

School Board Workshop:

March 11, 2024

Subject:

Fall 2023 Activities Report

Presenter:

Nick Guida, BHS Activities Director

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION: Report

DESCRIPTION: Season Summaries

Buffalo High School successfully completed its activities for the fall of 2023. Coaches and Advisors have completed a short narrative of their season for you to review. Thank you for supporting activities at BHS!

Girls Soccer

Head Coach: Josh Soukup (12th year)

Assistant Coaches: Carrie Schmitt, Mike Walters, Sam Haryn Kelli Barth and Shelby Halderson

Fall 2023 was the most successful soccer season in the history of Bison Girls Soccer. It was our first 10-win season, our second trip ever to the Section Finals (where we lost in the final 2 minutes), set the record for most goals, and assists and for the first time since 2018, scored more goals than we allowed. We were able to move to a 4th level and competed at all 4 levels in the Lake Conference. All of that while still being incredibly young as a program. We only graduate 4 seniors and only 1 of them completed the season without a major injury. We have 18 returning varsity players and are excited to see what this group can do next fall!

After reading that you might be surprised to learn that it was also one of the most obstacle filled seasons we've had; we finished the second half of our season with our backup goal keeper, and we were on our 3rd and 4th center backs (the most critical field position). Time after time this group just kept on going and was never phased. This team truly represented what Bison Girls Soccer thrives to be. "We are grateful, resilient, competitive and proud."

I'm truly grateful for the support we receive from the athletic office, the school district and our booster club. Our boosters were able to fund 2 full coaching positions, multiple

team events including Feed My Starving Children as well as a two-day road trip to play Bemidji and Moorhead on back-to-back days.

2023 Captains: Claire Erickson (12), Peyton Anderson (12), Kassie Moser (12), Emilee Neiderhiser (12) and Olivia Luc (11).

2024 Captains: Olivia Luc (12), Hannah Braun (12), Zia Wulf (12), Jeannette Bermudez (11).

All Conference Frist team: Olivia Luc & Hannah Braun

All Conference HM: Jeannette Bermudez, Zia Wulf & Sophie Alderman

2023 Section 8AAA Coach of the Year: Josh Soukup

2023 Team Awards:

Ms Bison Soccer-Claire Erickson

Game Ball-Emilie Neiderhiser

Offensive Player of the Year-Natalie Flynn (10 goals 3 assists)

Defensive Player of the Year-Hannah Braun

Most Improved-Kennedy Herrboldt

Rookie of the Year-Hayden Arvola

Miss Gritty-Jeanette Bermudez

Boys and Girls Cross Country

Dave Knutsen - Boys (10th year head CC coach, 17th year in the program. 30 years as a coach)

Amber Sedbrook - Girls (1st year)

Coming into the 23 season we were not sure how good we could be. Our numbers were down a bit and as a group we did not have as many summer miles under our belts as we did in past seasons. For the first time we were not the overwhelming favorite in Section 8AAA. Morehead, Bemidji, and St. Michael were all considered "better" than the Bison.

The biggest challenge early in the season was not another team or a difficult course. The biggest challenge was the heat. It was HOT. Our athletes adapted very well and we had to have several 5:30 am practices. The boys main Senior captains Collin Berg,

Ethan Gregoire, Kyle Douglas, and Cameron Ryks did an excellent job of keeping the attitude positive and setting the tone of hard work.

Early season race results were positive, if not overly fast. We were not a young team anymore so the boys understood it was going to take steady improvement throughout the season to get back to our goals. Each year they are the same. Win the home meet, Place well in the Conference meet, Win the Section meet and get to State.

This year our top finisher was Wesley Wistrom (Jr). He was consistently joined in each workout by our #2 runner Dexter Huss (jr). Our 3-9 athletes were Collin Berg (Sr), Kumail Akram (Jr), Jacob Macheel (Jr), Triston Lenton (Soph), Kyle Douglas (Sr), Ethan Gregoire (Sr), and Daniel Jungworth (Jr). The boys won the home meet (10th time in 11 years) again this year, (this meet also doubled as the Section preview meet) and the New Prague meet. The boys team showed steady improvement throughout the year and we started to become quietly confident in how we were racing. Few, outside of our own coaches, noticed the improvement. That's ok, we have been overlooked in the past and it always provides a little more motivation.

At the Lake Conference meet the boys team ended up 5th overall. The 4 teams ahead of us were all ranked in the top 10 in the State. Our time continued to improve and we felt ready for the Section meet. Wesley Wistrom and Dexter Huss were all conference athletes. Collin Berg was All Conference honorable mention.

Buffalo Heights was the home of the Section 8AAA meet. We felt confident we knew our course and we were ready to defend our title. The night before the home meet it rained nonstop for several hours. When we (the other coaches and myself) showed up to mark the course, most of the upper loop was under water. Through some creative design we were able to come up with a fair and competitive 5k course. The advantage of knowing the course for our athletes was now no longer the case. True to form, our boys adapted and ran very well. We were Section 8AAA champions for the 3rd straight year and have now won 7 straight Section titles.

The State meet was at a new course this year. Instead of St. Olaf college it is now being held at the Wes Bolstad golf course at the University of Minnesota. It was a rough day for the Bison. Our #2 athlete had his shoe stepped on early in the race and had to stop and readjust. Our #3 athlete was tripped and ended up rolling down a hill. The boys team finished 14th in the Class AAA meet.

I was extremely proud of the boys this year. They worked very hard all year and showed steady improvement. They were constantly overlooked (outside of our program) and were definitely not favored to win either the Section preview meet or the Section meet. They kept their attitudes positive and showed the grit and determination that it takes to succeed.

We will miss our Seniors for their leadership and work ethic, however with a large class of determined Juniors the Boys Cross Country team is poised for another successful 2024 season.

Football

Head Coach: Jackson Litterer, 1st year at BHS. 10th overall

Assistant Coaches: Nick Ward, Austin Youngmark, Craig Lachowizter, Chris Gmach, Troy Holland, Wyatt Craft, Tandrell Foster, DJ Shefland, Leroy Erickson, Jeremy Halek, Mac Mahmens, Josh Lanners, Mike Winfield, Matt Barter, Easton Esson, Dan Reil

The 2023 Bison Football team finished with a 5-4 record and lost to the Woodbury Royals in the first round of the playoffs.

After starting the season with a loss vs. Eden Prairie, a state semifinalist team, the Bison won their next 5 games to win the 2023 Maroon 6A Sub-District Title. This was the first football district title that Buffalo has won since 2009. The Bison ended the season with losses to top-3 ranked Minnetonka and Prior Lake to close out the regular season 5-3. The Bison then lost to Woodbury, the No. 2 seed, in the 1st round of the playoffs. This season provided many highs along with struggles - each proving to be learning opportunities for our kids as we work towards next season.

The Bison were led statistically by Gauge Alsen (12th grade) with 31 receptions, 591 receiving yards and 7 receiving touchdowns. Ky Kelvie (12th grade) was the leading passer, completing 94 passes for 1212 yards and 17 touchdowns. He also led the team in rushing with 353 yards while Grady Guida (12th grade) led the team with 7 rushing touchdowns. Defensively, Wyatt Osterbauer (12th grade) led the team with 80 total tackles, and also led the team with 14 tackles for loss. Malik Winfield (12th grade) led the team with 5 sacks.

The following players and coach voted on and named 2023 Metro Maroon All-District selections:

First Team: Wyatt Osterbauer, Grady Guida, Ky Kelvie, Malik Winfield, Gauge Alsen, Ryan Babatz (11th grade), Ben Holland (11th grade), Trevor Kotilinek (11th grade), and Hans Pederson (10th grade).

Honorable Mention: The following five players were Honorable Mention All-District selections: Jack Griffieth (12th grade), Ayden Gawtry (12th grade), Nolan Mahannah (12th grade), Noah Wittke (11th grade), and Caleb Johnson (11th grade).

District Players and Coach of the Year: Wyatt Osterbauer, Defensive Player of the Year; Ryan Babatz, Lineman of the Year; Jackson Litterer, District Coach of the Year.

The Bison Football Program also gave out seven team awards at the end of the season. At each level of the program, players voted for an MVP for their level. The following players were named team MVP: Wyatt Osterbauer, Varsity MVP; Grant Benson (10th grade), JV MVP; Dolen Brisk (9th grade), Freshman MVP. The other four team awards were also player-voted, and each award is directly tied to the four core values of the Buffalo Bison Football Program (Character, Toughness, Relentless, Investment). The following four players were a Bison-Branded Award recipient: Grady Guida (Character), Jack Griffith (Toughness), Ayden Gawtry (Relentless), and Ky Kelvie (Investment).

Wyatt Osterbauer was also selected to play in the Minnesota High School All Star game at the Minnesota Vikings stadium on December 2nd. He was also named to the 2023 Minnesota Vikings All-State Team along with being a 2023 All-Metro Team selection.

Girls Tennis

[Simona Potockova](#) - Head Coach (2nd year)

We had a lot of questions coming into the 2023 season. We graduated a lot of seniors that played really significant roles on our team the season prior. We knew it was going to be tough because a lot of younger players had to step into positions that previously "belonged" to seniors and now they had some big shoes to fill. I am so proud of everyone on the team - they stepped up and we had a good year in spite of so much inexperience. I cannot wait to see what the next season has to offer! All the experience and all the things that we have learned will help us tremendously in 2024 season!

- 8-15 overall (1-5 in Lake Conference)
- huge win against Hopkins!
- lost to STMA in the regular season but then stepped up and won later in the season which helped us advance further and play Wayzata for the second time in the season as well.
- placed 2nd in our annual Buffalo Invite. We invited a new team (Mound-Westonka) to our Buffalo Invite and lost to them in close matches 3-4.
- We had two players receive All-Conference Awards - Kiley Herbst (Sr.) and Lauren Berg (Soph.)

- Three of our players received All-Conference Honorable Mention Awards - Ashley Coleman (Sr.), Megan Steinmetz (Sr.) and Evie Lubben (Soph.)

Girls Swim and Dive

[Jocelyn Woytcke](#) - Head Coach 1st year

This has been such a fun season! To recall a few highlights:

- Team Bonding Activities - So proud of seniors and captains for helping plan and organize these activities.
- Practice - Lots of tough sets, some tears or jaw dropping moments, but also a lot of laughs and memories made.
- Dual Meet Season - We competed against some tough teams again this year, but used that to our advantage as we trained for championship meets.
- Themed Relay Meet - Highly anticipated and so much fun. Received so many compliments by visiting parents about our girls and how much it is enjoyed.
- True Team - 7th place - lay of the land for sections. We loved seeing some improvements early on this season and great team spirit.
- JV Champs - Such a fun meet! Not only energy and positivity, but the support shared among the team. We saw some MAJOR time drops and it was so encouraging to see the team supporting one another.
- Sections - 6th overall. Improvements all around!! Every single athlete dropped time in at least one of their events...some a LOT of time. We saw a lot of podium finishes and again, great support and team spirit.

Boys Soccer

Head Varsity coach: Joe Pokorney (8th year in position, 13th year coaching at BHS)

Assistant Varsity coach: Jordan Danielson (6th year coaching at BHS)

JV coach: Marc Mens (2nd year coaching at BHS)

9A coach: Darren Olson (1st year coaching at BHS)

Season/Program Overview

Bison Boys Soccer had a successful 2023 season on many fronts. Players on all three teams worked hard, deepened friendships, and experienced significant growth — both on and off the field. Our varsity group finished 4-9-2 in the regular season (0-5-1 in the Lake Conference), enjoying our best goal differential in conference play since joining the Lake in 2019. Key results against Brainerd (W), Rogers (W), Sartell (T) and Hopkins (T), as well as close games with Edina and Minnetonka helped the Bison earn a #4 seed

in Section 8AAA. We hosted Moorhead in first round play, coming up just short (0-1) in a rain-soaked match.

We had 60 student athletes participate on our three teams this year, which is very similar to our 2022 numbers. No cuts were made. Like our varsity, our lower level teams played a demanding schedule against excellent competition and showed significant growth. Coach Mens had a good season with the JV squad, as did Coach Olson with the 9A.

A special note of gratitude goes to our senior class: Noah Boillat, Landon Bourgoine, Alec Dima, Tyler Louwagie, Aaron Presteng, Bode Russell, R.C. Ryan, Grant Schepers, Sam Studnicka, and Kef Tita. Our seniors showed outstanding character and left a positive mark on the program. We thank them all for their commitment and contribution to Buffalo Boys Soccer.

Awards/Honors

Lake Conference All-Conference honors went to Landon Bourgoine (Sr) and Elliott Elton (Jr). All-Conference Honorable Mention awards went to Bode Russell (Sr), Hunter Scott (Soph) and Wyatt Anderson (Soph).

Volleyball

Head Coach: Jennifer Peterson 9th year

Assistant Coach: Kylee Zumach,

JV coach: Jennifer Penney

B Squad Coach: Aivary Bouman,

9A Coach: Lauri Zumach

9B Coach: Amanda Bicknell

This was the best season the varsity Bison Volleyball team has had in my career as head coach going 15-9. With the highest placement ever in the Lakes conference (4-2) and being the runners up right behind state champion Wayzata.

Buffalo was also a recipient of the GOLD ACADEMIC AWARDS (which is awarded to teams who have a 3.75-4.00 Cumulative Team GPA)

Our First Team All Lake Conference athletes were: Kaia Castle (Sr. committed to Ohio State), Grace Therrien (Sr. committed to Bethel University), Ellie Keusman (Sr. committed to Sacred Heart University), and Madison Roushar (Sr.). Our Lake Conference Honorable Mention athletes were: Olivia Lutz (Sr.), Haley Shult (Sr.), and Sophia Zupan (Sr.) Kaia Castle also earned the award for First Team All-Metro (top 7 athletes of the metro via Star Tribune), and she was First Team All State (top 14 athletes in MN)!

You may have noticed, but we graduated A LOT of seniors (10 to be exact) and will be rebuilding with lots of young talent in 2024. Kylee Zumach recently took over as the head coach and she is very excited to take over the helms! Next season, make sure to look out for returners Natalie Mix and Kendra Harris! Coach Zumach has very high expectations for the upcoming season and has already begun to implement out of season training and lifting opportunities! We look forward to seeing you all come and support the girls next fall. Go Bison!

ATTACHMENT:

- **2023 Fall Activities Participation Report**