in health classes?

I think it is a good idea because many kids are having unprotected sex, and there is a lot of unfounded discrimination against homosexuals.

-senior Erica Cruz

I think this education is very important. Many times, teenagers aren’t informed well enough of things as important as condoms and are given the wrong impression of homosexuality.

-freshman Jeeimy Gutierrez

How do you feel about animal dissection in Blair science classes?

I feel that animal dissection in science classes is just a part of learning. It’s not like these cats are people’s house pets. These cats have been donated to science, just as someone would donate their body or organs to science.

-senior Shannon Ruffin

Do you think hockey should be a school-sponsored sport?

The hockey team should be a school-sponsored sport because it is a popular sport in other states and other schools.

-senior William Steele

The hockey team should be school-sponsored. I personally don’t like hockey, but I know there are plenty of people who do, so they should have their sport like we have football and basketball.

-senior Lee Dominguez

The school should not sponsor the hockey team because they could use that money for books or something else that would help everyone.

-senior Imnar Bernal

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Blair prepares for standardized testing

Administration implements new exam preparation to meet federal education standards

By KERSTI CHAKRARATI

After Blair’s failure to meet certain categories of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act last year, the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) tightened the accountability measure.

Because of pressures of meeting AYP, the school is preparing students for the exams. Assistant Principal Holly Wolf said that more work needs to be done to prepare students for the exams.

Ms. Wolf explained that AYP is an accountability measure for educational programs.

The Blair Math Department has started assigning Home-School Assessments (HSA) and various reading comprehension practices before the May exam. Ms. Wolf said that more work needs to be done to prepare students for the exams.

One of the factors that are influencing Blair’s AYP is the lack of vending machine profits. The lack of vending machine profits has made it difficult for Blair to keep up with the requirements of the NCLB Act.

Ms. Wolf said that the school is considering various options to improve its AYP scores, including offering new, healthier snacks, and implementing strategies to improve the school’s finances.

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**New department preparations for the HSA and MSA**

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<td>- HSA-formatted tests</td>
<td>- Read-aouds</td>
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<td>- Weekly Geometry teacher meetings</td>
<td>- BCR/ECR practice</td>
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**Heathier vending machine snacks hurt Blair finances**

Students buying fewer new snacks, leading to the school’s loss of thousands of dollars

Blair Business Opportunity Center (BBOC) Director Walter Goosh said that he expects Blair to lose nearly $23,000 this year due to the lack of vending machine profits.

Mr. Goosh said that the school is considering various options to improve its finances, including offering new, healthier snacks, and implementing strategies to improve the school’s finances.

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**Blair’s healthy future**

The Blair Business Opportunity Center (BBOC), commonly known as the school store, also began to sell healthier snacks in accordance with the new MDS guidelines. Most noticeably, candy bars have been replaced with foods low in sugar, such as Greek yogurt and Nutri-grain bars.

Soda has been substituted with low-calorie water, and juice has been replaced with water. BBOC is no longer available in the vending machines, and students are no longer able to purchase unhealthy foods.

Mr. Goosh agreed that there is little the school can do to improve the students’ eating habits. Still, MDS’s efforts to encourage healthier eating have not been overlooked.

“I don’t think they can do anything to improve the students’ eating habits, but they’re doing the best they can,” said Davis.

For the complete story, see http://silverchips.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/inside.php?id=6570
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Smaller percentage of eighth graders receives first-choice, many choose high school nearby.

from DCC page 1

AP enrollment grows

from AP TESTS page 1

PSAT scores.

The program targets sophomores and juniors who performed well on the PSAT, but have not taken an AP course, and encourages them to enroll in such a course; the study shows a consistently higher correlation between AP exam grades and PSAT scores than between AP exam grades and high school grades and courses completed. There's a big push for kids who have the ability and who haven't taken [any AP tests] before," said Principal Phil Gainous.

Blair's increase in AP enrollment is the largest in the past five years, which reflects the recent nationwide push to expand student access to and participation in AP courses. In 2004, more students than ever in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., passed at least one AP course in high school. The state's goal was to make the HSA graduation requirement, but their idea was to "phase it in" so that students could get accustomed to the testing procedure, according to MCPS Coordinator for Student Assessment Daniel Cotonour.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Special Education departments are the most concerned about their students' performance. ESOL students, much of the material covered in the HSA is too advanced for ESOL students, as is the teacher Joseph Bellino. Out of the 59 ESOL students who took the English Language Arts test, only one passed, said Bellino.

Special Education students are at a disadvantage. The special education plan will be submitted to the local school system for review, according to the MSDHE.

If Blair is unable to meet AYP after the first year, it will stay in "need of improvement" for a second year. Additional years of failing to meet standards will cause the school to have to make more changes, which can include replacing staff members who are responsible for the poor performance and implementing a new curriculum. Eventually, the school can be taken over by the state and be transformed into a charter school.

A "tremendous disadvantage"

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Special Education students are at a high risk. All students must take the PSAT, but the CollegeBoard's AP Potential statistical-analysis program with Blair's PSAT database, national averages show that students who take AP courses typically have PSAT scores that average between 370 and 400 out of 500 maximum points for each section, though students with scores as low as 40 out of 80 have approximately a 50 percent chance of passing an AP test.

By implementing the new program, Blair will be considerably expanded. "This year, 263 AP-testing student base, which currently includes only 500 students. Of the 1,070 seventh-graders and 908 eighth-graders taking the PSAT test last November, 58 showed the aptitude for at least one AP course but were not signed up for any course.

Students were selected if the AP Potential statistical-analysis program indicated they had at least a 50 percent chance of scoring a three or above on an AP exam.

This year's passing students also include more minorities than in past years. At Blair, 14.2 percent of African Americans and 15.4 percent of Hispanics of the 2004 graduating class at Blair outscored the PSAT national average. At Blair last November, 58 showed the aptitude for at least one AP course but were not signed up for any course.

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Hey Vitelio it’s the girl that sits across from you in English. I just want to tell you that I really like you, and I hope that maybe you will notice me one day. Love, your secret admirer

Happy Birthday Tisha! Have a great day! Eat lots of fruits and veggies! Lol. ~oy!

Yuning and Kiran are so cool! My HEROES!
Dear DAN and OLIVIA! You guys are the best valentines ever. Our love will never fade. Olivia, you especially are such a good friend. Dan, you’re such a jerk!!! Let’s have our sleepover sometime soon! Hehehehe!!!

April is a beast, Alex suffers from yeast, Audi’s hair is straight, Rosie gets some hate, From April’s Sailormoon shirt
Happy Birthday to Raquel, Love ya. Cami
Hi Sheena it me Jose Cruz How are You Love you bye

Shoutout to all the future Terps!!!! And to Fezabeza who’ll be going to Spelman! Have fun in Atlanta with all those Luda and Usher look-a-likes! Love, Sheri

Shahla, holler at trampoline wrestling and good times... paper or plastic? NEITHER!

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Shoutout to wild car chases to the church (o the drama...), pushin a hoopy that shows no indication of speed on I-95, wasted hotel money in LP and such a bust night. Love ya’ll, especially my girls!!! -Yasmin

Mock Trial! 4-0 baby! RM needs to bring it

Shoutout to all the future Terps!!!! And to Fezabeza who’ll be going to Spelman! Have fun in Atlanta with all those Luda and Usher look-a-likes! Love, Sheri

Shahla, holler at trampoline wrestling and good times... paper or plastic? NEITHER!
MCPS receives national honors

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Education recognized MCPS in January as a leader in the area of emergency and crisis preparedness, according to the MCPS Bulletin. MCPS was one of only three school systems in the nation to be placed in the “Best” category in a report initiated by the American Preparedness Campaign, which evaluated the abilities of the country’s 20 largest cities to handle the worst kind of air pollution.

MCPS was placed in the “Best” category for having a comprehensive emergency plan dealing with terrorist threats, along with records and communication with parents.

MCPS also was named a “Gold Medal” school system for the 10th consecutive year, according to the Bulletin. MCPS was judged against the other 2,800 school systems nationwide with over 3,300 students and was one of five school systems to win the award.

MCPS was placed in the “Best” category for having a comprehensive emergency plan dealing with terrorist threats, along with records and communication with parents.

Board of Education approves budget

The Montgomery County Board of Education unanimously adopted the $1.7 billion Fiscal Year 2006 budget on Feb. 8. The budget includes investments to reduce class sizes, expand full-day kindergarten to all school-age children, and enhance science and technology in classrooms. The budget increased by 6.8 percent (or $109.5 million) over the $1.3 billion adopted budget on May 19.

Math department offers more classes for re-takes

In an effort to increase the number of students who pass math classes, special sessions were held in some math classrooms that it will re-offer this spring for students who failed a class last semester, a change that has created scheduling difficulties for several math teachers.

Last year, Blair only offered one section of Algebra 2A during the second semester to allow students who failed to take the class again in the summer to make up for the failing grade. This year, however, the math department introduced six additional math sections: two sections of Algebra 2A, two sections of double-advanced Placement Algebra II, one section of Geometry A and one section of Precalculus A. The change is expected to significantly help students who failed during first semester, said math Resource teacher Rochelle Sherman.

Assemblies promote recycling and conservation

In the first educational opportunity for students as part of the newly established recycling education program, assemblies were held in the morning of Feb. 23 to ensure that all students were aware of the program with her colleagues in the entire school system.

MCPS Recycling Coordinator Ana Carbajal spoke at each assembly.

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MCPS Recycling Coordinator Ana Carbajal spoke at each assembly.
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SGA
is donating $200 to the American Heart Association
in honor of Blair student Abrahm Gurmu who passed on January 31 of heart disease.
Our condolences go out to his family and friends.
(See Story on Silver Chips Online silverchips.mbls.edu)

The SGA raised over $1800 for Tsunami victims thanks to all Blazers who participated

DATES

March 15 - SMOB Nominating Convention
March 16 - MCR General Assembly at Blake High School
T he walls tremble, and the floor shakes. Blue lights sweep across the crowd in broad circles. Wide black speakers burst with sound. Though it is still light outside—in fact, it’s only noon—Nation, a Washington, D.C., nightclub and music venue, is packed.

This is “Exposure,” a two-day-long battle of the bands that showcases over 20 local punk and alternative bands. The grand prize: a recording contract with a local label. During the weekend of Feb. 26 and 27, hundreds of people pay $13 for a ticket to watch the competition, which includes Outsource and Entropy—two bands composed partially of Blair students.

For the members of Outsource and Entropy “Exposure” is a rare opportunity not only to win a record deal but also to play for a huge crowd in a professional venue. They are not going to waste it.

Practice, practice, practice

Arriving at band practice after school on Feb. 6, juniors Jackson Vassighi and William Wiles make their way to the back of their friend’s garage and into a tiny room barely large enough to fit their music equipment and the four teenagers who make up the punk rock band Outsource.

The cinder-block walls are covered with quilts, which attempt to serve as make-up the punk rock band Outsource. The members are grouped together in a more intimate stage and is ready to play. The big moment Twenty minutes earlier, Entropy has just begun its first song. Gleichman grasps the microphone in front of her with one hand, the other plucking out a beat on her guitar. Her voice erupts from the speakers, resonating off the walls. The original punk music pounds through the audience as they rock to the beat. Entropy rocks!” and “Woo!” the audience explodes in applause. “Thank you!” she yells. “It’s our first song. We’re not really expecting to win,” explains Gleichman. “We’re just expecting to get our music out there.”

Backstage jitters

With the wealth of amplifiers and speakers that line the elevated stages in Nation, Gleichman should have no problem being heard.

Standing backstage with the rest of Entropy one act before they are scheduled to go on, Gleichman restlessly adjusts the microphone on her shoulder. “It’s a little intimidating,” she admits.

The band that has just finished walks past. One of the members is carrying a battered cymbal. It is bent upside-down, and a large jagged piece is missing from the side. Gleichman points and laughs nervously.

After 20 long minutes of waiting, Entropy is up. They climb on stage with their equipment in tow. Stagehands frantically adjust amplifiers and weave through mazes of black cords. D’Eustachio tests his guitar and gazes out into the gathering crowd. This is it.

Over by the second stage of Nation, Outsource is waiting its turn to perform. The members are grouped together in a darker corner lit only by swirling red lights reflected off of an overhead disco ball. They are surrounded by a bevy of friends and supporters: mothers, girlfriends, assorted “groups.”

Newman spins his drumsticks and watches as Veras and Wiles hook arms and swing wildly, doing-doing the song blasting from the nearby speakers. Vassighi laughs as they collide, comparing his nerves to their apparent excitement and energy. “I haven’t thrown up yet,” he jokes.

Finally, Outsource boards the smaller, more intimate stage and is ready to play.

After a few songs, a small mosh pit forms, and frenzied audience members push each other into the tangle of arms and legs. On stage, Outsource is oblivious to the excitement; the band members are too occupied with the music to notice.

Newman’s face contorts with effort, his tongue jams up against his lower lip and his arms fail to the beat. Vassighi periodically moves over to join Veras or Wiles, singing into the same microphone and turning his back to the audience as he bangs out notes on his guitar.

When Outsource finishes up the last song, the audience explodes in applause. The members of Outsource gather their equipment and head off stage, worn out but flush with excitement and adrenaline.

Although neither band won, the members of Outsource and Entropy insist they found the experience enjoyable regardless. “I’ve never won, the members of Outsource and Entropy insist they found the experience enjoyable regardless. “I’ve never gone on, Gleichman restlessly adjusts the microphone one last time. "We’re not really expecting to win," explains Gleichman. "We’re just expecting to get our music out there."
Lori Potts-Dupré, Ph.D., C.E.P.
College Consultant

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-Kelsey Eichlin, '05

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The saga continues: nerds gone wild

Two Magnets ditch their graphing calculators to enter the fast-paced world of freestyling

By Samir Paul and Sheila Rajagopal

When we left Chips reporters and free-styling wannabes Sheila and Samir, senior Makomons Brown had just put them through the bling-ringing in a desperate attempt to convert the two from loafer-happy Magnets to his bling-bling freestyling crew. With no way to practice, the boys decided themselves Free-styled Champions of the Universe (or at least Blair). In part II of this saga, we see if Dean, Blair’s top thespian, will let them have a chance at becoming the kings of the bling.

Anatomy students dissect their cat.

Photo by Adam Schuyler

Anatomists grade the interior of our playthings; they’re here to study us humans,” she says.

VoiceBOX

How do you feel about cat dissection?

“I’m all good with cat dissection, I just don’t want it taking place in a cafeteria.”

— Social studies teacher

David Swaney

“Yeah, I mean, it’s cliche, but it’s kind of our way of saying, ‘We got all these animals, we could dissect them if we wanted to.’”

— Anatomy teacher

“Mollie Segal, who owns 5-10 cats, says she would rather have the school keep the cats than to look inside?”

— Junior Mollie Segal

Reporters Samir Paul and Sheila Rajagopal quiver in fear in the face of senior Ryan Dean’s rap skills. Samir and Sheila challenged Dean to become the freestyle champions of Blair on Jan. 14. Photo by Adam Schuyler

Dean is careful to point out that he’s not at all worried about his ability to dominate the stage. “I’m not going to be that terrorizing a rap performer,” he says nonchalantly, “I’m just going to be myself.”

Dean’s other goal is to make sure that he’s not the only one who’s going to be successful. “We’re going to have to make sure that we’re all successful and that we’ve all put in our best performance,” he says.

Dean is also looking forward to the challenge of being able to perform in front of his peers. “I’m excited to be able to show them what I can do,” he says.

There are more ways than one to skin a cat.

When Blair students in Anatomy and Physiology classes were asked to identify various muscles in a dissection, they found that they were able to learn more quickly and effectively by dissecting a cat.

Arms and legs, muscles and bones, the anatomy students dissect their cat.

Photo by Adam Schuyler

U nderneath Anato- my and Physiology teacher John Haigh’s distilling Scotland lies a dead creature, one eye ajar, tongue sticking out and front legs stretched next to its face. Haigh’s students squirm, smile and laugh at the sight of the cat, marveling at the art of demonstrating the day’s lesson: identifying various muscles in a dissected cat.

For almost the entire third quarter, students in Anatomy and Physiology classes were dissecting a cat. They were forced to perform the dissection in a classroom setting, but Haigh’s students were able to learn a great deal from the experience.

They were able to learn about the anatomy of the cat, as well as how to properly dissect. They were also able to learn more about the biology of the cat, as they were able to see the internal organs and circulatory system.

The students were also able to learn more about the experimental nature of the dissection. They were able to see the internal organs and circulatory system.

In the back corner, seniors Meena Singh, a classmate on Valentine’s Day. 

Chamber Choir singers serenaded the lifesaving hands-on experience.

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Everyone is always talking about it. Supposedly, girls seem to always think about sex. It is estimated by some that approximately 47 percent of homes are doing it — that it loads three-to-five times that is the constant focus of everyone's attention.

But junior Monica Eldridge is different. She hasn't done it and isn't planning to anytime soon. Her reason to remain a virgin until marriage comes not from her parents, counselor or health teacher — it comes from her personal faith.

In today's culture, where (according to the Center for Media and Popular Culture) teens watch an average of 93 sexual situations in an hour of MTV music video, it is hardly surprising to find that nearly one in two teens agrees with the statement, "Teenagers are hearing about sex for the first time while still in elementary school." Monica, however, is very different, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, study that shows that 89 percent of all teenagers are exposed to sex and sexuality by age 12.

"Keeping the faith"

Those religious Blazers stand out in a culture that has become increasingly preoccupied with sex. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 85 percent of episodes of the top TV shows watched by teens in 2001 contained some sexual content. Forty-two percent of songs on the top 100 in 1999 also contained some sexual content, according to the Astroturf Foundation. In the video game "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City," even have sex with a prostitite and then kill her.

"Everybody's doing it" says Eldridge. "It's kind of a rule. You may start out just hooks up, but one thing leads to another and your romantic interest in God in a scenario where you would be tempted?"

Eldridge often finds herself in conversations in the boating dating world. "Boys are often have sex with me, and they say, "You're a virgin, that's so cool!" Eldridge says. "But I've been using for anything, like people. I say, 'I love this virgin!" she says.

Monica has had a video shown a school in which different levels of love were explained in terms of love represented simply for the love of a dog. On film, we've been used for various kinds of people. And it was the first time she had ever been in a relationship.

"It's a combination of all the different kinds of people that I've known," Eldridge says. "It has to be about the same time you would be tempted." Temptations

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Former secret agent blows her cover

Disillusioned with her career, Blair alumna writes about her experience as a CIA officer

by Amanda Lee

In the middle of a written test on explosives, CIA spy-in-training Lindsay Moran is suddenly awakened by a loud, blinding flash. An hour later, she’s sitting in a car as masked men leap from the window, aiming their guns at her windshield, shooting off rounds from an AK-47 and yelling threatening obscenities.

As one of the men starts to enter the back of her car, Moran floors it and the chrylce is gone.

“What the hell am I doing with my life?” Moran thinks to herself as she pauses to catch her breath.

Moran had spent her defensive driving exercise and went on to successfully pass the test, but Moran at The Farm, the CIA’s training facility in Williamsburg, Virginia. A Blair alum and former Silver Chips editor-in-chief, Moran (class of 1987) spent three years as a CIA case officer in Macedonia. She chronicled her less-than-glittering experiences working for the agency in her book, “Blowing My Cover: My Life as a CIA operative,” released in January.

A “classic overachiever”

As a member of Blair’s graduating class of 1987, Moran showed her potential even in high school. According to the book, Moran was voted “Most Intellectual,” her potential even in high school.

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Moran was voted “Most Intellectual,” her potential even in high school. As a member of Blair’s graduating class of 1987, Moran showed her potential even in high school.

“If that dream ends tomorrow, or I don’t have it anymore, I could just go to the music store and buy a guitar and take a chance, get up in front of dozens of screaming fans and belt out your favorite Spanish or English song.”

Carving out a new career

“Upon leaving the agency, Moran conveys to the reader that her career was not just for Intel wonks,” she says. In her book, Moran was particularly grateful to Mr. Mathwin and Dr. Smith, both of whom were writing “sticklers” to her book.

“Look Again Thrift Shop: Walking into Look Again Thrift Shop is much like walking into your grandma’s attic: It’s messy and a bit dusty. But if you look hard enough, you can definitely find a treasure. Look Again, located on Wayne Avenue, has been around for 38 years and sells anything and everything from furniture to clothing to dishware.”

Mayorga Coffee Shop: Sit and enjoy live music while sipping a cup of coffee made from home-roasted coffee beans. Browse through the shop and check out artwork by local artists in the smaller rooms.

Negril: Walking through the doors of Negril is like walking into a tropical spot. Silver Spring reared as soft Jamaican cuisine, it features dishes that are sure to please.

Music specializes in sheet music, instrument rentals and music lessons.

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Two cultures join hands to defeat discrimination

reasons, but most possess a good dose of curiosity as well as a deep passion for leadership. For junior Emma Hutchinson, as a Jewish American currently in OUDC class 11, the program was a prime opportunity for her to explore both her own Jewish heritage and the culture of others.

Regardless of background, 32 students have come together February of this year to experience the unique three-component program, says Program Director Eric Nelson-James. During the immersion of OUDC, stretching from the commencement ceremony on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday to the end of the spring semester, students go on retreats and attend weekly seminars. Hutchinson, in particular, was awed by the program’s ability to bring individuals together. During one retreat, the cry of a Hilton hotel’s fire alarm forced Hutchinson and junior Natalie Friedman along with the remaining OUDC group out of the building and into the freezing winter weather. Stranded in the middle of a Silver Spring sidewalk, the group of students — who had been complete strangers just two days ago — huddled against one another singing the Civil Rights song “We Shall Overcome.” By the end of a mere three-day retreat, they had grown so close, says Friedman, that tears of joy brimmed from the eyes of several students.

The highlight of OUDC’s experience is the three-week summer trip where students visit historically significant sites to both Jewish and non-Jewish cultures. They cover six different states, traveling to Harlem and Jewish communities in New York and several other states, like Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Tennessee, all historically significant sites in the civil rights movement.

Through the program’s summer trip, students are thrust into applications of what they have learned. They cover issues such as throwing hearings on teen driving restrictions (or “Drive to . . .,” page 11) and minimum wage increases.

Up close and exclusive

Acosta not only saw government in action but also met the people who run it. She enjoyed shaking hands, collecting business cards and posing for a picture with Baltimore Mayor Martin O’Malley.

“It was fun to meet people who make a difference,” she remarks. “It was fun to meet people who run it. You learn how to interact with professionals. The contacts you make last a lifetime,” she continues.

Swapping shoes

The greatest overarching lesson that OUDC teaches is the value of not feeling left out of stereotypes. For Slaughter, this lesson has a special impact in the community. “I’m Jewish, so I know what it’s like,” he says. “It was fun to meet people who run it. You learn how to interact with professionals. The contacts you make last a lifetime,” she continues.

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Register to play

**COED SOFTBALL**

in Takoma Park/Silver Spring

Spring is here and its time to play COED softball. Bring your friends!!! (ages 13-18)

**Sign up in person** at the Takoma Park Municipal Building,
Maple Ave and Philadelphia Ave. (Rt. 410, enter at rear):

**Saturday, March 19th 9 am-noon**

Sign up for Babe Ruth Baseball (13-18) that day too!

Or, **REGISTER ON-LINE** anytime at


**FEES**

$95 ($70 per player plus $25 for weekly pizza party); Scholarships available; all skill levels welcome, no one turned away; everyone plays!

**SEASON STARTS**

In April with games played Friday evenings followed by the weekly pizza party! Ensure a playing slot and avoid late fees: register by March 1!

For more information go to www.takomabaseball.org

The Babe Ruth Teen Coed Softball League is a program of:

**Takoma Park—Silver Spring Babe Ruth League**
Centered in the midst of Forest Glen, an upper-class neighborhood that was once a residential area of university-town life and now stands as a reminder of its past, the National Park Seminary is an iconic building complex that has been left to wither away in the 1970s, and ever since, the National Park Seminary has been left to wither away in Beltsville pollution and neglect.

**New look for historic local Seminary**

Treasured community landmark to be revitalized and converted into affordable housing

By KARMA TAVIK

During its founding in 1887, the National Park Seminary was on its way to playing host to the most prestigious post-secondary women’s schools in the nation, becoming one of the most prestigious post-secondary women’s schools in the nation, and acquiring theater and music and ballroom dance for community use. However, the National Park Seminary was left to wither away for the next 120 years, its buildings remaining on the building site, its lettering that has remained on the building site, and its buildings remaining on the building site, its lettering that has remained on the building site.

Although Gervafi says it is tempting to enter the mysterious building, he warns against it. “People break in and don’t intend to harm anything, but they break historic treasures,” he says. A fire in 1980 burned the Odeon Building, a theater used by the girls’ school with Greek Corinthian columns on the exterior and a large proscenium arch bordering the stage, to the ground after either vandals or fire broke in and started a fire. All that remains is a desolate three-story wall facing north.

### Reemerging and renovating

The abuse of the National Park Seminary has prompted a countywide debate for the past 25 years. This fall, the property transferred from the U.S. Army to Forest Glen Ventures, LLC. “They are going to renovate the buildings so that the exterior will look like it did at the time the Army acquired it in 1942,” says Gervafi. The inside, however, will become more modernized. The Chapel will be converted into a two-room apartment. Dorm rooms used in the school will combine into single residences. Elevators will be installed. The balcony will become community space for activities such as dance and yoga classes.

When Zwerdling learned of the development project, she initially opposed the renovation. “It’s beautiful and I don’t touch it!” she says. “But if no one does anything, it’ll all fall apart.”

Save Our Seminary is in full support of the changes taking place, as development is the only feasible means of preserving the property, says Gervafi. Today, the yellow signs labeled “Zoning Request” stand out like they are a reminder of the transformation property are a reminder of the transformation that will begin six months from now. Behind these signs, the old and worn-out towers of the seminary seem.

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**Playing House, Senate**

From page 19 page 19

When Frank thanked Epstein for the comment, the onlooking pages were impressed. “Pages are not supposed to be there because you don’t talk to Barney Frank, you stay out of his world for me,” she says. Acosta left Annapolis with the realization that government figures are ordinary people. “The people who represent us in our government are just like us,” she reflects.

### Work, play and politics

During her stay in Annapolis, Acosta rose at 7 a.m., showed up for work, then went to a business uniform with a “really ugly” page jacket and walked two blocks to the State House. When not observing committees, she played Baby Boomer Trivial Pursuit, went to Starbucks and fed the ducks with the other pages.

“Tons of fun”

Epstein and his page friends now share an unbreakable bond. “We lived together, worked together, went to school together. After five months, you get so ridiculously close,” he says. When Epstein applied to the page program, he wanted to make friends, get experience and earn money. He got everything he was looking for — “everything and a whole lot more,” he says.

Acosta looks forward to returning to Capitol for a page as a second week this month; she hopes she can partake in more action than before. Her high expectations mirror her enthusiasm about the page experience. “We’re interested in government, if you like to talk to people, if you don’t mind working at your own pace, if you don’t mind sitting around in comfortable shoes and if you don’t mind walking around in uncomfortable shoes,” she says.
CUTTING AWAY THE EMOTIONAL PAIN

For students who routinely resort to self-mutilation, cuts and burns are a dangerous outlet

There are a reported two million cases of self-harm in the U.S. alone, including cutting, burning and self-hitting, according to the National Mental Health Association. Photo by Charlie Woo

By CAMELLE MACKLER

Where only first names appear, names have been changed to protect the identities of the sources.

Anthony, a junior, stares silently, fixated on the flame before him. He prepares to answer the question, he lifts the lighter closer to his hand, this time so that it touches his flesh. He waits and clenches his fist as the flame engulfs his knuckle. Five, 10, then 30 seconds go by until the final drops the lighter. He is left with nothing but an empty mind and a scar to remind him of his pain.

Anthony’s act of self-harm late last year is not accidental, but it is by no means an attempt at suicide. Since his introduction to self-harming during his sophomore year, he has become one of a significant number of teenagers who regularly channel their depression, anger and anxiety through self-mutilation.

The term self-mutilation, used interchangeably with self-injury and self-harm, is defined as the act of inflicting injury or pain on one’s own body. Many researchers argue that this deliberate alteration and destruction of body tissue is done without a conscious suicide attempt. But new research indicates that it can lead to an increased risk of suicide, according to psychiatrist Tim Zwerdling. According to the National Mental Health Association (NMHA), there are a reported two million cases of self-harm in the U.S. alone, and it is estimated that one out of every 200 girls ages 13 to 19 regularly practices self-harm behavior. Other forms of mutilation include cutting, burning, self-hitting and wound interference.

For some, the urge to cut, burn and even break bones can be suppressed with the help of medication and therapy. But for Blazers battling the urges of self-mutilation, it can become a helpless addiction.

The first taste

Sitting leisurely in a class at E. Brooke Lee Middle School, Karen becomes aware of her arm. Her fingers move slowly as they touch her raised arm. Karen, however, in spite of her depression, is no longer concerned about what was bottled up, “It was seven years of ignoring and internalizing. I opened everything that was bottled up,” she explains. For the next couple weeks, Davis engaged in what he would call intense “workout sessions,” periods during which he would sprint more than half of his usual running route and do “too many reps too fast,” he says. His mind wasn’t on protecting his body; it was on rid- ing it of his anxiety and anger. Zwerdling, who works with many teenage self-abusers, explains that Davis’s rationale is a common reason for self-mutilation. Teenagers are often in a state of strong emotion, says Zwerdling, “and they find that by cutting themselves or doing other forms of self-mutilation, it relieves that state of intense bad feelings.”

Number the scars

For the past two years, cutting provided an emotional release for Karen. Even after seeing a psychiatrist and taking antidepressants, Karen’s habit has progressively worsened — at times leaving her with over 30 cuts on her arm. She explains that her cutting, especially recently, is no longer about experiencing pain for the mere sensation without the risk of creating things. For Karen, however, in spite of her lack of concern, self-mutilation, especially cutting, can cause significant physical dangers. Exces- sive bleeding is not at all uncommon and can potentially lead to death.

Teenagers often mislead themselves into thinking they have control, Zwerdling explains, when in reality real self-harm can become a hard addiction. “Any kind of behavior has the potential to being truly dangerous to their well-being and lives,” he says.

Teenagers who use self-harm and warnings, cutting still remains an attract- ive method of coping with mental health issues and disease. “I think it’s healthy or a good re- lease of emotion,” she admits. “But for Blazers and parents there is a real risk.”

Anthony is not the only student who has struggled to cope with his mental illness. Davis is not the only student who is in need of depression medication. Anthony’s soon fell back into his old patterns. “I stopped for a while, but things kept building up, so I started cutting again.” He has since burned his hands and plastic bags, both of which left permanent scars.

Anthony’s relapse into burning hardly went unnoticed, and he was soon confronted by a counselor from the suicide hotline forced AnTHONY to check into the hospital for treatment. “Again, I’ve been back to the hospital,” he says. “I’ve seen patients successfully treat me.” Zwerdling suggests teenagers do anything to change their state of mind. “I feel good but being able to put the music on and listen to music. However, for people like Anthony and Karen, both who have tried these techniques, Zwerdling notes that “it’s a unique piece of advice. Get a little ice and put it on your arm where you can feel the cold.”

Like for many self-abusers, cutting proved to be much like a gateway drug, introducing him to other, more painful and dan- gerous habit. While in the shower, Anthony put a plastic bag of ice and put it on his arm where he could feel the cold. He explains that her cutting, “I started cutting myself. It was a unique piece of advice. He has since been relying on his fear of further con- frontation to stop cutting or burning himself, neither of which he has done in the past month. “Last time I tried, I lighted a blue and broke and I was in fear of the hospital stopped me,” he says. Similarly, Karen hasn’t cut her- self in about a month and admits that she wished she had never be- gan. “There are times when I wish I could be cut, but it wouldn’t be a good substitute for not being like this, but I’m not going to act on that. I don’t want to die.”

Active tuberculosis found in MCPS

Two MCPS students were diagnosed with active tuberculosis (TB) in January, prompting MCPS to conduct skin tests between Feb. 8 and 10 for 229 students and faculty members who had been in contact with the diagnosed students. Tests were conducted at Glenallan and Kemp Mill Elementary Schools and at E. Brooke Lee Middle School.

Of those tested, 24 individuals were positive, indicating that they had been exposed to TB at some point in their lives. Further tests of these 24 indi- viduals indicated that none of them had an active case of TB.

Without treatment, one in three pa- tients with active TB dies within months of contracting the disease. It is caused by bacteria called Mycobacterium tuber- culosis that usually attack the lungs and cause coughing, chest pain and bloody phlegm.

Symptoms of active TB include weight loss, fever, night sweats and loss of ap- petite.

TB is contagious; its bacteria spreads through sneezing and coughing. When a person breathes in the TB bacteria, the bacteria begins to grow within the lungs. From there, the bacteria can spread throughout the body, including the brain, spine and kidneys.

People with TB can be treated and cured if they seek medical help soon after contraction. Those who have latent TB infections but are not yet sick can take medication to prevent the development of active TB. Latent TB is not contagious and has no symptoms. TB was the leading cause of death in the U.S. before 1940. Since then, TB cases have greatly declined, thanks to modern medicine. However, TB hasn’t vanished completely.

In the U.S. alone, 16,000 peo- ple had active TB in 2000, according to the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention.

LATENLY, TB has been back on the rise, especially among people with HIV. Those individuals are especially vulnerable to TB because their immune systems are weaker, the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention.

According to the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention, latent TB continue to be a major public health problem. In 2000, according to the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention.
Braving the barren wasteland of primetime TV, one reporter decides to fight back.

By KRISTINA HAMILTON

It's 8 a.m., and senior Ivy Winston has to be out of the house by 9. Forget about school; this is the last vestige of humor in television. Winston had to do was put on an "Almond Milk," as she calls it, and start the day. Winston, in the coffin ever imagined for the competition.

In addition to feeling physically stupider, people began watching, the TV industry's mortality rate slowly eradicated. I decided I would do something to prevent "Arrested Development" from being cancelled. I even thought about going on a hunger strike. But over the years, I've watched with mounting horror as my favorite shows have been cancelled and sentenced to the graveyard of being rerun.

Today, Winston sports a pair of cowboy boots, denim capris, a matching vest and a cowboy hat covering her brunette curls split into two ponytails. Underneath it all is a button-down blouse is a bikini top. "Arrested Development" is what Winston wants to do.

Lights, camera, action!

"Arrested Development" was never going to find a suitable replacement. Other programs on television that could still fill the void after graduation, he could not believe, but I was once a happy child and, as I grew older, I could no longer watch as the show produced a liberal lesbian mother trading places with an anti-gay conservative. In addition to being just a tad bit (read: incredibly) offensive, the program wasn't extremely boring for all the conflict it supposedly engendered.

"Arrested Development" was cancelled and sentenced to the grievance front doors of Fox's corporate headquarters, Winston applied to Drexel University and was accepted, but she does not plan to attend college for at least another year. After her modeling career is over, though, she does not want to be involved with anything related to fashion. "Right now, I'm a model," she says. "I don't want to (ever) make clothes...I just want to be a megastar. Forget the people; I want to dress the cars."

Braving the barren wasteland of primetime TV with the looming cancellation of "Arrested Development," one reporter decides to fight back.

Winston. "Sometimes you'll look at other girls and say, 'She's hotter looking than me.' It makes you lose self-esteem and you get low confidence sometimes." Yet, despite the struggle to "stay looking good," modeling is what Winston wants to do.

Information session.

I'm going to impale myself on a stiletto heel. Winston plans to make a big deal about it, "She's better looking than me — hotter and skinnier than me." It makes you lose self-esteem and you get low confidence sometimes. Eventually, I decided I would do something to prevent "Arrested Development" from being cancelled. I even thought about going on a hunger strike. But over the years, I've watched with mounting horror as my favorite shows have been cancelled and sentenced to the graveyard of being rerun. People have often asked me why I like the show, but I was once a happy child and, as I grew older, I could no longer watch as the show produced a liberal lesbian mother trading places with an anti-gay conservative. In addition to being just a tad bit (read: incredibly) offensive, the program wasn't extremely boring for all the conflict it supposedly engendered.

"The Blunders" evening, Winston's mom, Judy Dickinson, says finances have been the most difficult hurdle of Winston's new career. "Arrested Development" charged a whopping $5,000 for the competition.

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Lights, camera, action!

"Arrested Development" was never going to find a suitable replacement. Other programs on television that could still fill the void after graduation, he could not believe, but I was once a happy child and, as I grew older, I could no longer watch as the show produced a liberal lesbian mother trading places with an anti-gay conservative. In addition to being just a tad bit (read: incredibly) offensive, the program wasn't extremely boring for all the conflict it supposedly engendered.

Winston. "Sometimes you'll look at other girls and say, 'She's hotter looking than me.' It makes you lose self-esteem and you get low confidence sometimes." Yet, despite the struggle to "stay looking good," modeling is what Winston wants to do.

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Senior Mike Sindall, who frequently organizes video game parties, focuses while playing Halo 2. Enthusiasts like Sindall enjoy the action provided by today's games. Photos by Charlie Woo

G
generation “X” is so three consoles ago. Now, a new generation has found its escapist more than its Z-button, these gamers are trading zzz’s for the game’s buttons; it presses ours.

“Even though it’s a video game,” says Wuerthner, “there’s a much more intense feeling of realness. The more they go into the game, the more they feel like they’re actually there.”

Other “Halo” players feel the same way. “If you’re going to buy a guitar and you go out and play it, you need to be immersed in the music to play it,” says Willemstijn. “You need to be there.”

Sindall’s fingers are playing a guitar as the action roars on the screen. Despite the fact that he was ranked eighth in the nation during the school year, McNair spent so much time gaming don’t always mix. Last year, McNair spent so much time playing “NBA Street” online that he was ranked eighth in the nation — so when it came to figuring out what was behind his decline, his grades improved “exponentially.”

Violent addiction

Junior Chris McNair knows that he has a problem. For him, playing Halo 2 is an all-out lifestyle. When he was stuck at home with mononucleosis, he couldn’t play his game. It was a big difference. “When I was at home, I was thinking about playing Halo all the time,” he says. “And when I was out and about, I was thinking about playing Halo.”

“Halo” online for three hours a day, his friends introduced him to the game. “I didn’t stop playing until my characters have perfect everything,” he says. “I’m referring to the maximum items and powers to be attained by the main characters in each Final Fantasy game.”

Junior Gu Khalsa is more interested in the online gaming world. He is a member of the Cyberathlete Amateur League (CAL), an Internet association that has garnered hundreds of thousands of other members worldwide. CAL gave a management position to his best friend Marcus, who dropped out of high school before his freshman year to play video games every day. Although Khalsa’s case is less dramatic, he sometimes finds himself playing computer games until 1 a.m. — when he should be sleeping.

“Sometimes I’ll pull an all-nighter,” he says. “Just to catch up.”

Khalsa has most recently embraced an addiction to “World of Warcraft,” the hottest new fantasy epic on the net. This popular sequel to the original “Warcraft” games has also grabbed the attention of junior Zack Wuerthner, who plays the game five hours a day from friends. Blair Wuerthner’s intense love for “Warcraft” has forced him to reprioritize his daily activities. “Homework?” he jokingly says. “What’s a homework?”

“Halo” is the most popular of the new generation of video games, according to senior Lawrence Lyons, who sees playing violent video games as a way to vent his frustrations. Lyons is currently engrossed with “BloodRayne,” a game about “a hot half-vampire, half-human chick who is trying to save a super-natural Nazi regime. His deep fascination with the game has even filtered into some of his CD demos: One of his tracks contains a natural Nazi regime. His deep fascination with the game has even filtered into some of his CD demos: One of his tracks contains a
demons. One of his tracks contains the lyrics, “...making blood rain / like the girl in the game.”

Wuerthner is also drawn to the realness of “Halo.” “I can’t stop myself from getting sucked into the game,” he says. “I can’t stop thinking about the game.”

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March Crossword

by Eric Glover

Across
1. CBS’s number one show
2. Actress: _____ Michelle Gellar
3. Same as 7 across
4. Sidekick tired of hearing what's "elementary"
5. Live Journal (abbr.)
6. MTV prank show
7. John Steinbeck’s "_____ Mice and Men"
8. "The Funnies" by Lena Moreno
9. MTV word for "house"
11. "Elementary" about nothing
12. "Number one" card game
13. "Titanic" medicine
14. "Dippin' Dots"
15. "Mister ______"

Down
1. "Smallville," Clark is ______
2. "Fiddler ______ the Roof"
3. "Holy Grail" group: "_____ Python"
4. "Pluto"
5. "She's got the ______ to Herbal"
6. "Star vs. the Forces of Evil"
7. "Man and the Masters of the Universe"
8. "Promiscuous"
9. "Titanic" medicine
10. "Smallville," Clark is ______

Submit completed crosswords to room 158 by March 18. The winner will receive a bag of candy of his or her choice.

Congratulations to last issue’s winner, sophomore Antonio Cellamare!

The Funnies

Fish ’n Chips

by Lena Moreno

Hey man! C’mon! Hey cakkidyang! Hey lady! Hey purrygus!!

I thought you kept it ______

Obvious!!

"We can’t be promiscuous about chicken squeezing."
-Feb. 3, 9:44 a.m., room 312

"So what are you saying? That I couldn’t take on all the Disney Princesses in a fight to the death?"
-March 1, 12:07 p.m., room 137

"My dad’s in the circle business."
-Feb. 15, 10:11 a.m., room 315

"The zodiac is crashing. Well, that will be interesting to watch."
-Feb. 23, 1:30 p.m., room 312

"This class has a way of turning nose-blowing into party time."
-Feb. 3, 9:44 a.m., room 312

"She loves sex, and she loves Jesus. That’s it."
-Feb. 15, 12:27 p.m., room 165

School LYFE

by Yanael Tamrat

Hey, you know that my father is an astronaut.

"Well, he’s going to the sun next week!"

Wouldn’t he be burnt to a crisp?

No man, he’s going at night! Why.

"Hey, you know that my father is an astronaut."

"Year!"

Hey man!!
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Las noticias

Algunos usan supersticiones para mejorar su suerte

Por Paúl Richardson

Además de estudiar antes de un examen, Patrick Beckford, del undécimo grado, duerme y sueña con su libro de estudio para mejorar su suerte. Esto es una sugerencia en que cree su mamá y la cual él ha hecho muchas veces.

Para algunos, esta acción puede parecer rara, pero Blakers como Beckford hacen cosas para aumentar su suerte y las posibilidades de obtener lo que quieren. En algunas culturas, estas creencias supersticiosas han formado parte de la vida cotidiana de muchos.

La explicación

Janet Chernela, una antropóloga que trabaja en Latinoamérica, describió este fenómeno. “La superstición es usada para explicar una creencia que no es eficaz fuera de lo común,” dice Chernela.

Algunas religiones se han combinado con las supersticiones caribeñas. “Los movimientos de los brazos cruzados y ver cómo los niños se mueven tiene miedo a estar sola.”

Un creencia popular es que “Si algo va a pasar, es debido al comgio de algo que he aprendido a creer por mí misma,” asegura Carillo.

El lado oscuro

“Las creencias supersticiosas son fuentes de ilusión,” argumenta Beckford. “En el caso de la lotería, el juego no es muy eficaz. El único efecto que puede tener es el acto simbólico, como si estuvieran teniendo sexo,” dice Beckford.

Religiones con creencias supersticiosas

- Santería: es una religión que viene de donde "este mundo" y "el otro mundo" se entrelazan, con elementos africanos y religiosos de diversas áreas del mundo. Aunque no existe una edad en específico para convertirse, muchas personas lo hacen por la influencia de sus padres o entre amigos.

- Umbanda: es una religión creada en Brasil que venera a diversos deuses (inyoré), que combinan elementos africanos y religiosos católicos, con la finalidad de ayudar a las personas en diferentes aspectos de su vida, como salud, amor, trabajo, entre otros. Se cree que sus prácticas pueden influir en la vida cotidiana de las personas.

- Vudú: es una religión que se originó en el siglo XIX en la isla de Puerto Rico, que combina elementos africanos y religiosos de Europa y América. Se cree que puede influir en la vida cotidiana de las personas, pero es importante destacar que no todos lo practican.

- Astralismo: es una creencia que se refiere a la existencia de reencarnación y al hecho de que la persona puede viajar al "otro mundo" a través del sueño. Esta creencia se usa para mejorar la vida cotidiana, como hacer que un sueño propicie un buen momento.

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March 10, 2005
**BOYS LACROSSE**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** 4-6

**HEAD COACH:** Robert Gibb

**PLAYERS LOST:** Josh Gottlieb-Miller and Alex Berger

**KEY PLAYERS:** Senior Andrew Beach, senior Andrew Helgeson, senior Justin Hoy and senior Erik Kojola

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “I think the key to our having a successful season is in the unknowns. We need some of the new guys to pick it up, and it looks like they are,” says Gibb, adding, “It will be an interesting year.”

Information compiled by Erik Kojola

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**GIRLS LACROSSE**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** 6-6

**HEAD COACH:** Michael Horne

**PLAYERS LOST:** Anna Benfeld and Mairead Hunter

**KEY PLAYERS:** Junior Maddie Driskill, senior Raya Stein: Michael Horne

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “We play good team defense and have a pretty capable offense. We need a little more depth in the midfield,” says Horne.

Information compiled by Erik Kojola

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**GYMNASTICS**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** Placed sixth in County meet

**HEAD COACH:** Paul Belliveau

**PLAYERS LOST:** Amanda Allen, Lizzie Bryant and Denise Sylla

**KEY PLAYERS:** Junior Rose Feinberg, junior Raya Stein: Michael Horne

**UPCOMING MEETS:**

- 4/8 vs Blake, 4 p.m.
- 4/18 at Walter Johnson, 6 p.m.

Information compiled by Lauren Finkel

---

**COED VOLLEYBALL**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** 5-7

**HEAD COACH:** John Mott

**KEY PLAYERS:** Sophomore Carl Burton, senior Vycong Liu and senior Kristina Yang

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “Girls will be our strength, and if we can get some boys that can hit, we’ll be fine,” says Mott.

Information compiled by Anthony Glynn

---

**BOYS TENNIS**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** 8-4

**HEAD COACH:** David Ngbea

**KEY PLAYERS:** Senior Edward Hsieh, junior Michael Tsai and sophomore Hailtu Yang

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “We’ll do okay, as long as players don’t let their egos take it hold,” says Ngbea.

Information compiled by Nick Falgout

---

**TRACK AND FIELD**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:**

- **Boys:** 1-4, **Girls:** 2-3

**HEAD COACH:** Carl Lewin

**KEY PLAYERS:** Sophomore Ashlyn Sinclair, sophomore Halsey Sinclair and sophomore Josh Uzzell

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “I am very optimistic about our chances this year,” says Lewin.

Information compiled by Kristina Yang

---

**BASEBALL**

**LAST YEAR’S RECORD:** 13-9

**HEAD COACH:** Louis Hoelman

**PLAYERS LOST:** Katherine Epstein and Marianne Epstein

**KEY PLAYERS:** Sophomore Michelle Lainford, senior Emily O’Brien and junior Sarah Rumbaugh

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SEASON:** “I’m always optimistic about the season. The key to the season will be to stay healthy. If we stay healthy, we will be competitive,” says MacDonald.

Information compiled by Ellie Blalock

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Information compiled by Lauren Finkel

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Photos by Nathaniel Lichten, Hannah Rosen, Adam Schuyler and Hannah Thresher taken during the week of Feb. 28.
Athletically sound and college bound

Blazers shoot for athletic success in the aggressive college recruitment world

By ELLIE BLAACK

When senior varsity girls basketball coach Brittany Higgins received her first college recruitment letter in her junior year, it meant not only that she was one step closer to playing college basketball and hopefully her dream of someday playing professional basketball, but also that she had just become, in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) jargon, a "recruited prospect: student athlete."

As of that moment, Higgins could no longer exchange more than a quick "hello" with a college coach without it being considered an official face-to-face "contact" (illegal until the July after her junior year). Yet somehow, she was expected to sort through countless letters and phone calls on her own, in search of her perfect match: a Division I school, preferably in North Carolina, that could offer her the right combination of academics and competitive playing time.

Higgins, who qualified for the tournament with 41 points, missed the top eight spots in their weight class at the end of the tournament. Only one of the top eight qualified for the tournament with 41 points. In order to place eighth, the coach needed to sort through and find a school that matches their goals.

Phone calls and letters

A variety of colleges (some local, some national) ranging from Division I to Division III have shown interest in Higgins, a three-year varsity basketball player who, according to Blair’s top scorers, is generally among Blair’s top scorers. At this point, she is very interested in High Point University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and has begun talking to coaches at both schools. Although Higgins’s experiences with college coaches and coaching assistants have been generally good, she knows of other athletes with horror stories of coaches calling morning and night. "They want to know if you can play basketball," Higgins says. "I’ve heard that some coaches just call, call, call. It gets kind of annoying if you’re not interested," she adds.

Junior Cate Rasmann, who played in the Montgomery County Wrestling Tournament as a Blair varsity squad and an off-season Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) team, has already seen college coaches at one game. "All the letters said, 'We saw you play and think you have potential and we’re interested,'" she says. "Many of the letters continue to do this. I have Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, from which Rasmann has come to expect this. I have received certain mail ranging from comic strips featuring the girls on the team to holiday-themed letters. Valentine, a Thanking thing," Rasmann recounts with a laugh.

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Coach Jake Scott prepares senior Andrew Wallis for the Montgomery County Wrestling Tournament on Feb. 19. Photo by Anthony Glynn

By ANTHONY GLYNN

FEAR. 19, NORTHWEST—

Last year, the Blazers had a third place, a second place and three first place finishes at the Montgomery County Wrestling Tournament. This year, they had one wrestler place eighth.

To enter counties, a wrestler must have 30 regular season points. In order to place in the competition, wrestlers must be in one of the top eight spots in their weight class at the end of the tournament. Only two Blazers (senior Andrew Wallis (189) and junior Jean Ulysse (160)) qualified for the Montgomery County Wrestling Tournament, and only Wallis placed.

Walls, who chose to compete after qualifying for the tournament with 41 points, won his first match by forfeit when his Richard Montgomery opponent, Kyle Gallagher, failed to make weight.

Walls went into his second match hopkinson, in which he lost to a Sherwood opponent, in the beginning to overcome his opponent’s strength advantage with his endurance. However, 20 seconds into the second period, Walls aggravated a shoulder injury and had to forfeit the match. Walls entered the tournament’s "loser’s bracket," in which he lost to a Sherwood opponent after a second period pin. Coach Jake Scott attributed the Blazers’ demise at Counties to both the exceptional strength and experience of Wallis’s opponents and Wallis’s recurring shoulder problems.

However, 20 seconds into the second period, Walls aggravated a shoulder injury and had to forfeit the match. Walls entered the tournament’s "loser’s bracket," in which he lost to a Sherwood opponent after a second period pin. Coach Jake Scott attributed the Blazers’ demise at Counties to both the exceptional strength and experience of Wallis’s opponents and Wallis’s recurring shoulder problems.

Senior Tyaishia Jackson qualified for the tournament with 38 points. This year, the school athletes nationwide who qualified for the tournament with 41 points. In order to place eighth, the coach needed to sort through and find a school that matches their goals.

Sinclairs compete at States March 10, 2005

Photo by Hannah Thresher

Blair wrestlers fall short

By JASON GOLD

Sophomores Halsey and Ashlyn Sinclairs competed at the Maryland State Championship. The girls placed high in each of the three events they competed in: the 800m, 1600m and 3200m. Both Halsey and Ashlyn finished in the top 10 in all of their events, but only Halsey was able to improve upon one of her times from the Feb. 16 Regional Championship.

Halsey ran the 1600m and 3200m events, finishing sixth in both with times of 5:23 and 11:41, respectively. Ashlyn finished sixth in the 800m with a time of 2:24 and seventh in the 1600m at 5:31. Ashlyn and Halsey both ran some of their best times during other seasons to come.

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Vikings knock Blazers from playoffs

By DAN GREENE

MARCH 1, WHITMAN—The girls basketball team entered the second round of the playoffs in high spirits after a 12-0 season. The Vikings, who started the year off at the seeded Quince Orchard, but fourth-seeded Whitman proved too much for them. Before a large and fervent student following, the Vikings ended Blair’s playoff run with a 45-38 victory.

Blair showed defenses of defensive and offensive flair throughout the night, especially in a 13-0 run that spanned the third and fourth quarters, but the team was ultimately unable to consistently control the momentum of the game. The Viks put up a fight, but pay for any carelessness, penetrating the Blazers’ defense on quick, point-guarding and answering any fouls with deadly accuracy at the line.

Seniors Brittany Higgins, Javana Henderson and Vicky Dean all scored well enough to keep Blair in it, but with the exception of Higgins, who scored 13, the Blazer were not able to consistently put points on the board.

Blair was down 27-16 after a lackluster first half, including a half a minute on the clock before the Vikings could finally score their second point of the game. Blair bungled transition into offense by refusing to use the open lane to the basket and continued to shoot blanks at the line. The girls foul shooting held them back all night; sharper free-throws would have made a big difference down the stretch.

The Blazer were getting repeated embothered by the Vikings on offense as the third quarter wound down, and girls suddenly broke out. After two periods with no inside penetration, Henderson and Higgins dished for one another, with paint-like play. Everything started clicking with transition, and the Viks found themselves stretching a lead to 35-29 at the end of the third.

Higgins drove for another two as Blair ended the quarter and began the fourth quarter. The Viks looked like they were about to put the game out of reach. But Higgins put it out of reach. But Higgins put the game out of reach.

Blair’s offensive explosion caught the Vikings off-guard, but they managed to recover with more consistent scoring and a bit of their outside shooting. Although Whitman stepped up with rough defense, the Viks hit three of some scrambles for the ball and slowly ceded control of the game back to Blair, who eventually pulled ahead. Blair’s offensive blunders on simple shots and passes showed how the Viks barely needed to lengthen its lead.

Foul shooting put Whitman back on top, but Blair looked like they were about to put it out of reach. But Higgins responded with a textbook outside jumper, swishing a dagger of a three. Unfortunately, the rest of the Viks were interested in, starting too late in the offensive pluck they needed to pull even in the final minute.

The Viks ended the game in front of another strong student following, the Blair had flashes of great team play but could not keep it together long enough to secure a win. In the end, Whitman’s cleaner passing and shooting, as well as their steady production at the line, made the difference. While this season is over, there is a lot of hope for the team’s performance next year. The Viks could improve on fundamentals and teamwork, but with talented players like juniors Monique Elridge, Sara Pierce and Cate Rassman, they have a solid framework upon which to build.

Boys place at Metros

Swimmers finish eighth among 46 teams

By KRISTYA YANG

FEB. 26, MONTGOMERY AQUATIC CENTER—Every year, after the regular season is over and done with, after divisional and county championship trophies are handed out, many swimmers take some time to build on their season, getting their first glimpse of the bigger picture. Post-season meets, often divisional or county meets, are the first team meetings swimmers take to chase the goal of a state title. The goals come from attaining checkpoints, from good overall team times, from qualifying for state meets.

Although the Blazer girls sent four swimmers to Metros last year (only one of whom graduated in 2004), junior co-captain Kelsey Dean was the only Blazer to score in the non-relay events. This year, Dean placed third in the 100 IM and 16th in the 100 Fly. Along with Vuong, Yang was the only Blazer to score in the non-relay events.

The team’s success was not limited to the relay events, however. This year, the seniors included similar triumphs in the last year’s team that featured a Lundmark and Wilchek led the boys with a sixth-place finish in the 100 Free and a second-place finish in the 200 IM, sealing it at 322.22. The Vikings were not limited to the relay events, however, and the boys enjoyed similar triumphs in the last year’s team that featured a Lundmark and Wilchek led the boys with a sixth-place finish in the 100 Free and a second-place finish in the 200 IM, sealing it at 322.22.

The Viking boys held their own against the competition, earning 94.5 points to place 19th in the overall team standings. The team placed fourth in their respective events.

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Blazers get iced in the playoffs

By DAN GREENE
FEB. 26, SPRINGBROOK—

The Blazers put up a hardy opposition to the ferocious Blue Devils for much of the game tonight, but a flurry of Springbrook scoring coupled with the ejection of coach Orlando Larracuente took the wind out of Blair’s sails and let the Blue Devils run away with the first-round playoff match, 64-45.

Blazed solid, speedy basketball for much of the night, but it later degenerated into turnover-riddled, sloppy play. After Larracuente was dealt two technicals in quick succession, Blair did not look like they could keep it together. Springbrook had built a healthy 14-point lead, and it proved to be too much for the Blazers to overcome.

Springbrook’s perimeter play proved to be the big difference again tonight; although Springbrook’s big men did repeatedly demolish the Blazers in the paint, their outside ball movement and unerring accuracy beyond the arc hurt the Blazers all night.

Senior guard Makonnen Brown had some success from outside, racking up four treys, but could not come even with the Blue Devil guards. Brown’s real damage was done in his slashing drives and in distributing the ball to Blair’s outside-shooters and inside post players.

Senior workhorse Kenan Myers also worked hard to keep the Blazers in the game tonight, grabbing 11 points and several thundorous blocks against unsuspecting Blue Devils. Myers would come out of nowhere all over the court to smack away what looked like a definite two points.

Springbrook opened up the night with a 10-0 run, but Blair was not about to let the Blue Devils run away with it, going tit-for-tat on the offensive end and coming up with major defensive stops when needed. As halftime approached, the Blazers were breathing down the Blue Devils’ necks, 27-21.

Blair kept it up for much of the third, but the Blue Devils’ skill and length started taking its toll. Springbrook did not let up on the demoralized Blazers as the quarter wound down, silencing Blair on defense and scoring with abandon.

Blair was in a deep hole in the fourth quarter and did not manage to climb out. Junior Petros Fentahin hit a jumper as time expired, but by then the game was already out of reach.

Blair’s early playoff exit showcased the inconsistencies that must be addressed if they are to compete next season. They must work for a cleaner transition game, a better grasp of offensive fundamentals and, overall, more cohesive team play. There is hope for Blair, especially with players like sharp-shooting sophomores Marquis Tyler and Jaydee Encarnation as well as versatile sophomore swingman Ross Williams. All of these players can produce when it matters, but the real challenge will be in forging a unified, consistent Blazer team.

Senior Kenan Myers takes it to the basket against the intimidating Blue Devils defense. Myers played solidly, grabbing 11 points in Blair’s 64-45 first-round playoff loss, the third game the Blazers dropped to Springbrook this season. Photo by Charlie Woo

March 10, 2005
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