

School Board Meeting/Workshop:

February 13, 2017

Subject:

2016 BHS Fall Activities Report

Presenter:

**Tom Bauman
BHS Activities Director**

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION: Informational

DESCRIPTION: Buffalo High School has completed its fall activities season for the 2016-2017 school year. Coaches and Advisors have shared a short narrative summary of their seasons for your review. This report also includes a detailed statistical summary of participation #'s including coaching ratios.

Updates and program news will be shared on the following areas:

- Participation Analysis
- Conference/Region/MSHSL Updates
- Coaches/Administrative updates

FALL ACTIVITIES SUMMARIES:

GIRLS TENNIS: Head Coach Scott Larson (1st year)

The Buffalo Girls Tennis team began the fall 2016 season with a new head coach, for the second consecutive year, and 27 student athletes at the high school level. Molly Jungwirth (SR), Mya Lubben (JR), and Claire Stevens (JR) were named captains and led a team that included only one senior on the varsity roster. After graduating six varsity players last season, there were many opportunities for players to step up and contribute. The team posted a 6-3 conference record and finished in third place. We had thirteen athletes letter, based on performance, and one senior athlete letter based on commitment and dedication to the program for four years. The team was seeded eighth out of sixteen schools in the section. We defeated St. Michael Albertville in the first round of play and earned the right to play the number one seed, Delano, where our season ended. During section individual play, both of our singles entrants won their first round matches before falling in the second round of play. One of our doubles entrants was defeated by the second seed in the first round and our other team (Mya Lubben and Claire Stevens) advanced to the semi-finals, before losing and finishing fourth in the section. Strengths of the program include: 3.905 varsity team GPA, 5 M8 All-Conference Honorable mention players and 1 M8 All-Conference player, strong booster club, supportive parents, supportive athletic department, 8 court facilities at both the high school and middle school, and the overall quality of student athlete that is coming out for tennis (top shelf young people). Our current needs include: court resurfacing at the high school (courts are in very bad shape aesthetically), growing the number of participants at the middle school level that transition to high school with playing experience, and strengthening our summer programming.

BOYS SOCCER: Head Coach Joe Pokorney (1st year)

Building on excellent foundations established by previous coaches and players, the boys soccer program had another successful year in 2016. I had the fortune to work with an outstanding group of student-athletes on the Varsity team -- what a gift for a first-year head coach! It was inspiring to work with a group that enjoyed being together as much as this year's team did. They also worked hard and earned some impressive honors. After three educational losses to start the year, the Varsity team found its stride and went undefeated in conference play. The conference championship came down to the final match of the Mississippi 8 season in Monticello, where a hard-fought 1-1 tie gave the Magic the crown. Still, we achieved many of our goals, including a playoff win over Brainerd in the first round of Section play. Our final overall record was 10-5-2. With a 3.72 cumulative GPA, the team also earned the Conference Academic Silver Award. We were awarded five All-Conference selections (seniors Spencer Lund, Blake Habisch, Nate Rabusch, Josh Skarin, and junior Peter Deneen).

Coach Josh Hutchcraft (2nd year) led the JV team to a 10-4-2 record. The JVII coached by Justin Wolf (2nd year) finished with an overall record of 8-3-1. Far more important than wins/losses, players at both lower levels grew tremendously in their technical skills and understanding of the game.

With limited practice space at BHS, our players and parents showed great flexibility in adjusting to changes in locations. It was a great experience playing on campus at Bison Field West, and we can't wait to conduct all of our activities at BHS next year. Thanks to everyone involved for helping things run smooth for our program. We are a lucky group!

GIRLS SOCCER: Head Coach Sarah Rodenwald (1st Year)

The 2016 girls soccer season was filled with new experiences. A new coaching staff at the varsity and JV2 levels, many faces new to varsity competition, and a new playing facility were just a few of the things that were introduced this year. Although the record did not reflect the work that the girls put in, with only four returning starters, and a team of 20 that brought 14 players without varsity experience, the girls showed heart and determination and experienced a great season of friendships and competition, culminating with the best effort of the year coming in section play against Rogers, where our girls battled to a tough 1-0 loss behind a total team effort. The success of the season could be seen after that game, when it was impossible to get the team to leave the field, as they were not ready to leave their teammates for the last time.

The season was not without its challenges. These included the difficulty of practice space, and a season ending knee injury to a key leader on our team, Cadyn Luedemann. Cadyn tore her ACL and MCL during our second conference game in Chisago Lakes. The team rallied around this loss, and Cadyn remained a positive leader throughout the remainder of the season.

From the beginning, our players were asked to do four things: have a great attitude, give their very, very best, have unconditional gratitude, and treat people really well regardless of their circumstances. We had a group of fantastic young women who rose to reach those expectations.

Our seniors provided great leadership this year, and we will miss them. We are looking forward to the 2017 season, as the team will have a lot of experience coming back. The team will bring back seven seniors, led by seniors Danika Tweten and Sydney Johnson,

Thank you to the school board for your support of the girls soccer program!

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY: Head Coach Jill Hanson (30th year)

This task of reviewing the Cross Country season is always bitter sweet. I am sad that the season is over and that I do not see the kids every day anymore but it is fun to reflect back on the many memories we made over the season.

Our season started out with an influx of runners, mostly freshman but a few upper class girls as well. We were technically a young team in that we did not have a single senior running for us this year, but our juniors and sophomores did have some varsity experience. A few of our runners did some summer miles and you could see their improvement. Hopefully the other girls will make the connection this next summer.

Our girls won two meets this season, the Maple Lake Invitational and the Big Lake Battle of Liberty Invite. We were 3rd in the Conference and 9th in Section 2AA. Amanda Monplaisir and Meredith Reynolds were All Conference and Kaitlin Berg and Areefa Seepersaud were All Conference Honorable Mention. All of our varsity team were All Conference Academic. We have very smart athletes to work with. Amanda also qualified for the State Meet in which she took 74th out of 175 runners. It was great to have her back there this season

We had a lot of fun this season. The girls worked hard. The only suggestion is that we need to believe, as a team, that summer miles matter. Our boys have come to totally buy into that philosophy, a few girls have but we need more. These athletes have many opportunities and Coach Knutsen and I just need to keep emphasizing the fun of running in the summer together.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Head Coach Dave Knutson (3rd year)

The 2016 Boys Cross Country program had a very successful year from top to bottom. The boys won 5 of the 10 meets in which they ran. They placed first at Menahga, Big Lake, Buffalo (4th year in a row), Chisago Lakes, and the Mississippi 8 Conference meet where they defeated the 3-time defending champion STMA Knights. The boys placed second at the 2AA Section meet and advanced to the State meet for the 5th time in program history. Earning All Conference honors for the boys were Issac Basten (10), Brett Hanson (10), Landon Tourville (12), Zach Lane (12), Braden Benson (11), Nick Oak (9), and Ryan Russek (10).

FOOTBALL: Head Coach Todd Bouman (3rd year)

The 2016 Bison Football season began with plenty of excitement for obvious reasons - the opening of our beautiful new stadium (Bison Field West). As a football program we are beyond blessed to play in what has been deemed by MSHSL's John Millea the best football facility in the state. We opened the season against Willmar in front of a great home crowd and came away with a big victory, 47-20. The next two games saw us go 1-1 vs Monticello and St Francis. A tough stretch in the middle of the season against some tough teams and eventual state champion Elk River saw our regular season end at 3-5.

Playing in Class 6A playoffs matched us up vs #1 seed Blaine. Although we didn't win the game we made it very exciting football for all who were in attendance. I couldn't have been more proud of the kids with their effort and determination. Coming into a game with only 1 defensive starter remaining that began the season is a true testament to our young/tough kids. Many of who were sophomores playing significant varsity minutes for the first time.

Another season where we were all very blessed to coach such amazing student/athletes and everything they stand for. We had many exciting accomplishments throughout the season. Wide receiver Tyler Johnson was named District MVP WR for the second consecutive season as well as All District, All State, Star Tribune and represented Buffalo in the first All Star game to be played at US Bank stadium. TJ also broke school records for receptions and TDs in a season and

career. Also noteworthy is tying a state record for yards in a game in our playoff loss to Blaine. We were also second in our District with a cumulative GPA of 3.32, a credit to everyone getting their work done not only on the field but in the classroom as well.

I look forward to getting back to work this spring after another successful winter in the weight room. A **HUGE** thank you to everyone who had their hand in the construction plans and building process. Our administration and community has something to be proud of for years to come. There isn't a place I go where someone doesn't mention our new facilities. Also to our maintenance and custodial staff for all of their hard work in always having everything in perfect condition.

GO BISON!

VOLLEYBALL: Head Coach Jennifer Sheedy (1st Year)

I was very fortunate to begin my head coaching career with such a strong group of senior leaders. Overall the Bison volleyball program had a very successful season across all levels. We had the largest turn out for tryouts in many years which is very promising for the future of our program. We added new 9th grade coaches, BHS Alumni, Danielle Odeen and Mary Johnson, who brought fresh ideas, encouraged the players and allowed the 9th graders to grow as athletes and mature as young women. Our 9th grade teams finished with winning seasons, ending up 4th in our conference tournament. The future of BHS volleyball will be strong.

We hired another BHS Alumni, Jill Wackler as our B Squad coach. Our 10th grade team ended the season with a record of 4-5 but showed tremendous growth in the last half of their season to prepare them for JV/Varsity next year. Megan Scherer coached the JV squad again this year which included 2 junior leaders, 7 sophomores and 2 freshmen. Scherer did a great job developing the young players into confident athletes this year. Our varsity record was 14-14, which was filled with many high points along the year. In both the Irondale and Hopkins Tournaments we placed 2nd which were great accomplishments. The seniors were great pillars to our program, who were competitive and compassionate which became contagious for the rest of the team.

We ended our season with 2 All-Conference selections: Taylor Thompson and Kari Zumach, two All-Conference honorable mentions: Aivary Bouman and Autumn Senger. We ultimately lost our first Section playoff game against a very athletic Orono team. My assistant Becky Karna and I were so proud of the girls for their continuous hard work on the court and in the classroom all throughout the season. They laid solid groundwork and expectations for the years to come!

GIRLS SWIM & DIVE: Head Coach Rachel Busch (2nd year)

We kicked off the season with a lesson on flexibility as we started our season in the Fitness Evolution and Big Lake High School pools. The girls did an outstanding job throughout the season with being flexible and making the best of each situation. In the second week of the season, we did some special team-bonding activities: ropes course at Camp Friendship in Annandale, Finding Dory at the St. Michael theatre, and the Amazing Race at Coach Hale's cabin in Big Lake.

The team spent some additional time learning about Growth Mindset, developing team and individual goals, learning about the importance of quality nutrition, making posters of the Star Qualities, and learning the competition rules. The 2016 captains, Emily Van Tassell and Natalie Bobick, did a great job leading our team throughout the season, showing true class and dedication.

For our coaching staff, we had three returning coaches and one new. Coach Busch completed her sixth season, Shannon Barclay (Dive Coach) completed her third, and Angelee Hale (Assistant Swim Coach) completed her second. The new face was Stefan Walker, a new resident of Buffalo and graduate of Dassel-Cokato. The team was very fortunate to have such a dedicated and caring coaching staff.

The season wrapped up with a 5-4 dual meet record. The team swam well at the JV Conference Meet and finished fourth in the conference with their dual meet record. Most girls swam/dove season-best times/scores at the Section Meet. For the first time in recent history, there was at least one girl that made it to finals in each event at Sections. Participating in the State Meet were Alex Zeiss (11th grade) - Diving (3rd), and Tianna Kosek (10th grade) - 50 Free (24th) and 100 Free (32nd). Additionally, Kassy Shroyer (8th grade) tied the school record at the Section Meet in the 100 Fly.

As a team, the girls earned the Conference Academic Gold Award. These girls were a continued joy to work with and we are looking forward to the 2017 season. The captains for 2017 are Natalie Bobick, Abby Serbus, and Alex Zeiss.

FALL PLAY: Debb Bestland (4th Year) and Amy Sparks (2nd year)

The Fall Production - White Snake by Mary Zimmerman

Student director: Mallory Rabehl.

Set and lighting: Greg Bestland and Dave Kilgore.

Parents: Kathy Peterson costumes and Connie Bednarek lobby and intermission.

Original music: Jonah Schmitt and Mallory Rabehl (Seniors)

Amy and Debb began the season planning to do a show by Mary Zimmerman, an author both were familiar with and liked. Upon closer inspection of the script it was noticed that some things would not be acceptable in our community. The show was switched to White Snake by Mary Zimmerman

Some highlights of the show as it unfolded:

- We had over 70 students audition for 18 roles
- This was the first time Amy and I had worked with a student director. It was fun and challenging for all three of us to work together
- Two of the three leads had never had a lead role before
- Five students of the 18 had never been in a BHS production before
- We had over 30 students committed to tech work throughout the show
- We had to switch the lead character 3 weeks into the show due to personal issues of the actor. Ingrid Nelson (senior) stepped into a lead for the first time ever and did a stellar job. The former lead stayed in the show and was supportive all throughout the transition.
- We expanded the original script to include as many students as possible
- Thanks to Kathy Peterson and her crew, we were able to create all the costumes except two which were rented from the Guthrie, keeping the costs to the school way down

- We sold close to 1000 tickets, despite the fact that our Friday show was canceled due to weather.

Audience responses:

One of our tech students had a visiting grandparent from China. The show encouraged them to talk and share and the student created a practice book based on Chinese lettering as a result.

Ning Ning Sun (wife of John Holtz), helped us with lettering as well and thanked us for re-connecting her to stories and scenes from her own childhood. She felt we had been true to the form and culture of the story. This was a high compliment in our books.

We are excited to have the new storage space. We used every platform available so as to paint the floor of the set. Getting them up and down the stairs was quite the challenge.

Having the space will allow us to store these heavy duty items on the ground level and provide for a safer work flow.

We were really pleased with our final production and the audience appeared to feel the same.