

VOLUME
I

SUMMER
2020

CATS ROAR

AN INSIDE LOOK AT JENISON ATHLETICS





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We would like to issue a special thank you to all of those who capture these special moments for Jenison Athletics from behind the lens:

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JenisonWildcats



Jenison_Wildcats

ONWARD WILDCATS

4

**ONWARD WILDCATS,
EVER ONWARD,
FIGHT TO VICTORY!
GREEN & WHITE,
FOREVER FIGHTING,
HERE'S OUR CHEER FOR THEE!
RAH! RAH! RAH!
FIGHTING WILDCATS,
LOYAL BOOSTERS,
HERE'S TO DO OR DIE.
ALL FOR THE FAME OF OUR SCHOOL,
JENISON HIGH.
J - E - N - I - S - O - N,
GO JENISON
GO, FIGHT, WIN!**

**ON YOU WILDCATS,
ON YOU WILDCATS,
ON TO VICTORY.
COME ON, TEAM;
WE'LL WIN TONIGHT WITH LOYALTY TO THEE!
RAH! RAH! RAH!
ON YOU WILDCATS,
ON YOU WILDCATS,
WAVE THE GREEN & WHITE.
COME ON, TEAM;
WE'LL WIN TONIGHT SO
FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

JENISON'S STATE CHAMPION
MARCHING BAND PERFORMS
DURING PREGAME OF THE 2019
HOMECOMING GAME VS.
MUSKEGON REETHS-PUFFER.



JENISON HIGH SCHOOL FIGHT SONG

PHOTO BY AMANDA SMABY

FROM THE DESK OF THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

TIM RITSEMA



ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, TIM RITSEMA



Dear Jenison Community,

At our opening teacher in-service this fall, Superintendent, Mr. TenBrink challenged us this year by focusing on the word “Relentless”. Being “Relentless” in everything we do from teaching, to caring for kids, to doing all the little things right, and to have a burning desire to be the absolute best in all that we do. Well those words sparked an interest in a number of things for me. A new school year, a new logo, a new conference, and a new publication. With this first edition of the Cat’s Roar, we hope you too appreciate the start of the latest way Jenison can tell our story – and we have stories to tell!

Jenison Public Schools hold academics in very high regard and as an extension to the classroom, we also hold athletics in much the same light. We expect our student athletes to excel in both the classroom and in the academic arena while representing our schools and community in the very best way possible. And that’s part of A our mission – to help our young adults be successful in these areas as we walk side by side with them celebrating their successes and helping them through their setbacks. I can’t tell you how lucky I am to have a small hand in this and to be part of a team that values these expectations. Jenison is a great place!

Little did we know at that time we’d be in the middle of a pandemic that is sure to change the world as we know it. I can’t tell you how proud I am of our athletes and parents as well as teachers, administrators, and the entire community on how we have come together to fight this disease. In a way, it has recalibrated our school and community by A being forced to take a step back and take inventory of what is most important. As much as we love athletics, it is family, friends, and being grateful for the things that we so often take for granted that makes us all winners.

In the following pages, you will get a snapshot of what makes Jenison so special – the students and coaches. Regardless of whether we win state titles or not, we have amazing kids who rise up and exceed the expectations set in front of them. Furthermore, we have coaches whose sole mission is to be part of transforming their lives.

We hope that you are inspired by what we are doing at Jenison and that you enjoy our first edition of the Cat’s Roar. Again, I am honored to be part of this incredible athletic family we call The Wildcats as we live into our core beliefs of Community, Achievement, Tradition, and Service, and that in the following pages, you are too!

Go’CATSA

Tim Ritsema, CAA



WHAT IS AN ATHLETIC TRAINER?

Trainer! Trainer! Those words are familiar to coaches and athletes on the sidelines whenever a teammate goes down on the field. Someone usually runs out and tends to the injured player, but who is that someone? They are Athletic Trainers and often are confused with personal trainers, physical therapists or nurses. Here is a look at what an Athletic Trainer is and why they are an important team member when it comes to athletics.

The title of “Athletic Trainer” can be confusing because they don't actually “train” anything. Athletic Trainers are medical professionals who provide services in an athletic population that include injury prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The National Athletic Trainer’s Association (NATA) helps us take a look at the difference between an Athletic Trainer and a Personal Trainer.

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER

An athletic trainer is a person who meets the qualifications set by a state licensure and/or the Board of Certification, Inc. and practices athletic training under the direction of a physician.

Certified athletic trainers:

- Must have at least a bachelor's degree in athletic training, which is an allied health profession
- Must pass a comprehensive exam before earning the ATC credential
- Must keep their knowledge and skills current by participating in continuing education
- Must adhere to standards of professional practice set by one national certifying agency

Daily duties:

- Provide physical medicine and rehabilitation services
- Prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate injuries (acute and chronic)
- Coordinate care with physicians and other allied health professionals
- Work in schools, colleges, professional sports, clinics, hospitals, corporations,

PERSONAL TRAINER

A personal trainer is a person who prescribes, monitors and changes an individual's specific exercise program in a fitness or sports setting.

Personal trainers:

- May or may not have higher education in health sciences
- May or may not be required to obtain certification
- May or may not participate in continuing education
- May become certified by any one of numerous agencies that set varying education and practice requirements

Daily duties:

- ⇒ Assess fitness needs and design appropriate exercise regimens
- ⇒ Work with clients to achieve fitness goals
- ⇒ Help educate the public about the importance of physical activity
- ⇒ Work in health clubs, wellness centers and various other locations where fitness activities take place

HEATHER PRAHL AT | AC



Hi!

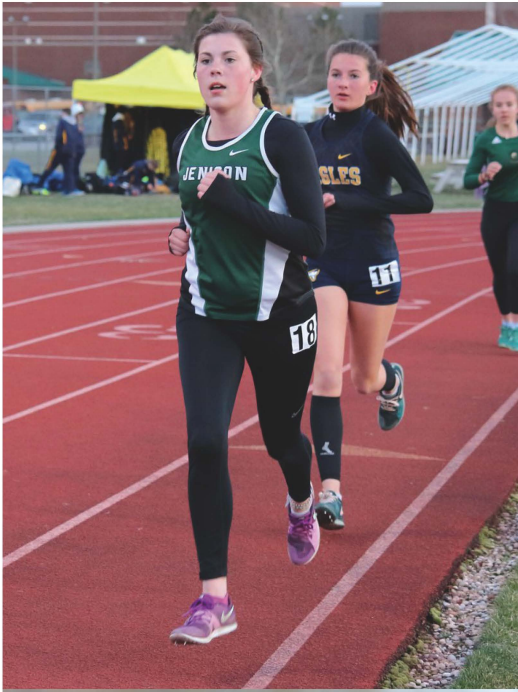
My name is Heather and I'm proud to call myself your Athletic Trainer! This is my third year providing services at Jenison Public Schools and my fourth year of being a certified and licensed Athletic Trainer. I graduated from Grand Valley State University in 2016 with a Major in Athletic Training and a Minor in Dance. I've always had a passion for helping people and learning new skills and that's exactly what this job is.



Athletic Training is a fun, fast paced, and rewarding profession. When I say rewarding I don't mean financially. This is a challenging job and at the end of the day I leave knowing I was able to help someone and make a difference. I love working in an athletic population with motivated athletes who want to improve their skills and are always eager to be out on the field. Getting to be a part of that process by keeping athletes safe and healthy makes working weird hours worth it. The athletic training profession is always growing, and new skills and techniques are always being discovered. I love being able to constantly learn and immediately apply my new skills to the work I am

doing. No two athletes are the same and no two injuries are alike. This job allows for creativity and quick thinking. Whether you are out on the field or sitting on the bench, I'm here for every athlete as I continue to be a proud member of the Wildcat family!

JENISON HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC TRAINER



A LOST

GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD

BOYS TRACK AND FIELD

GIRLS TENNIS

BASEBALL

SOFTBALL

GIRLS LACROSSE

BOYS LACROSSE

GIRLS WATER POLO

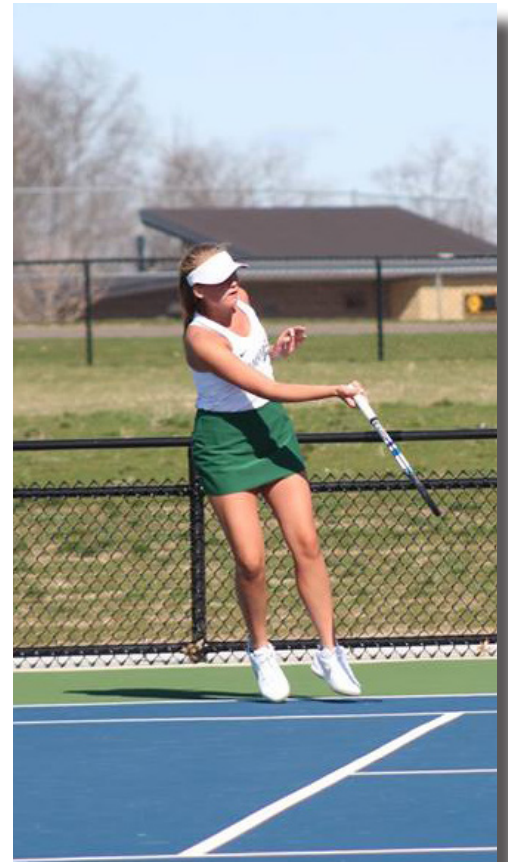
BOYS GOLF





SEASON

The impact of Covid-19 has caused so many things in our lives to change. From illness and loss of life, to lost incomes, learning new terms like "Social Distancing," and so much more. Another way it has impacted us close to home is the loss of so many "lasts". The last chance to see friends in the hallways, Senior Prom, the last school play, the joyous feeling of turning textbooks back to your teacher for the final time, and the last chance to play a sport you have worked so hard for. Our heart breaks for our senior athletes whose season was taken away from them before it even really got started. Whereas Zoom, facetime, texts and phone calls fill the void, nothing can replace competing with your teammates, win or lose, one last time. The following spring senior athletes were asked what the loss of their senior spring sport means to them and what their future plans are.



ABBI MORSE | SOFTBALL

When I think about COVID-19, I think about how I'm going to miss the bond that I have on this team. This team is more than what you would expect out of a high school sport. This is a family. I hope that I find myself involved in a similar bond in college. I've never met a group of girls that feel so close to sisters.

I'm so torn because I never get to step on the field with these people again. We had so much potential to go far this season and we're all beyond bummed.

Personally, I am managing to deal with this pretty well. I continue to talk to my teammates and coaches daily, this has given me a lot of peace of mind. We frequently do Zoom meetings just to see each others faces and laugh together again, it's like we haven't missed a beat.

To my teammates and coaches, thank you. You guys have impacted me to be the person and athlete I am currently. I miss you guys like crazy and am at a loss for words about what has been taken from us. We will come out of this better than before.



NATALIE SYTSMA | WATER POLO

I miss going to practice & laughing with my team at all our inside jokes & memories. Some opportunities that I lost were being able to attend senior night & playing one last game with my teammates. I'm managing things by trying to workout as much as possible because it feels weird not doing something right now.

Some words for my teammates are to keep pushing yourself & take everyday as a new one. I want to thank my coaches for being there for me & always showing me how I can improve. My plans for next year are going to GRCC and then transferring to Grand Valley State where I am going to participate in the Physical Therapy program.



GABE SMITH-VERWYS | TRACK & FIELD

What I'll miss about spring sports is definitely the friendship & events. The opportunities that I lost involve making it to States & redeeming my last track season since I was injured. I'm managing things pretty well, organizing my time and making sure I'm doing school as much as video games. What I have to say is don't take things for granted no matter what anybody says, which I'm sure this is already a lesson you've learned from this current phase we're in. Also to give the sport everything and never "lazy" out or give excuses. Coach VanderBeek it's been really fun having you coach me in Jr. high football and also for these past years in shot put at the high school level. My plans for next year involve playing football at Ferris State and putting everything I've lost from either this situation or injury into the 2020 football season. Also pain is temporary, even if it lasts for a year.



STEPHANIE BOLTHOUSE | LACROSSE

I miss being able to see my teammates everyday and creating a stronger bond with them and miss goofing off with them. Having the "first last game" of senior year, not being able to step on the field one last time to play the game I love.

I am trying to keep busy by still utilizing my lacrosse stick in some sort of way everyday if it comes to wall ball or just cradling watching T.V. I encourage my teammates to not take anything for granted. Every time you have the opportunity to play give it your all, like it's your last game.

I'd like to thank my coach for all the support throughout the last 3 years. Thank you for pushing me to be the best defender I could be, and thank you for the endless amount of running to prepare us for the best. And thank you for making girls lacrosse here at Jenison possible. Next year I plan on attending GRCC for the dental hygiene program.



GRACE WEELDREYER | TENNIS

I will miss being able to play with all my old friends on the team and all the new friends I made at the beginning of the season this year! I thought we had a lot of potential this year as a team and it's too bad we didn't have a chance to show it on the court.

I've enjoyed being able to do things I normally don't have the time to do and spending time with family. Thank you for all the amazing memories we made together and I wish you luck on your upcoming seasons!

I would like to thank Coach Scott and Coach Brown for making it such a great experience. I will never forget all the amazing memories and everything you did for us on and off the court. Thanks for everything!

My plans for next year are currently undecided but I plan on attending either Hope College or Northern Michigan University to further my education.

JONAH GRAHAM | GOLF

Missing out on the spring semester of my senior year has been a disappointment, but I'm glad I can look back on the great years I had at Jenison High School and know I left it all on the DECA stage, ball field, in the classroom and most recently, on the course.

This spring would have been my second year of transitioning from baseball to golf, and I was really looking forward to getting to know Coach Boersema and the guys that would likely make the team. Last year I really loved hitting the course after school and working on my game, but just as important were the times of having fun with my teammates and enjoying being outside together and laughing at a bad shot. While we didn't have a chance to build those relationships this year or spend much time together, I really appreciate the work Coach put into our tryouts and his attitude about keeping things fun. Even though we didn't have a normal year, it was great while it lasted.

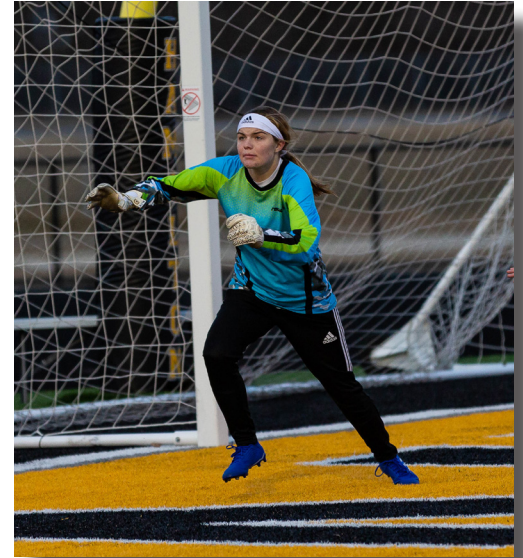
Next year I plan to attend Hope College to double major in Accounting and Economics, and am still contemplating whether to try out for the golf team there. I'm excited to apply the academics and experiences I took from Jenison High School and look forward to cheering on the Wildcats when I come home to see my brother play.



CAROLINE HUISTRA | SOCCER

What I will miss the most about this sport is competing as a team and all becoming family together. Opportunities I have to miss is competing against Mona Shores and beating them. I have been managing things all right. I try to stay busy by going outside and playing soccer or by working out. Stay strong and don't take everything for granted. I want to thank my coaches by always knowing how to challenge me as a player and become a better person and athlete.

My plans for next year are attending Jackson College, and play soccer there while also studying Sonography. Future upcoming Seniors, show our class the best year yet in spring sports and stride to become not only a better person but a better teammate.



RACHEL RUSSO | TRACK AND FIELD

I am going to miss just about everything about Jenison Track and Field. I'm going to miss the bonds I've created with so many different people, laughing, competing, and just having fun. I'm going to miss the bus rides, the long weekend meets, working hard, getting medals and waking up sore after a tough workout. It's difficult to think about how last year was actually my last year of competing. If I knew it was my last year, I would've worked even harder to accomplish things I was hoping to this year. For all of you who are still in high school track, treat every season like it's your last because you never really know when it will be.

I appreciate how so many people and coaches are reaching out to me and all other senior athletes who are missing their final season. It's nice to know that others are thinking of us and that they care, it means a lot! I obviously thought things would be different this year, Covid-19 changed just about everything, but everything has a purpose and I think that's good to keep in mind at times like this.

CHASE POST | LACROSSE

What I miss most about Jenison Lacrosse is going to be the friendships I have made throughout my time playing. Losing this season was a lot for me to handle, I wanted to win the conference championship back-to-back but most importantly, I have always wanted to earn a plaque on the wall. This year was the year I was going to earn All-State. I'd say I'm managing things with just reflecting on myself and still working out. I just want my teammates to know to not take this for granted. Never did I think I would lose my senior year, just proves that you can't take advantage of these sort of things. I want to thank my coach Steve Strelecki for all that he has done for this program and me. I know he tried really hard for me to play at least one last game since I am the only senior with experience on the team. Next year I will be attending Davenport University and playing lacrosse there. #2out.



CADEN BEURKENS | BASEBALL

I really miss being able to be on the field with my friends. We have a strong bond and it's hard to imagine not being around the guys playing ball anymore. I feel like this year's ball team had tremendous potential to go far. Even with our lack of pitching, our hitting and defense were HUGE parts of this year's team. I'm managing myself pretty well on this time away. I've been working out 3-4 times a week and am staying ahead of the game on my schoolwork. I'm also able to keep in touch with friends even if I cannot be with them physically.

If I could say something to my fellow seniors and the younger guys on my team, I would definitely say that I love all of them and saw/see the potential in all of them. To the younger guys specifically, stay strong and stay on the grind. Never hesitate to find something to improve your game. I love you guys and I see so much in you guys. Know that I'm always here if you need anything and there's always a way to reach out to me. I'd be glad to help you. To my fellow seniors, I love you guys man. It's been a journey and I can't believe we don't get to be on the diamond together this year. Each and every one of you have a special place in my heart and I will greatly miss the opportunity to play ball with you guys one last time. All of you will go on to do great things and I am so proud to be a wildcat with you guys. Stay strong.

To my coaches. I love you guys. Individually I'd like to say a few words. Coach Keur, thank you for giving me this opportunity. I never thought I'd miss a sport this much but you have made it so enjoyable. And I thank you for every moment you have shared with me. From the personal conversations last year to the chance to start my first varsity game. Thank you. Coach Tervree, thank you for always going above and beyond to make sure I'm mentally engaged and giving me all the tips and tricks to better my game. You truly made my experience great and I love being around you. You are an easy guy to be around and you mean business. The side chats about how I'm improving and what I can still improve on mean the world to me. Thank you. Coach Witczak, we are truly closer because of the game. I love being around you and you bring a joy to all of the guys on the team. You should hear the words we share about being around you and your "goodie bags" of snacks during games. The chats we have on and off the field and the constant jokes about "playing for your shoes" and the memories of spring break games and whatnot will live on in me forever. Thank you. And to one last coach, Coach Smolen. Smolen was my coach from freshmen to JV year and he created a stronger love for the game for me than I thought I'd had. I know he doesn't coach for Jenison anymore but the memories surrounding those teams are never ending. He actually gave me the nickname everybody decides to call me now in Jv year (stump). Thank you for the countless memories. To all of my coaches, thank you, I'll never forget anything you've done for me.

I plan to attend Grand Valley State University next year with an interest in Electrical Engineering. I am unsure of my athletics as of now as I may or may not decide to join a club or intramural team to keep me busy.

One last thing I would like to add, thank you Jenison. For everything. I never thought a community would mean as much as this one does to me. I love this community and the people who have helped me along my journey. Bauerwood will always be my home. The memories surrounding that school and the middle/high school. I'd like to thank every teacher, friend, person, Coach, and supervisor for everything they've done for me. I'll remember all of you. And thank you for allowing me to play for you for 4 years.





**JENISON
GRADUATE
1983**



**JENISON
ATHLETIC
DIRECTOR
1999 - 2018**

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

KEVIN VANDUYN

EARLY YEARS

You could say I have come full circle with my life. As a kindergartener at Bursley Elementary, I never would have imagined that I would grow up, move to the other side of the country, and end up right back where I started. It was at a young age that I enjoyed all sports, not only playing them, but learning as much as I could about them. I can remember as an elementary kid going to Wildcat Football and Basketball games and watching the entire varsity contest. My friends would all be running the halls or adjacent fields while I simply enjoyed sitting next to my father and talking about the game.

HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

My passion for athletics blossomed in high school where I became a two-sport all conference player in both basketball and baseball. My Jenison athletic experiences did a lot to mold me as a young student-athlete at Jenison. My baseball experience was learning how to fit into a star studded and talented group of individuals. I was a small cog in a program that was dynamic and successful and enjoyed participating for two years on the dominant teams of 1982-1983. Those teams lost only 5 games in two years. Conversely, my high school basketball career was a very different experience. Basketball in the early 80's at Jenison was a struggling program and I was thrust into playing on the varsity for three full years. What started out as a difficult sophomore year through hard work eventually turned into me being a part of a district championship team my senior year. Two completely different experiences but both exciting and exhilarating.

COLLEGE YEARS

I maintain that I played every high school game both basketball and baseball as if it were to be my last. I really had no aspirations to play at the college level. Besides, colleges were not banging down the door for a 5'9" 150-pound point guard or second baseman. I chose Calvin University as Jeff Pettinga, the Calvin baseball coach, had reached out a few times showing some interest. Upon arriving at Calvin University, I still aspired to play both basketball in the winter and baseball in the spring. It was during those four years where I grew physically and mentally into a successful two-sport athlete. I could have never dreamed of becoming a three time all conference basketball player and a four time all conference baseball player including All American honors for two years. I worked very hard to become a better athlete, but my greatest achievement was getting my diploma and gearing myself up for my next and most important phase of life, my teaching and coaching career.

TEACHING AND COACHING YEARS

Being around athletics for much of my early childhood through college years gave me the confidence I needed to pursue teaching and coaching positions outside of my comfort zone. I have had the opportunity to coach and teach in such places as Huntsville, Alabama, Cerritos, California and Palos Heights, Illinois. In each of those experiences I could lean back to my high school and college experiences as a student and as an athlete. In Alabama my challenge was to save an athletic program. In California, I was handed a state championship level program and was fortunate to win many conference titles and a state championship. It wasn't that I was a great coach, I had talented athletes. In Illinois, I was given the responsibility of reviving a once-proud basketball program. In a short time, we were able to do so and enjoyed some years of success.

RETURNING TO JENISON

There was one dream job that I thought about often, the athletic director position at Jenison High School. In 1999 Curt Pals, who had guided Jenison athletics from its early years, was retiring. Curt had seen Jenison High School grow from a fledgling country school in the 1970's to a powerhouse school district leading the charge in both athletics and education. In 1999 I was offered the position of athletic director for Jenison Public Schools. The athletic program was a well-oiled machine and my job was not to mess it up. Over my 20 years, with the support of the community and administration, we were able to pass a bond/millage for several of our Jenison athletic facilities. A natatorium, outdoor stadiums, new baseball & softball facilities have helped Jenison pave the way as a leader in athletics today and in the years to come. These facilities today are still regarded as some of the best in the state. Besides elite facilities, I was able to work with some of the finest coaches and faculty. The 100's of coaches I was blessed to work with not only inspired me but equipped me to be a better leader and person each year at Jenison. Over my 20 years there were many conference, district and regional championships, but it was the deep friendships that I will most remember.

RETURNING TO CALVIN

In the fall of 2018, I took a leap of faith to go to my second alma mater, Calvin University, to be the head baseball coach and be involved in some athletic administrative duties. To leave a place you call home is extremely difficult. So, I am into my second year at Calvin and enjoying a new job, new faces and new challenges. While writing this my Calvin experience is still incomplete. The ending has not been written. One thing I do know is the ending will one day come and I will walk away content and with no regrets. For I will have been blessed from every person in my past and present. I have built relationships with athletes, coaches, teachers, administrators, parents and officials each who have given me insights and support. I have lived a childhood dream I still get to go play sports every day! You may still find me helping at various athletic events at Jenison from time to time – and if you see me, don't hesitate to say hi!



Former Jenison Student, Athlete, Coach and Athletic Director, Kevin VanDuyn, during his induction ceremony into the Jenison Athletics Hall of Fame in the spring of 2019.



KEVIN VANDUYN

FALL SEASON RECAP

A LOOK BACK ON HOW OUR FALL SPORTS TEAMS FARED IN THE 2019 SEASON.

FOOTBALL
VOLLEYBALL
BOYS SOCCER
GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY
BOYS CROSS COUNTRY
GIRLS SWIM AND DIVE
GIRLS GOLF
BOYS TENNIS
BOYS WATER POLO

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

The girls cross country team had a very successful 2019 season! After a solid summer of training, the girls were ready to compete from day one. We had a steady start to the season, placing in the top 2 in three out of our first 4 invitationals. We also went undefeated in our regular season OK Black Jamborees, and went on to sweep our 3rd straight OK Black Championship in BOTH the varsity and JV races! That shows the incredible depth of our team! We went on to the MHSAA Regional meet, where we continued our success and placed 2nd as a team, qualifying us for the MHSAA State Final meet! Maya Guikema (9th grade) and Claudia TenElshof (11th grade) placed in the top 15, finishing 3rd and 5th, respectively. At the cold and muddy State Final meet, all seven girls (Maya, Claudia, Ashley Winger, Lily Strelecki, Tori Vander Veen, Maggie Otto, and Rachael Barone) fought hard and we placed 13th as a team out of 28 teams!

In addition, Maya Guikema was All-State with a 28th place finish! Every girl on the team worked so hard from June through November, with 14 of our 23 girls achieving personal bests this season! Even if most girls weren't on the line at the State Final, the seven who competed wouldn't have been there without the support and commitment from their teammates. Great season, Wildcats!



FOOTBALL

The 2019 season will be remembered by its senior class. Beyond the weather delays and Mosquitos, they were a resilient group that never lost faith in their team or teammates. This senior class instilled a work ethic that was beyond reproach and demonstrated that trait regardless of circumstance. The way they handled the adversity at the start of the year, the dignity and never die spirit they exhibited each and every week, and the resolve with which they finished the season by outscoring opponents 76-0 and logging 8-straight quarters of shutout football, really sets a tone for the program as we head into the 2020 season. This senior class legitimized the virtue that the program continues to collectively grow and learn -- not being constrained or limited by a result on a scoreboard. That didn't diminish their competitive spirit, not in the least. It was obvious for all to see each Friday that they really cared about each other, and accepted the class below them with open arms from the beginning. They will be remembered as a special class. The program is indebted to them, and we will miss them.



VOLLEYBALL

The 2019 varsity volleyball team finished the season 37-13-4 with an undefeated run through OK Black conference play to claim their third straight conference championship! This was a competitive group composed of four seniors, five juniors and two sophomores. Something that really made this group special was the versatility in personnel. We had so many girls who had experience playing different positions which helped make us a more well rounded team.



BOYS SOCCER

Boys soccer season finished their season a solid 11-6-1, with strong senior leadership and a large mix of underclassmen. This team was able to compete in every game with a well-diversified offensive output. The defense was strong all season allowing more than 2 goals only twice. On the season they outscored opponents 60-20. They are looking forward to the challenge of moving into a strong OK red conference this upcoming season.



GIRLS GOLF

The girls golf season was memorable. They learned to support each other through great adversity (loss of a teammate, lots of health issues), coming together to a strong finish. Their schedule consisted of 14 matches - 2 of them dual matches, 11 of them tournaments or jamborees, and 1 of them a special mixed team scramble with Byron Center in memory of Sydney Carfine, a teammate lost in a summer car accident. Team members were sophomore - Malina Kothari, junior - Claudia Scogga and seniors - Sophie Hoekstra, Erin McKinnon, Abby Perrien and Amanda Smaby. Every team member scored in a match. Highlights included the team finishing second in the OK Black Conference, with five players placing in the top 10 in the final Conference match at Macatawa Legends. Amanda, Sophie and Claudia earned All Conference honors; Malina and Erin were Honorable Mention All Conference. Amanda Smaby went on to play her way into the State match, shooting an 89 on a tough Blythefield Country Club course in the Regional tournament. Amanda made a strong showing at States, shooting an 84 and an 88 on consecutive days at Forest Akers West, finishing 26 out of 108 golfers. Special thanks to the 4 seniors, all of them 4 year golfers. These seniors led us in caring deeply for each other, in helping out with all kinds of situations (rides, snacks, carrying clubs, etc.) and in entertaining the team! They are good golfers, but even better people!! We will miss them!!



BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Jenison Men's Cross Country team had a great season ending with 103 wins. The boys continued their dedication and determination to finish as Conference Champions where all 7 runners received awards. Vachon, Walters, Lubberts, Kloppe, and Zimmerman earned All Conference; Bowen and Wood received Honorable Mention. Vachon earned All State finishing 13th in the State Finals.

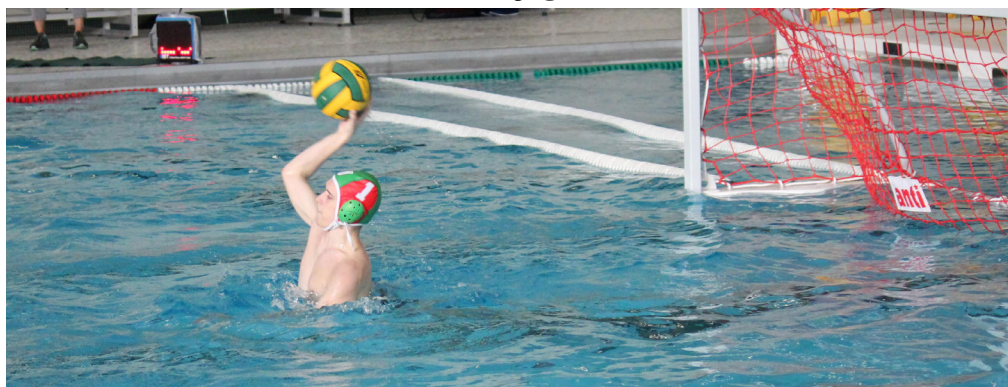
BOYS TENNIS

The Jenison Boys Varsity Tennis Team had another strong year. After winning the OK Black Conference Title the previous three seasons the team came up just a bit short and finished second place this season. However, strong performances came from players all around. Jenison led the Conference with the most players being nominated for All Conference Honors which included seven players. It was a great season and Coach Boersma is excited to get back out of the courts starting this summer.



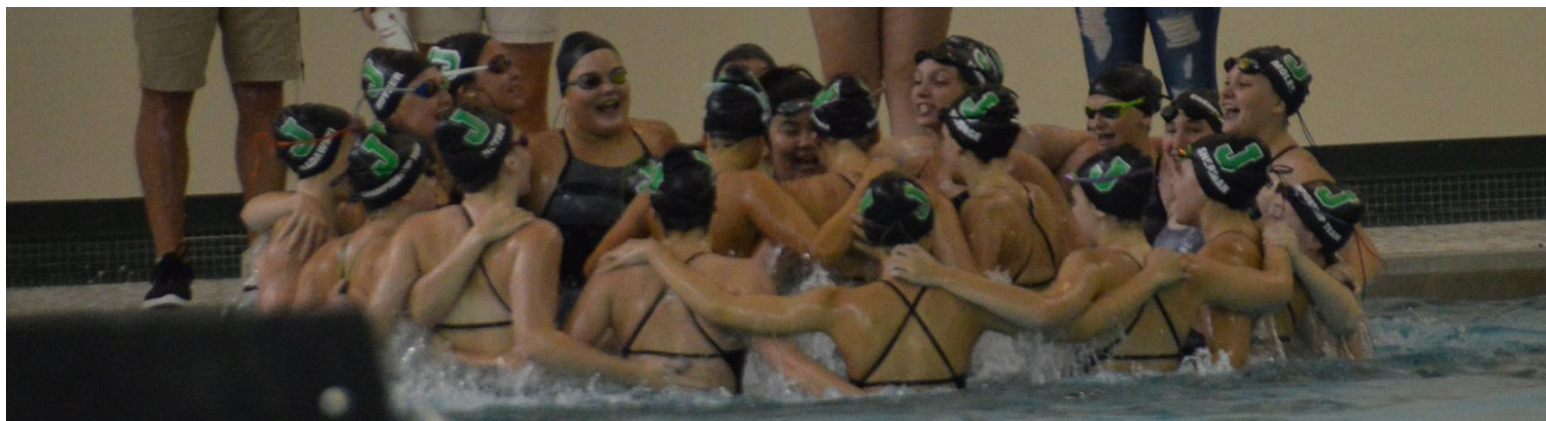
BOYS WATER POLO

The 2019-20 season for the Jenison Men's Varsity Water Polo team was one of immense growth. Of our fourteen players, nine were new to the Varsity team. Over the course of the season, through overwhelming personal hardship and loss, these young men bonded together and fought for each other in each and every game. Our three Wildcat seniors: Andrew Ferguson, Bryce Hughes, and Cam Williams, along with junior captain Nick Majestic, led by example each and every day. The team's hard work paid off with a monumental win over 2018 State Champion Okemos Chiefs at the East Grand Rapids tournament in early October. Ultimately, we have set a solid foundation for the future, and are looking forward to the 2020-21 season!



GIRLS SWIM AND DIVE

The Jenison Girls Swim and Dive team wrapped up their successful season in late November. Over the course of 101 days, the Lady Wildcats trained hard on the pool deck, the diving boards and the weight room. Personal bests in various events were achieved by all swimmers and divers over the course of the 2019 season. Overall, the Wildcats finished with a dual meet record of 7-3. There were nine seniors on this year's squad and they will be missed greatly next year! The nine seniors are: Anna VanHaitsma, Mycah Kasper, Abbi Morse, Dani Norder, Maeghan Kunzi, Dani Timmer, Elvie DeJonge, and Kaylee Rothermel. The Wildcats would finish third overall in the OK Greater Grand Rapids conference, with Abbi Morse, Elyse Radawski and Hailey Sherman earning all-conference honors. State meet would follow two weeks later where the Lady Wildcats would place 17th overall, with five second day swims and dives. Hailey Sherman, Elyse Radawski, Rachel Huyser and Mycah Kasper would earn All-State honors, placing 8th in the 200 Medley Relay. Abbi Morse would finish 12th in 1 Meter Diving. Hailey Sherman would finish 12th and Mycash Kasper would finish 14th in the 100 Backstroke. The 400 Free Relay of Mycah Kasper, Ella Reed, Rachel Huyser and Hailey Sherman would earn 15th place. Overall, it was a very successful season with a very bright future ahead for Jenison Girls Swimming and Diving!



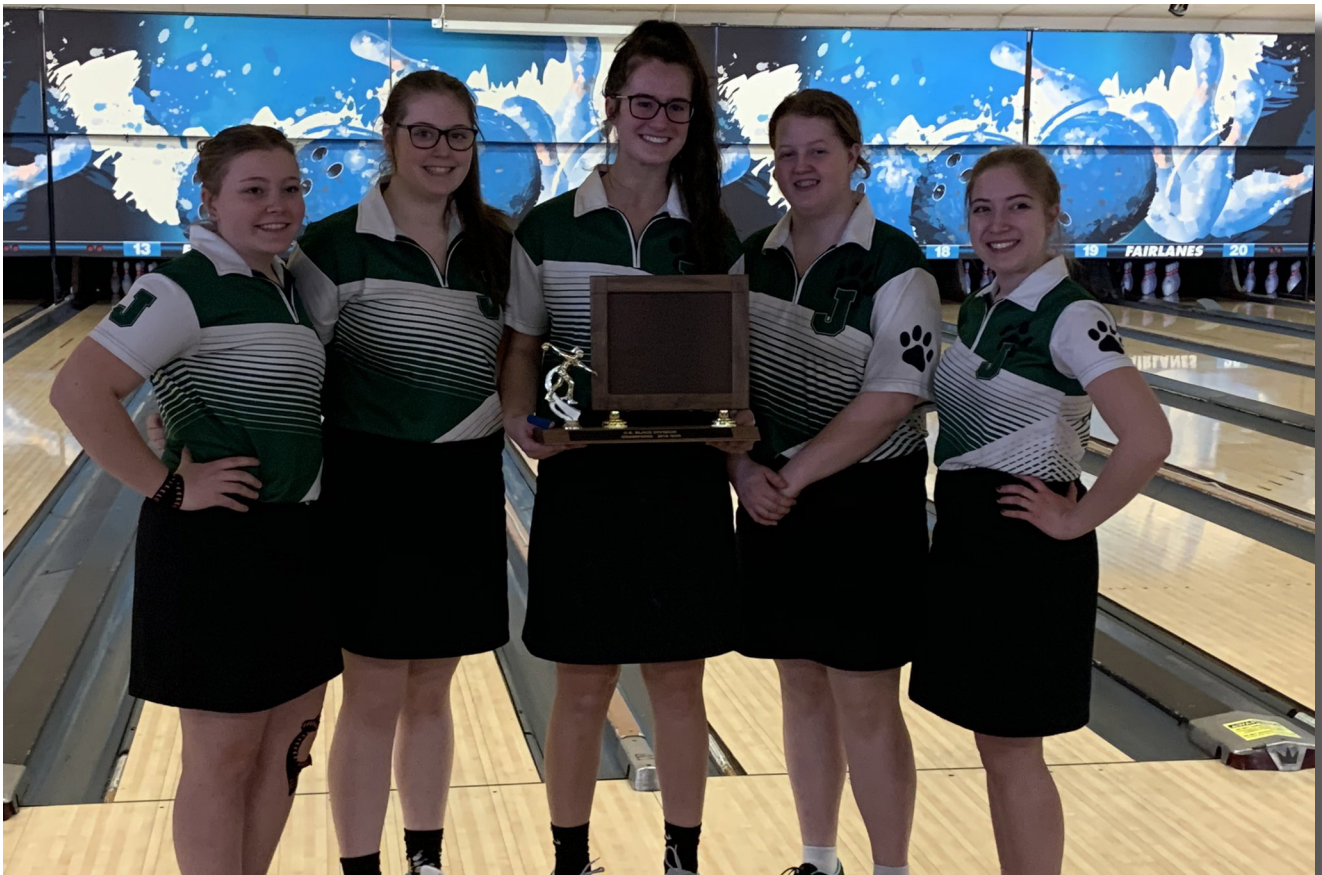
WINTER SEASON RECAP

A LOOK BACK ON HOW OUR WINTER SPORTS TEAMS FARED IN THE 2019-20 SEASON.

BOYS BASKETBALL
GIRLS BASKETBALL
BOYS BOWLING
GIRLS BOWLING
DANCE
COMPETITIVE CHEER
WRESTLING
ICE HOCKEY
BOYS SWIM & DIVE

GIRLS BOWLING

Girls bowling team had another great season. Tying for conference championship, winning Regionals, and finishing runner up at states. Individually, Lauren Slagter and Anna Bartz made a run at Regionals and States. Anna won her first match, but lost her second one. Lauren Slagter made a run into the finals averaging almost 230 in match play, but ultimately losing in the finals. Both performances earn Lauren and Anna spots on the All-State teams, All-State Academics teams, and Michigan HS Dream Team. Dream team is the best of the best seniors in ALL 4 divisions, limited to only 6 seniors in the entire state.



BOYS ICE HOCKEY

Our 19-20 hockey season started off with many challenges that we turned to opportunities to grow. Opportunities for players and coaches to continuously evaluate their contributions to our team. Our roster consisted of 14 skaters, 1 goalie, and 3 coaches. Together we learned how to operate the best we could given any circumstance. Every player and coach stepped up when asked and performed to the best of their abilities. We had players reach milestones in points, years played, educational achievements, and experiences that will last a lifetime. Our team finished with a 13 wins, 11 losses, 2 ties and a locker room full of pride.



DANCE

Our team preserved through so many hurdles this season and came out on top. From multiple dances placing top 4 and under and competing against some incredibly talented opponents, the girls pushed themselves incredibly hard, put in all their dedication, and although we didn't end with the season how we had hoped, we ended with so much more than all the trophies in the world could show. We bonded. We grew in dancing, in maturity, relationships and friends. We laughed (and sometimes cried). Most of all, they made the most of everything and should be incredibly proud. The Varsity team was made up of some of the most impeccable girls who deserve the world and as a coach, I could not be prouder of the 9 ladies I had the honor to coach.



BOYS SWIM AND DIVE

The Jenison Men's Swim and Dive had a very successful season. They finished third in the highly competitive Greater Grand Rapids Conference behind East Grand Rapids and Grand Rapids Christian. We had three athletes earn All-Conference: Liam Kornoely, Tristen Kloppe and Noah Eggleston. We also had numerous athletes qualify for the state meet: Noah Eggleston, Andrew Tease, Ethan Thomas, Sam Albrecht, Tristen Kloppe, Liam Kornoely, Nick Majestic, Cam Williams, Xander Austin and Nate Scholten. Many of these individuals were in a position to earn All-State honors both individually and on relays, but unfortunately our season was shortened one day prior to the State Meet. It was an outstanding season with great improvement from the entire team, and we are already looking forward to next year.



BOYS BOWLING

The boys team finished 3rd in OK Black Conference and placed 4th at Regionals, 21 pins out of qualifying for states. Another highlight was they finished in 1st place at the Zeeland Baker Tournament. The boy's team was young and look to make some noise next year in the OK Red Division.



COMPETITIVE CHEER

During our Competitive Cheer season this year we definitely broke a lot of records! We had some of the highest scores in all three rounds that we have scored in past years. In addition our final total of 775 points has beat all previous scores that we have received. Our team comprised of some very talented athletes. Our first round was a remake of a former Jenison cheer and the team made it their own and showed confidence and strength. Our incredible second round had the maximum points available and we were able to highlight our amazing back tucks. Round three was extremely difficult and the most challenging round three that any Jenison team has ever had. We were very often complimented on it from judges, coaches, and other cheerleaders and spectators. Our team had many accomplishments this season and it will be exciting to see what they will be capable of next year.



WRESTLING

The Wildcat Wrestlers had an outstanding 2019-20 season. We started off with a bang by winning the Tri-County tournament the first weekend of the year. Our Seniors Chadd Larson & Bryce Girschle made a huge impact for us scoring a combined 285 team points throughout the season. Individually, We had 7 regional Qualifiers and a lone State Qualifier (Trey VanHooren 125lbs). We finished the season with a 22-8 record and won the Team District title over Hudsonville & West Ottawa before falling to Rockford at Team Regionals.



GIRLS BASKETBALL

The girls varsity basketball team finished the season 14-8 and 2nd place in the OK Black. The team was ranked in the top 10 multiple times in the area and lost to a close game to Hudsonville in the district final. The success of the season was in large part to the group of seniors that decided themselves to the program and the culture needed for success. The three seniors on the teams were Stephanic Bolthouse, Caroline Huistra and Mandy Smaby. The team returns nine players next season and look to continue future success.



BOYS BASKETBALL

The 2019-2020 boys basketball season was a roller coaster. You will be hard pressed to find a team anywhere that had a turnaround the way the boys did. The team started the season 1-10. However, the guys on this team never gave in and never stopped believing in themselves. They were able to turn the season around going 7-2 in their last 9 regular season games. They were able to beat a lot of teams that had really taken it to them the first time. This season was a story of perseverance, improvement and believing in each other for the boys basketball team.





ANDREW

**A STORY OF HOPE.
A STORY OF INSPIRATION.
A STORY OF ANDEW MEDLEY.**

WRITTEN BY DOMINIC ALLEN AND ROB ZEITMAN

Heading into your senior year of high school, there are certain things that you should be thinking about. Things like; what you want to do after high school, how much fun it's going to be playing on your sports team or participating in your club or arts group, who you're going to go to homecoming with, who's in your first semester classes, graduation and tons more fun things. After all, this is your senior year and it is going to be the best year of your life. In the case of Andrew Medley, you had to add one thing that nobody at any age wants to think about, let alone a high school senior. When is my kidney transplant going to happen?

Andrew has lived his whole life with a kidney that didn't function to what you would consider "normal" capacity. Though it's not been something that held him back as he's been able to excel on the football field and the basketball court. Heading into the summer of 2019 it started to become apparent that at some point in Andrew's life a transplant would be necessary. At first, he was told that the transplant would not take place until the summer of 2020 which would allow him to enjoy for the most part a normal senior year. Then it was spring of 2020, then it was February. "I realized I had to buckle down and enjoy things while they lasted," Andrew said.

MEDLEY





That's a heavy weight for any person to bear. Let alone a 17 year old young man. I had the good fortune of being able to call myself Andrew's basketball coach. I coached him right up until days before his surgery. You would think and totally understand Andrew's mind being elsewhere or unable to focus on a game or practice. That just wasn't the case with Andrew. He was the same Andrew. He was always smiling, always tough on himself and always doing the best he possibly could. To the point that had you not known any better you wouldn't have known Andrew had a kidney that was failing him. In fact, Andrew's last game of his career which was 3 days before his transplant ,was in my opinion, the best game of his career.

If you talk to Andrew he will tell you how important athletics were to him leading up to the surgery. "First off it really helped me because I was healthy. It also really helped me take my mind off of the upcoming surgery because sports just made life feel normal. I was doing the same things I always did. All of my teammates and coaches were so supportive of me and that meant a lot." Not only were athletics at Jenison important to Andrew but having Andrew in athletics was important to the people of Jenison.

In fact, I can tell you that if you were to go around the sports teams that Andrew participated on you won't find a person that says a bad word about Andrew. Coach Rob Zeitman, the varsity football coach, would fall right into that camp. "Andrew served as a captain my first two seasons at Jenison. He has been a recognized leader on the field and has displayed the same tenacity and resilience as he has gone through this experience. He is an inspiration to me and so many of his teammates. He will have a lasting impact on the Jenison football program." Talk about making your mark in the face of adversity.

Andrew continues to recover remarkably well. He had to stay inside his home right after his surgery due to his immune system being compromised. Little did we know the entire country wouldn't be far behind him. Fortunately for Andrew adversity isn't new. He was supposed to have 3 lab appointments a week and 2 doctor appointments a week but due to COVID-19 that has been reduced to 1 lab visit and 2 dr appointments every week. In typical Andrew fashion he isn't concerned about himself but more so his mom and dad going back to work. Both of which could be at the hospital which scares him. One of the highlights of Andrew's recovery was being cleared by the doctors to attend the Senior night festivities at his last home basketball game. "I was really surprised I was able to go. I didn't think the doctor would approve it. Then I was even able to stay for the entire game which was awesome."

Andrew will miss going back and forth with his buddies on the field of play, getting to know so many kids outside of the kids in his grade and so much more about sports. However, he's forever grateful for the participation he was able to have. Andrew shares the grief we all do for the students that weren't able to participate in their spring sport but knows there's more to life than sports. "Look back at all of the fun you had before this happened. Fight through it and remember things could be a lot worse. The most important thing right now is everyone's health and safety."

This is a difficult but really cool perspective to see from a person that has already been through so much in their life. I know I speak for everyone involved in Jenison athletics that we will all remember with great reverence the way Andrew carried himself through his not so typical senior year.



KARI AND KARLA KOSSEN



LEAVING A LEGACY



KARI AND KARLA KOSSEN HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH WILDCAT SOFTBALL SINCE 1986

PRIOR TO THE START OF THE SEASON, THEY HAD ANNOUNCED THAT THE 2020 SEASON WOULD BE THEIR LAST

THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED...

ARTICLE WRITTEN BY TIM RITSEMA

What do you say...

To a coach inducted into the Jenison High School Hall of Fame? To the same coach announcing retirement after discovering that it turns out there is life without softball? To a coach in preparation for a 27th year?

What do you say...

To a team, loaded with talent and with sights set on a long tournament run and state championship dreams? To a building process spanning eight years with the inception of "Wildcat Pride"? To a program others envy because of their success and loyalty and work far before the official start?

What words do you tell them that their season is over before they even get to throw one pitch? When their biggest opponent was a virus so small that even their best hitters on the team couldn't see coming. What do you say?

Kari and Karla are the cornerstones of Jenison Softball. Since 1986, as freshman, they helped build the dynasty it is today. This past year, Jenison Softball celebrated their program's 1000th win in which they are responsible as both players and coaches for nearly 630 of them. However, asking them about their success on the field, they will quickly deflect to what they feel the most proud. Kari and Karla are most proud of building and mentoring their players through competition.

Former player, Lauren Bouwman said this, "Playing Jenison Softball for Kari and Karla not only allowed me to experience some of the best moments of my life, but also transformed me into a responsible young adult. Playing for them wasn't just about playing softball. It was working with others, supporting others, working hard for what you want, respecting where you come from, respecting yourself and one another, managing time, prioritizing, and accepting constructive criticism. All to better yourself and others. They taught me to be a leader. They taught me to never give up. They taught me when your teammates are down, not one person, but the whole team joins in to lift them up and work through issues."

She went on to say, “They taught us to play with heart and leave it all out on the field. They taught us to be on time. They taught us how to dress respectfully on and off the field because we come from Jenison Softball and we respect Jenison Softball, our community, and ourselves. These women transformed us from young athletes into young adults ready for the real world, all while making great memories.”

The “Twins” started playing softball at Jenison in 1986 under the tutelage of Jerry Hoag, another Jenison Hall of Fame coach. Coach Hoag, who upon his retirement, could not think of a better coaching duo than Kari and Karla to take over the reins. After all these years, Coach Hoag still recalls the first week of softball practice during their freshman year. Watching Kari and Karla was a treat because each could pitch or catch and were capable of playing any position; they were interchangeable. When pitchers and catchers threw to each other they always worked together. Did you have a different expectation?



As Coach Hoag reflects, ‘I thought Karla was a little better as a catcher and Kari a little better as a pitcher. So, when games began, I decided that was the best option and for four years it stayed that way with only a few exceptions. They would switch during practice or play another position just so they were prepared. After four years I was asked why I switched them since, before high school, Kari was usually the catcher and Karla the pitcher. I think they probably just switched uniforms when they wanted and only mom and dad knew. Not really! I do remember one time they got on the bus for an away game and had switched jackets which had their uniform number on the sleeve. I asked them why and they just smiled. They are two of the best ball players and people ever to play at Jenison. I had the pleasure of watching them play and coach after.’

Upon graduating at Jenison, they both went on to play at the University of Michigan where they furthered their love of the game. Players turned to coaches at Calvin College alongside joining the Virginia Roadsters as professional softball players in 1995 and 1997. They then went on to coach with Coach Hoag as Jenison's JV coaches until his retirement in 1999 in which they took the reins as varsity coaches and never looked back.

Tenacity and competitiveness are the two attributes most remembered by past athletes. Kari and Karla positively intimidate: they push their players beyond their self-imposed limitations, they are fierce, and refuse to make excuses. You don't end your career with a 500 – 210 record without having these qualities. Yet, once you got to know them and earned their trust, intimidation was just the shell. Kindness, compassion, and relentless caring about each athlete exemplifies the "Twins" program.

Kendra Thomas said, "Kari and Karla were the most fun to be around. Their love of the game rubbed off on each of us and we all became a family. I miss my time playing for them. They taught me so much over four years, especially teamwork and if we bond like a family, nothing can stop us."

Kendra added, "I would go into Coach K's office and talk because I was having a bad day. She always made time for her players if they needed it." As previously stated, coach Kari and Karla had an outstanding record of 500-210. Along the way, their teams earned OK Conference Champions in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2013, 2017, and 2019; District Champions in 2002, 2005, 2018, and 2019; and Regional Champions in 2002 and 2005.



They coached their teams into the playoffs in 2002 at the semifinal game and 2005 where they finished in the top four in the state. And poised to add 2020 to their list of accomplishments until the season was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Virus. This is where their storybook career changed. I remember having conversations with them that went from “practices are to be halted”, to “I’ll let you know about your annual spring break trip”, to, with tears in my eyes...”your season is cancelled.”

Kari and Karla have not stopped coaching and mentoring their team; in fact, their response to their players and families feels like a win.



There is a life lesson that, like an umpire’s call, sometimes the call just doesn’t go the way we want. Or sometimes we lay down a sacrifice bunt to put someone else in a better situation, as our communities’ health is more important than the game we love. The big thing is, looking back now, you really never know when something is going to end. You have to cherish the moment, no matter what, because you don’t know when it could be over. Let this also be a lesson for younger program athletes; use every second you have to get better, have fun and just enjoy the moments participating in such an awesome sport. Don’t take it for granted, because you might not get another chance.

So, where do we go from here? Let’s find some solace or a silver lining in knowing that you have reached great success over the years in softball. From winning many summer tournaments, conference championships, district championships, being athlete of the month, selected All-Conference, All-District, All-Region or All-State - you have made a mark in this program that will never be forgotten! We won’t be able to defend our title(s), but we’ve won it, more than once, and not everyone has the opportunity to feel what that’s like!! You ALL are an incredible group of young women that we are very proud of and privileged to have coached. You will be leaders in our communities, workplaces, churches, and families. We will miss you all so much.

So what do you say to these outstanding coaches who have done so much for Jenison Softball. When “thank you” seems so shallow. Perhaps current senior Emily Siler says it the best. “The twins built a culture that was very unique. They pushed us, believed in us and created a fire in us that made us want to succeed for them. They were the kind of coaches you respected & wanted to make them proud. They taught us to never give up and to overcome our obstacles. I’m so thankful for them and the 3 seasons I got to play for them. We were hoping to send them into retirement with a State Championship because they deserved that!”

So Kari and Karla may not have gotten the chance to finish their career the way they had hoped for but their mark on Jenison and their legacy has touched more lives than they could ever dreamed of and not a single loss or an untimely virus can ever take that away.



WINNER WINNER



PICTURE BY DAMION
VANSLYKE PHOTOGRAPHY



Last year, Jenison High School took on the challenge of applying for the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Exemplary Athletic Program. This program was established in 1998 with four purposes. First, to identify and give public recognition to outstanding athletic programs statewide; secondly, to provide a framework that encourages high school athletic administrators throughout the state to voluntarily engage in a self-assessment and comparison of their current program to a set of established exemplary criteria; thirdly, to facilitate communication and a sharing of best practices throughout our state; and finally, to encourage continued improvement in our state's high school athletic programs.

The exemplary program models excellence and equity. It provides for what is best in educationally sound high school athletics. There is a strong, district-wide commitment to athletic excellence for all of the school's student-athletes. The athletic program's success in advancing the emotional, social, moral and physical growth of all of its participants is a basic foundation of the recognition criteria. In awarding exemplary status to our state's athletic programs, the MHSAA looks to recognize schools where sustained successes in teaching the values of high school athletics are evident.

In early 2019, Jenison put together a committee of administrators, coaches, community members and athletes to see if we could measure up to this challenge. Since the program's inception, roughly 30 schools throughout the state have gone through this process and have earned this distinguished honor. After providing an eleven-member review panel our documentations and hosting another committee for a site visit, I am proud to say that Jenison has earned this prestigious award! Much like peeling an onion apart, we did just that with the athletic department. What we liked, we kept – what we didn't like, we changed. Overall, this doesn't mean we're perfect but rather we are committed to educational athletics and the purpose that it serves. The exemplary award committee that visited our school was incredibly impressed with our facilities and with the people they interviewed. Never have I been more proud to be part of the Jenison community!

The quality of each program was judged by comparing the standards of excellence to the school's goals (vision statement) and the processes that have been put in place to meet those goals. Also, to what extent the athletic program is serving its various constituents (athletes, staff, parents and patrons). An exemplary school's athletic program continually strives to meet and exceed the needs of all student-athletes.

One of the outcomes of the committee's work while compiling information for the MHSAA review committee was the creation of Jenison Athletics core beliefs. Any successful organization must have something that unifies them and has a way to set the compass needle in the right direction, continuously striving for excellence. So after taking inventory of what we hold important and value the most, let me introduce you to CATS: Community, Achievement, Tradition, and Service. As I was reintroduced to Jenison last year when I took the position as athletic director, I can't think of anything better that helps define who we are. The Community is second to none and one we are all proud to be part of. Achievement, not only in athletics but academics and performing arts is what drives us to get up each morning and go to school. The Tradition that we all hold dear to our hearts makes us all feel proud to be a Wildcat and the Service that Jenison strives for in events such as Hand to Hand Ministry, Change can Change Hunger and Pink Out is immeasurable. So join me in celebrating CATS and letting that acronym be the needle in the compass that drives what we do!



PICTURES BY DAMION VANSLYKE PHOTOGRAPHY

ICE, ICE BABY!

How do they do it?

Drew Bobeldyk, Tej Kothari, and Nick Rathsack, epitomize the term student-athlete. Whether they're playing golf, tennis, football or hockey, these guys are able to maintain their focus on academics by killin' it in the classroom. Drew is our valedictorian, Tej a MHSAA Scholar Athlete Award winner, and Nick, who has a 4.0 GPA, a 3 sport athlete, and a very involved student in our school. Coach Williams says, "Three players that experienced different rolls with in our team on and off the ice. On ice, Nick played forward for us, Tej played Defense, and Drew played goalie. Each player played significant roles with in our club for a number of years. Off-ice, all three of these student/athletes grew together through our program and were instrumental in developing our team culture." Recently, I had the pleasure of sitting down with them to have them share what they all have in common besides playing for our schools hockey team.

What sports are you involved in?



When did you start playing hockey?

AGE 4

AGE 4

AGE 7

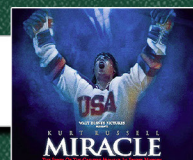
What is your favorite food?

GRILLED CHEESE

PASTA

PASTA

What is your favorite movie about hockey?



What are your college plans?

M

M

M

What do you find challenging about playing sports and succeeding academically?

NICK | Often times it can be hard to balance practices and homework with AP classes but with good time management and a solid work ethic, it becomes almost easy.

TEJ | I find it challenging to complete assignments that have timed due dates for online homework when I have either games or practices during those due dates.

DREW | Time-management is probably one of the bigger challenges that I face as a student-athlete.

What's your favorite athletic memory?

NICK | Beating Hudsonville in football my junior year. There was nothing like having the cat pack rush the field and hearing the boom of fireworks from the surrounding houses.

TEJ | My favorite athletic memory is beating Hudsonville for our purple out game after scoring two goals in the last minute to win it.

DREW | My favorite memory was making it to state finals my first year playing goalie.

Who is your favorite sports hero?

NICK | Nik Lindstrom

TEJ | My sports hero is Nicklas Lidstrom because he was such a great defenseman and he was a great leader.

DREW | I have always admired Tuukka Rask, goaltender for the Boston Bruins. His strive for success and his steadfast determination are two qualities I aspire to carry with me throughout life.

Favorite subject and teacher?

NICK | AP Calculus with Mrs. Clement overall. AP Gov. with Mr. Stump this year.

TEJ | My favorite subject this year is calculus with Mrs. Clement because she has a lot of energy and inspires us to try our best every day.

DREW | My favorite class was AP Calculus with Mrs. Clement.

PHOTO BY



How do you balance athletics and academics?

NICK | Good time management and hard work.

TEJ | I balance my athletics and academics by working on my homework after my practices so I have some free time at night.

DREW | It's easy to balance athletics and academics when you love the sport you play. I leave all stress and thoughts about school outside of the rink when I step on the ice. I attribute much of my academic success to hockey, which is a major outlet for me.

What's the best part of competing for Jenison Hockey?

NICK | A lot of kids on the team have played together or at least known each other for years so we are all like brothers on and off the ice.

TEJ | The best part of competing for Jenison Hockey is having the chance to play with the same guys I grew up playing hockey and going to school with.

DREW | The team. I have played with many of these guys for most of my life, and there's a real family atmosphere in the Jenison locker room. I'll carry the memories I've made with them for the rest of my life.

PHOTO BY



How do you and your teammates make practice fun?

NICK | We compete hard at everything we do and celebrate like we won the Olympics and lose like we just lost playing checkers. So basically when we win we act like it's the biggest deal in the world but when we lose, it's like we were just playing a friendly game of checkers. Keeps things competitive without letting them hurt the team.

TEJ | We make practice fun by having a competition day where it is all small area games and working on certain skills during those games.

DREW | We make several challenges and competitions. Whether it's a 3 vs. 3 game or a shootout, we find ways to create a competitive yet encouraging environment.

If you were coach for a day, what would you do different?

NICK | I would let them scrimmage the whole practice.

PHOTO BY



TEJ | I would add more smaller incentives to competition day like losing team unties the winning teams skates or losing team does a few laps. Little things that would make us work harder in a fun way.

DREW | I've had great coaching, there's nothing I'd do differently.A



Which professional sport would you play if you could? And why?

NICK | Hockey. It never gets old and there is such a silent beauty to the game that can take years to understand. It has such a special community that surrounds the sport. Whether it's family, fans, or players, hockey people are the best people.A

TEJ | I would play hockey professionally if I could because hockey has this speed to it that is unmatched by any sport and it keeps the game excited to play and watch.

DREW | I would play professional hockey if I could because it has always been such a big part of my life. If I could get paid to do something I love, I would take the opportunity in a heartbeat.



Advice for younger athletes?

NICK | Always make time for school first, sports second.

TEJ | Younger athletes should love every game and practice because it will be over before you know it.

DREW | Keep the game fun. Find ways to make yourself better without taking the joy out of the game. You only get so much time, so make the most of every minute you have.

JENISON

ATHLETIC BOOSTERS

JABOOSTERS@GMAIL.COM



JENISON ATHLETIC BOOSTERS



JENATHBOOSTERS

**WANT TO GET INVOLVED?
THE JENISON ATHLETIC BOOSTERS MEET
ON THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH
MONTH IN THE HIGH SCHOOL
MEDIA CENTER AT 7:00 P.M.**

