Atlanta: The Last Hurrah

First Stop: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

By Jack Litchfield

On March 12, MBA 8th graders arrived at school bright and early at around 7:00 AM, anxiously waiting for the much-anticipated Atlanta trip to begin. Students were assigned to one of three buses, based alphabetically by last name. We loaded our bags and boarded the buses around 7:15 and were off to the first stop of the trip: the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

After a lengthy bus ride, we finally arrived in the Birmingham Civil Rights District. Depending on the bus we were on, the 8th graders either went on the tour of the museum first or ate lunch outside. My group took the tour first, which began with an introduction in the lobby of the institute. We were told the rules and given a brief history of the museum. We then proceeded to a small theater, where the students and other tourists were shown a short movie. The film covered the history of civil rights, with an emphasis on Birmingham’s role in the movement. The movie was very interesting and was a great start to the tour.

The screen, which the film was projected on, then rose to reveal all the exhibits, and we were all left to freely roam the museum. The museum depicted African-American life in the south throughout the 1950s and 1960s with statues, paintings, and real items such as a Ku Klux Klan costume and an exhibit showing what the typical schoolhouse during that time would look like. There were many different posters advertising black entertainers of the time, as well. The display I found most interesting was the one of the jail cell in which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was imprisoned. The museum was very fascinating, and I learned many things I had never known before about the Civil Rights movement.

After the tour, we crossed the street to a small park with memorials and tributes to many famous figures in the Civil Rights Institute. We ate our lunch packed by the dining hall staff here as the other group took the tour. Although our time there was brief, it was well worth the detour. I would definitely recommend going to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute to anyone passing through Birmingham.
Paintball
By Daniel Bishop

Playing paintball on the Atlanta trip was a highlight for many of the students. It was long awaited by everyone for many reasons, including the following: teachers being able to shoot their students, students able to shoot one another, and everyone enjoying the presence of one another. The long awaited day started with a long bus ride filled with screams of anticipation. The paintball facility, called Atlanta Paintball, is located off the highway in a rural area where no one will be caught in the crossfire of flying paintballs. As we left the bus, we lined up to receive our five hundred paintballs. After a brief safety speech by the owner of the facility, the students again lined up to collect their guns and face masks. We were given Tippmann 98’s, very popular guns throughout the paintball community. After every student loaded his gun, he got in a line to be split into teams. We were divided into four teams, two with armbands and two without armbands. I was on the yellow armband team. My team first went to the tower course, a long course filled with wooden structures used as bunkers. The refs started the game quickly, and a huge crossfire of paintballs appeared on the course almost immediately, causing players to sprint and dive behind bunkers. While players continued to shoot each other endlessly, the number of players from each team decreased as they get shot (players got out when a paintball hit and burst on them). The armbands team, which had all the teachers, won this match.

After a quick reload, my team went onto the next course, which was a mix of open-field play with a forested area in the middle. The same bunkers existed in this course as the last one, but there were no tall towers on this one. The game started the same way as the last one, but many more students come up after realizing the minimal amount of pain that a paintball produces. After a lengthy charge from the armband team, the armbands win once again.

The next game was on a very small course filled with dirt mounds that are the only bunkers on the course. The armbands lost their advantage when the teachers switched teams to the non-armband team. This game went quickly because of the minimal amount of space in this course, and the armbands suffered their first defeat. The non-armband team advanced a substantial amount and soon overtook the armband team. The armbands watched their flag being taken, but armband team still attempted to get their flag back and to not go down without a fight; however, they failed to recover their flag, and the long game ended with the other team winning. After this intense battle, everybody’s raging hunger was satisfied by pizza, cold water, and a cooler full of candy. After everyone had eaten, the players that still had ammo (most had run out) played a last game of paintball on the tower course. The teams fought one last time, and the armband team came out on top; then everyone turned in their equipment.

Paintball was definitely one of the many high points of the Atlanta trip, but the experience could be better if you follow these tips (for 7th graders):
1. Bring extra money to purchase more paintballs, especially if you plan to shoot wildly onto the other half of the course without looking
2. Wear long-sleeve shirts and pants because paintballs do hurt on the bare skin.
3. Do not be afraid of the paintballs because they only sting for a few seconds.
4. NEVER take off your mask in the arenas, even if the game has ended. The workers and refs at the facility were great and helped make the experience great. Paintball was many students’ favorite activity on the Atlanta trip, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.
Class of 2016
Roots the Braves to Victory

By Joe Noser

On Friday, April 13, the 8th grade class attended the Braves home opener against the Milwaukee Brewers. The 8th grade arrived at Turner Field about 2 hours prior to game time to roam the stadium, buy souvenirs, and just catch the general excitement that filled the stadium. Some guys stayed for batting practice and tried to catch home run balls, while others roamed the stadium for food, watched the Civil Wars pregame concert, or found some fun way to hang out with their friends.

About thirty minutes before game time, the festivities began to commence. First, a huge American flag was spread out across the outfield, and four F-18 fighter jets had a fly-by over the stadium. Then, the great Chipper Jones led the Braves onto the field through a shower of fireworks and lights in center field. This moment was particularly special to die-hard Braves fans because Chipper is set to retire at the end of the year.

Finally, after the national anthem had been performed by the Civil Wars and the starting lineups announced, the game began. The Braves sent out Jair Jurrjens to face Randy Wolf for the pitching matchup. However, it soon became obvious that the game would come down to the offense, not effective pitching. The Braves struck first in the first inning on a Brian McCann double after Michael Bourn reached on a leadoff walk. However, in the 3rd, a two-run homer from Alex Gonzalez, the Brewers shortstop, and a solo shot by George Kottaras, their catcher, gave the Brew Crew a 3-1 lead.

In the bottom half of the inning, the Braves responded with an RBI double from Dan Uggla to cut the deficit to 1. In the 5th, McCann struck again, this time with a three-run homer down the right field line to give the Braves a 5-3 lead. A homer from Matt Diaz and RBI single from Michael Bourn gave the Braves an 8-3 lead, a seemingly insurmountable lead. However, the Brewers struck for two runs in the 6th and three in the 7th off of one of the best relievers in the game, Eric O’Flaherty, to tie the score. The Braves and their fans “stayed calm” though, and in the bottom of the 8th, Dan Uggla singled up the middle, scoring two and giving the Braves a 10-8 lead.

In the top of the 9th, Craig Kimbrel, the Braves fireballing closer, came in and shut the door on the Brewers, picking up his third save of the year and giving the Braves the victory.

The Braves game was easily one of the best parts of the trip. Some of the highlights from the game were a wave, which started in the MBA section and went around the stadium six times, as well as meeting some of the Atlanta faithful and cheering alongside them. Regardless, the Braves game was definitely the coolest experience the grade got on the trip, and one that will not be forgotten any time soon.
Six Flags

By Jack Litchfield

MBA 8th graders woke up on Saturday morning tired from the Braves game and sore from paintball, but everybody was excited to go to Six Flags over Georgia. Everyone wanted to make the most of the last day in Atlanta. The buses got to Six Flags around 9:30 AM, and everyone was free to explore all the roller coasters and places to eat.

As soon as we entered the park, we saw the intimidating Georgia Scorcher, a fast and winding roller coaster. A lot of people chose to ride this, but the line was extremely long all day. The biggest coaster by far was the Goliath, which stretched practically across the entire park; many people said the hour long wait was well worth the thrill of the ride. Many popular rides were in the “Cotton States” section of the park. The Great American Scream Machine was an extremely tall wooden coaster, and most 8th graders said it knocked them around a lot and hurt their necks. The Ninja was also another popular coaster in this section. However, the favorite coaster by a landslide was “Superman: The Ultimate Flight;” this ride lifts the rider horizontally, soaring as if he were the “Man of Steel” himself.

Another fun ride was the Batman ride in the Gotham City section of the park, as it was thirty seconds of pure adrenaline. The Acrophobia was also another thriller, and only the bravest 8th graders went on it; this ride rises vertically and suddenly drops sixteen stories as an announcer taunts the riders. The carnival-type games were also fun, and many kids won prizes ranging from hats to basketballs to glittery capes. Unfortunately, the fun at Six Flags ended at 2PM when MBA had to leave and return to Nashville.

Many people felt that the trip to Six Flags was the most fun part of the Atlanta trip, and it was definitely a great end to the 8th grade trip.
ATLANTA

Adam Young at Andretti’s

Sam Rhodes: “Boy, I hope my driver’s test is this easy!”

Carter Lovvorn


L-to-R - Cole Campbell, George Lazenby, and Devon Rundberg

Ready for action!
ON THE HILL

PREDICTIONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2016

Gray Adelman- Governor of Tennessee
Yavin Alwis- Starts first successful Sri Lankan restaurant in US-Motto is “The Food is “Alwis” Spicy!”
Sam Anderson- Owner of The Chum Bucket
Taylor Asher- Body-builder
Charlie Bailey- MBA history teacher
Richard Baker- Tennis player (Semi-Pro)
Bronson Bell- Author of tragic stories
Brandon Bennett- The next Pauly D
Dani Biegl- American ambassador to Hungary
Daniel Bishop- Vineyard Vines shirt tester
Will Blaufuss- Olympic swimmer
Alex Boone- Headmaster of Harding Academy
Werner Bradshaw- Starts new music festival, “Wernerpalooza”
Ross Bradshaw- Swamp People actor
Peter Briggs- First jobless millionaire
Parker Bryan- Weather man
Cole Campbell- Professor at Wake Forest
Ryan Carpenter- “Lacrosse Stick Doctor”
Robert Chilton- Patents a chrome lacrosse head
Luke Cianciolo- Owner of “Cianciolo’s” Italian restaurant chain
Glenn Coleman- Owner of Planter’s Peanuts
D’On Coofer- Bouncer at nightclub
Hudson Coombs- Gold Medal trampoline jumper
Cole Cross- MLB catcher
Dalton Crow- Inherits Dad’s restaurants
Owen Currey- First jobless billionaire
Sam Curry- Wins at the Olympics (in warm-up laps)
Robert Dedman- Triathlete
Tony Ding- Mathematician
Benton Dodd- Movie critic
Nick Dreher- Comedian
Will Emerson- MLS soccer player
Will Eskew- President of the United States
Grayson Fettroll- Librarian
Mark Floyd- TV personality on Hunting Channel
JC Fogg- Division I college athlete
KP Frazier- University of Tennessee
Athletic Director
Sam Galanter- co-University of Tennessee Athletic Director
Phelps Gambill- Owner of Papa Pep’s Pizzeria
Jim Garrett- Just an all-around nice guy
David Gaw- ESPN analyst
Drew Gordon- Broadway actor
Benjamin Graves- Abercrombie model
Conner Gray- Golfer on the semi-pro circuit
Grant Green- Injured for life
William Hall- One-man band
Hunter Hamilton- Movie director
Hayne Hamilton- Trucker
Winston Hewett- Owner of Hillwood Country Club
Alex Hilburn- Cast member of American Pickers
Brinton Hoover- First gamer to reach 1,000,000th prestige/Bridge builder
Matt Hopp- Zombie/ Actor on the Walking Dead
Conner Huff- Coxswain for Harvard
Bronson Ingram- CEO of Ingram Entertainment
Sam Jacobson- JCC basketball coach/legend
Zac Jernigan- Paparazzi
Will Johnson- Dubstep producer
John Kelly- Veterinarian
Jack King- Attorney-at-law
Ryan Kosson- Beach Body CEO
George Lazenby- Voice of Alvin the Chipmunk
Grayson Lester- Secret agent
Jack Litchfield- Professional hair stylist
Carter Lovvorn- The Tarheel Mascot
J.B. Lund- Creator of an eco-friendly crash test dummy
Rishi Mallipeddi- Indian Mafia
Chapman Malone- Mr. Irrelevant
Jack Malone- Chapstick Model
Michael Mappes- Motivational speaker
Tanner McCormick- Boot shiner
Russell McGinn- Russssseelllll!!!!
Chase Meluch- Tanning salon owner
Ethan Mowery- Zamboni driver
Will Norton- Knife enthusiast
Joe Noser- Sports analyst or Eye doctor
Connor Oman- Black Market operations
Jamie Payne- UFC fighter
Brodie Poe- Wait What?
Matt Remke- Poet Laureate
Sam Rhodes- The Muffin Man
Neil Richardson- The New Voice of Kermit the Frog
Wes Richardson- Serbian Ambassador
Stephen Richey- Professor at Harvard
Matthew Robbins- Member of the Geek Squad
Lawrence Rogers- Leader of a boy band
Adrian Roper- The next Chris Johnson
Jordan Rosdeutscher- A calf model
Devon Rundberg- Hostage negotiator
Nadir Saleh- Stand-up comic
Christopher Saxon- Rocket scientist at Yale
Richie Scherrer- Comedian/talk show host
Jay Shackleford- Eye doctor
Jackson Sitkberg- The Ambassador to Mexico
Daniel Smith- Professional Napper
Hunt Smith- Life coach
Sam Smith- Barber
Darrius Southwell- Next Axe model
Ro Stevens- Lion tamer
Sam Sullivan- Personal trainer/creator of energy drinks
Diggs Truitt- Rapper
Harold Turks- Smack talker and Pro Rap Battler
Jesse Turner- Accountant at Bank of America
Max Turner- Next Jose Vasquez
Alec Vest- Deer hunter
Davis Voecks- Orthodontist
Harrison Wachtler- Orthopedic Surgeon
Charles West- Horse breaker
Alec Whitson- The next Mr. Cooper
T. Whittington- Arms dealer in North Korea
Christian Williams- AD at Yale
Jordan Wilson- Calvin Klein model
Jackson Wooten- Russian spy
Adam Young- The new voice spokesman for All State Insurance
Alvin Zhang- Makes time travel possible
MATHCOUNTS Team Takes State Competition by Storm!

By Alvin Zhang

On March 17, the Tennessee State Mathcounts competition was overwhelmed as four students from the same school took the top four places, all qualifying for the national competition at Disney World on May 19. This school, of course, was MBA, and this domination was the first time in Tennessee (possibly the entire US) that the national team for a state consisted of one school. The four MBA “mathletes” who accomplished this were Tony Ding (1st place, score of 33), Tony Huang (2nd place, score of 32), Alvin Zhang (3rd place, score of 28), and Cole Campbell (4th place, score of 26). For all of you non-mathletes out there, Mathcounts is a nationwide middle-school math competition that features problems from multiplication-to-modular arithmetic. The competition consists of the Sprint Round (30 questions, 40 minutes), the target round (6 minutes for a pair of problems, 4 pairs in total), the Team Round (4 person team has 20 minutes for 10 difficult problems), and the Countdown Round (the most exciting round where the top eight students go 1 on 1 answering questions on the projector using a buzzer). There are Mathcounts competitions on the regional, state, and national levels, and MBA’s getting an entire team to the nation is a huge achievement.

Although this was a huge accomplishment for the students in the competition and MBA, the hardest worker on the Mathcounts team was probably Mrs. Qian. The team could not have succeeded without her tireless effort to explain thoroughly any questions we had in the simplest and most understandable way (which is very important) and to grade any packets we had done, even though it cost her own free time. She was the backbone of our team, and we could not have achieved anything significant without her devotion. This year is the last Mathcounts competition the current 8th graders will be able to attend, and although we won’t be crying, we will always remember the record we set and the hard work that brought us there.

Nationals Update

All four members of MBA’s Mathcounts team represented the state of Tennessee in the national competition in Orlando. Eighth-grader Tony Ding placed 34th nationally amongst the 224 best middle school math students in the nation. Massachusetts won this year’s team competition, while an individual from Indiana won the overall competition. Congratulations to MBA’s team for making the nationals: Tony Ding, Tony Huang, Alvin Zhang, and Cole Campbell.
Junior School Supports Charities While Also Having Fun

Max Turner and Nick Dreher drum up support for Mr. Spiegl's throwback bakesale for charity.

Arm wrestler extraordinairre, eighth-grader Ryan Kosson, takes on senior, Blake Bars with the proceeds going to Thistle Farms.
ON THE HILL

Ryan then takes on Coach McMurray and generates even more dollars for Thistle Farms.

The antics of several Junior School coaches generated lots of donations during the game. Coach Barclay “Tebows” in his tutu, earning $100 for Thistle Farms!

Coach McMurray reveals his softer side by wearing a tutu during the second half, resulting in another $100 donation for Thistle Farms. He fluttered down the court for a good cause!

2012 - 2013 HONOR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Turner Johnson  Gray Adelman  Will Eskew
BREAKFAST . . .

Mrs. Legare Vest and her sons, Alec and Frank (11th)

Mrs. Tara Holt and Jordan Wilson

Mrs. Dana Noonan and Tanner

Dr. Jeanne Peter and William

Mrs. Julia Whitson, Jack (12th) and Alec

Mrs. Laura Warren and Will
WITH MOM

Mrs. Amy Norton and Will

Mrs. Carla Rosenthal and Ben

Mrs. Sally Einstman with Andrew (11th) and Palmer

Mrs. Myshawne Fogg and JC

Mrs. Monteray Smith and Hunt

Mrs. Carrie Lund and Holland
Annual JS Poetry Competition Winners!

Junior School Tradition Continues with
Sixth Annual Poetry Recitation

The final round of the sixth annual Junior School Poetry Recitation Contest was held on May 2nd in the Paschall Theater. The competition is a celebration of National Poetry Month and the culmination of a year of quarterly recitation work by each student in the Junior School. The rounds begin with a representative from each English class and end with the seventh-grade finalist facing off against the eighth-grade finalist. This year was unusual in that there was a tie for the seventh-grade winner. Representatives for the seventh grade were Tony Huang and Turner Johnson. The eighth-grade winner was Lawrence Rogers, who is no stranger to this competition. Lawrence placed second last year behind his older brother, Henry, and Jess Darnell, who tied for first. This year’s finalists were quite varied with their presentations. Tony Huang began the competition with a lilting and melodic rendition of Robert Service’s “Carry On.” Turner Johnson took a forthright and inspirational approach with Edgar Guest’s “Can’t,” and Lawrence Rogers closed with the well-known dark and tortured soliloquy of William Shakespeare’s Macbeth, Act V, Scene v. Each performance was strong, and the competition was fierce, but Turner Johnson emerged the victor. Second and third place went to Tony Huang and Lawrence Rogers respectively. Congratulations to each of these young men.
Review of
*Wherever I Wind Up*, by R.A. Dickey

By Joe Noser

Wow. That was the first word that came to mind after finishing this book. R.A. Dickey’s book has been highly regarded as one of the best sports autobiographies of the last decade, and with good reason. It is deeply moving, hard to read at times, and filled with joy in others. Mostly, though, the novel is a story of survival.

Dickey starts the book with a description of how he felt during and after the worst outing of his career: April 6, 2006, against the Tigers: a game in which he gave up six homeruns in 3 1/3 innings, tying a major league record. This start to the book highlights the weakness he felt on the mound and how it was the low point of his career. He would never play another game for the Rangers again. The book then progresses to the beginning of his life. This first part of the novel highlights the difficulty of his parents’ divorce, and the impact it had on his relationship with his father. It also shows the unsteady nature of his family life. After his parents’ divorce, his mother becomes an alcoholic, and during the summer when he was eight, he was sexually abused by a female babysitter and an older teenage boy. This chapter is the toughest part to read. It’s short, but awfully frightening, and just makes the reader sick. It also leaves deep wounds in Dickey that last into adulthood. Only recently has the healing process of this traumatic event begun.

Next, Dickey talks about the teenage years of his life. For me, this part was the most interesting part of the book. He talks about his time at MBA, how it developed his love of writing and literature, his struggles to succeed academically, his appreciation of the school giving him a scholarship to attend, and, of course, demerits. The toughest part for him, though, was adjusting to the societal differences between him and his classmates, both economically and psychologically. He felt a certain detachment from his classmates, but still made great friends, including Mr. Anderson! Finally, he talks about his success athletically, in high school, how sports were his therapy, and his career at The University of Tennessee. The most exciting part of the book, baseball wise, was during his time at Tennessee, when he threw 149 pitches to defeat Oklahoma State in the College World Series. Next, he participated in the Olympics, and even got on the cover of *Sport’s Illustrated* with some other pitchers on his team. It looked as if Dickey was headed for a successful MLB career. Then he took the physical for the Rangers for his contract, and his life changed forever.

R.A. Dickey has no UCL, or ulnar collateral ligament, in his arm. He was born without one, and he did not know it until his physical with the Rangers. The fact that he was able to use his arm to open a door, let alone throw a fastball 90 plus miles per hour, may never be explained. Of course, the Rangers changed their signing bonus to 75 grand from 810,000, and Dickey was crushed. He shows true anger and disappointment in this part of the book, and only his relationship with Jesus Christ allowed him to continue. Next, he goes into a period of minor league ball and rare appearances in the Majors. This entire part of the book is horribly depressing and awfully hard to read.

After many struggles, peaks, and valleys, R.A. Dickey got to where he is now: a successful major league knuckle-baller, and the only one left, at that. The book has lots of spiritual meaning, as well as funny insights about MBA and Mets ballplayers. Therefore, R.A. Dickey’s *Wherever I Wind Up* is an autobiography that can be read by any MBA student, baseball fan or not.
While I was watching YouTube, I noticed this ad for a movie, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*. After watching it, I decided to investigate out of sheer disbelief that someone could actually think of something this absurd and twisted. I discovered that this movie was based on a book written by Seth Grahame-Smith, who some may know by his previous work, *Pride, Prejudice, and Zombies*. Once again struck by a feeling of amazement and absurdity, I decided to read *ALVH* (*Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*), and was pleasantly surprised by the quality that this book contained.

As you may have guessed, this story follows Honest Abe and his vampire-killing exploits. The whole plot comes from the rumor that Abe had kept a secret line of journals that remain a mystery today. Flash-forward to present day, and a man presumably in his 30’s meets an odd man whom he talks with and never sees again. A few weeks later, a mysterious package of ten diaries shows up at his house from the man whom he met with a letter saying that he should write about them. The man then shakes his head and retires the books to his bookcase. His friend, whom we will later know as Henry Sturges, changes his mind, and the story begins.

From the start this book, I found it to be a little dry, as the story of the writer didn’t interest me and stalled from the main story line. After the fifteen page introduction, the book opened up into three parts, Boy, Vampire Hunter, and President. Each part stood for a crucial chunk of Abe’s life. In Part one, Boy generally deals with his upbringing and family life. Little humor can be found here, as it is mainly used for the foundation of Abe’s turbulent life. This section was more of a long motivational moment for Abe to fuel his vengeance on the vampires. The second part consists of, you guessed it, his vampire-slaying exploits as a teenager and young man. This part starts to add in comedic elements to the mixture, while adding a new layer to Abe’s personality as we see him fall in love and have more tragedies. This is what some would call the prelude to the Civil War, as Abraham gains allies and uncovers more secrets to the South and its vampire-related slave practices. The final part of the novel, President, covers the rest of Lincoln’s life and his struggle against the South. The last section is where the truly captivating events start to happen. This is when you sit back and reflect back on all the insanity of his life and think, if only for a moment, of what he had to go through, not only in the book, but in real life. This book isn’t complete fiction, just an altered version of reality. Then the book wraps up with a satisfying and wholesome ending.

The book itself was beautifully written, crafted, and presented in such a way as to add suspense, insanity, sorrow, and anger to the mix. This book is a joke, but yet it made me think in a metaphorical way and has a quiet, grievous, and gruesome undertone that snapped me back from laughter into seriousness. Giving a rating to this book would be unfair, as this is a book to be read in a lighthearted tone so that you can appreciate it for what it is, a simple tale of revenge and retribution. I recommend this to anyone who enjoys dark humor, or books like *The Enemy*, or *Pride, Prejudice, and Zombies*. 
Dear Clyde,

Your responses to me have been bleak; I wish you had had more faith in me. I am in police custody now; the end is near. I realize that my time has come, and I plan to finish things quickly.

Clarice was a fool. I feel absolutely no remorse for what I have done. Killing her was easy, but of course you already know that. You would know better than anybody... but let a girl have a little fun...

I was interrogated a few hours ago, and in the midst of all the movement and confusion, I decided to confess to the detectives. It was a final revenge ploy; if I sounded distraught and embellished the story well, I may not even be considered fit to stand trial! Those results have not been given to me; I’ve been left totally in the dark...

It seems that even my parents hate my guts now. When I did get to talk to them, my mom’s eyes were cold and her face stony; my dad’s face was expressionless. We never did actually talk, just exchange furtive glances. Looking back, it seemed that even they had a clue it was I...

My sweats have passed over from the nights; my shakes have also disappeared. Killer’s remorse? Never. I couldn’t ever feel sorry... What makes me frightened now is the question, “Was I really that easy to figure out?” Someone must have told...

And even now I know exactly who that is – Syrus! And it makes sense; he was the only person who knew my struggle more than mentally, and I guess my tongue slipped...

I know what you’re thinking...I should have been more careful...after all, the cardinal rule is “Kill any witnesses before they kill you!” Of course, it’s slightly exaggerated, but very true all the same.

Was I that obvious? Was I that unprepared? Was I that much of a failure!? Everything I worked for is now down the drain; my thoughts are becoming distracted.

There’s only one way out; I’ve contemplated this many times before and my reasoning is solid; I’ll never apologize, never feel remorse, and absolutely never be at peace alive.

As I write this, I’m bleeding out. Teeth...are...very...powerful...weapons...Clarice...and...her...big...mouth...should...know...that...best...I...guess...she...won...after...all...

This too shall pass...

Taylor Crest
Moving On: Xbox 720 v.s. Playstation 4 (Orbis)

By Will Norton

Why now? That was the first question I asked myself when I heard of the new “Xbox 720.” Will I have to buy one to be able to play with my friends if they get one? For many people the new Xbox and Playstation is great news. Others, myself included, might want to save our pennies to buy one.

Let’s start with the Xbox 720. I myself own an Xbox 360, along with 37.36 million other people! I’ve read articles on compatibility between the 360 and 720. It seems that Microsoft will still support the 360, producing new games for a while, unlike the original Xbox. I am still not quite sure if the new Xbox will support 360 games or not. (I hope it will!) When Microsoft released the 720 an Electronic Entertainment Expo 2012, (E3 2012) the new console was showcased with a BluRay/DVD player. This addition will make it easier for any movie fans to enjoy their favorite flicks. One rumor states that the 720 will have an anti-piracy security system that will not allow any game that has been played on another console or owned by another person to be unplayable. This will really destroy the market for used game shops/rentals and behind-the-counter trades. Not much else is known about the Xbox 720 except that it is due to release as early as December 2013 or early 2014.

Apart from the Xbox 720 is the Sony Playstation 4. (Code named: Orbis.) I do not know as much about the current Playstation 3, for I do not own one, but I do know that the new Playstation 4 will be quite similar in design to the Xbox 720, not in looks, but in functionality. The PS4 will have many similar features such as the anti-piracy security feature as well as the BluRay/DVD player seen on the current PS3. One main difference in the PS4 is the backwards compatibility. The PS4 is rumored to be able to play all Playstation games, from the original Playstation to the current PS3. I hope that Microsoft will add this same feature to the Xbox 720. The Playstation 4 is scheduled to hit the public markets as soon as late 2013 along with the new Xbox.

Would you buy one? What if everyone else got one, and you were stuck with the old systems? What are your general thoughts on these new systems?
Mass Effect 3 Review

By Peter Taylor

What game comes with greater hype than BioWare’s Mass Effect 3, the ending to what I believe to be the most epic video game series of all-time. The game, an action RPG with a futuristic setting reminiscent of other space opera’s such as Star Wars, Star Trek, Battlestar Galactica, and Firefly, follows the exploits of Space Navy officer Commander Shepard as humanity takes its first steps into the galactic community, trying to make a name for itself among the dozens of other species of the Milky Way galaxy. A majority of these species are united into a government known as the Citadel Council, based on a giant space station called the Citadel, sharing a military and a cohesive economy. The antagonists of the series are the Reapers, giant robot spaceships that destroy all galactic life every 50,000 years. (This may sound somewhat cheesy, but it’s actually really not.)

A quick note I might add is that before you play this game, I’d strongly, strongly recommend playing the first two games. The game uses an import save feature that takes your choices from the previous games to make a much more personal experience. This is a big part of why the games are so epic. Do yourself a favor, and play the first two games.

The gameplay system is also the best of the series. The cover system is a bit iffy at times, but once you figure out how to use it, the system is very versatile and much more useful than the previous games. The weapons upgrades system is back, but it is no longer tedious like it was in Mass Effect 1. Simple, and it is really easy to get a great weapon setup. Your squad isn’t as diverse as I’d like, as there is only one team member with biotic powers (the Mass Effect version of the Force) unlike the usual two or three. That said, you can get some really great teams put together for your mission, and, if you use them right, their powers can be devastating.

The voice acting is amazing as always, and the storytelling and character interactions are deep and well done. The Mass Effect series is truly the closest a video game can get to art in terms of storytelling and writing, and many events throughout had me almost on the verge of tears by the sheer power of the way my choices affected other characters and situations.

I was unable to finish the game in time to write my opinion of the ending, but I have heard many things about it. The general consensus is that it was both awful and did not make sense, but there are a few fan theories out there that supposedly make an awful ending into a really good one. Depending on how many troops you are able to get for the counterattack on Earth, you can get a few different endings, so I decided to build some more, so I could get the best ending.

I played the multiplayer for one night, and I can say it’s a solid addition to the series. In the style of Modern Warfare 3’s Survival Mode, it pits you and three friends against waves of enemy troops as you try to complete various objectives. Though I’m not sure I’d buy the game solely for the multiplayer, it is a great addition to the franchise.

Mass Effect 3 is a phenomenal game. Great story line, solid combat, fantastic character interactions, minimal technical errors, and a fun multiplayer earn this game a solid 9.5 out of 10 rating. There was something about Mass Effect 2’s storytelling that made it a little bit more gripping, but Mass Effect 3 is great just the same.
Mass Effect 3: Ending Thoughts

By John Dugan

For those expecting a great, if not, amazing video game masterpiece, *Mass Effect 3* is an exceptional choice. The producers at BioWare have crafted, refined, and reinvented the *Mass Effect* series. The combat in this game is top-notch whether you are using firearms or complex biotic strategies. Ever since my friend, Peter Taylor, introduced me to the *Mass Effect* series, it has been the only thing I have been playing for the past three months as I am currently going through my second play through. But the finale to this three-part epic did not live up to its full potential. This series has a story that, in my opinion, is more captivating and truly moving than any other blockbuster the Sci-Fi genre has to offer, but it seems like it was all squandered because of the ending of the war against the Reapers. It is sad to say but all the decisions that are made in *Mass Effect 1* and *2* have a minimal effect on the outcome of the war. Instead of seeing the Rachni or the Krogan make a final push against the Great Machines, you are presented with a decision that is insulting to all that you accomplished during the Battle for the Citadel in *Mass Effect 1* or the Collector Base in *Mass Effect 2*. The end of the *Mass Effect* series is sadly left with numerous plot-holes, unexplained questions, and an overall flat conclusion. I do not know whether this is what the producers of the series wanted, or if this is just Electronic Arts assuming direct control for more DLC profit. My final comment on this subject is this is the greatest video game series ever created until the last five minutes. It seems like it would be best just to turn off the Xbox right as you are lifted into the pinnacle of the Citadel.

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The All-School Read for Fall 2012

*Shiloh*

By Shelby Foote
MLB 2012: The Show Review

By Joe Noser

The cover of MLB ‘12 the Show has a sticker that says it has been voted the best sports game four years in a row. Strictly a PS3 and PSP game, this series, along with the Uncharted series, is the main reason I still have the PS3. The cover doesn’t lie: this game is truly the best sports game out there.

The setup for The Show games has always been its main strength. The gameplay truly looks like a baseball broadcast. At one point, the game entered a beta mode while the player was not there. When the player returned, it looked as though the Yankees-Twins game was on. If it hadn’t been March, the game would’ve fooled some people. The broadcasting also contributes to the game’s realism. The broadcasters do repeat things, but it’s fairly rare, and generally not very annoying. Fans don’t fall onto the field anymore trying to get a foul ball, and they actually look like real people, not the paper fans one sees in the Madden series. Sometimes, the game can be excruciatingly realistic, as umpires make mistakes, players boot easy groundballs, and pitchers commit balks. However, what is often considered the best part about The Show games is that none of these features have to be turned on. Players can choose to play with perfect umpires, no balks, and few errors, if they choose to do so. Also, the game instituted a new method of a pinpoint pitching system to further the realism of pitching. However, if the player wants to stay with last year’s pitching method, he can. I find pinpoint pitching to be impossible and frustrating, so I stuck with last year’s analog stick method and highly recommend it.

The two main game modes I have played are franchise and exhibition. Franchise is awesome. The realism is insane. The player can release sign, draft, and trade players on his team as he so chooses. New to the game this year is the Rule 5 Draft, compensation picks, minor league options, and Super 2 players. If the game player is confused about any of these options, there is a handy booklet under the mailbox section that explains it all. I’m the biggest baseball fan around, but I had no idea what Super 2 players were, so this option is extremely helpful. Other things the player can do include setting prices at the ballpark, installing stadium and facility upgrades, getting a loan for more funds, fixing the field, and last, but not least, playing the games. I am a firm believer in never simulating a game, so I’m only to May 20th in the Braves’ season. Still, this part of the game is easily the best. A couple of tips for franchise are mostly to just accept loses and move on. This game will make you rage, no doubt about it. If you lose on a walk-off homerun, just move onto the next game. Besides, if you quit in the middle of a game, it just simulates to the end, so there is no way out anyway. Secondly, start on rookie for hitting until you get your timing down. This game is hard, and you’ll need some practice. After about 20 games, increase the difficulty to pro, and so on. This method will ensure the most amount of success. Thirdly, know your team. It helps a ton to have knowledge of your team’s farm system, strengths, and weaknesses. Finally, don’t try to trade for Albert Pujols. There’s no way the Angels will accept your offer, and even if they do, he’s getting old anyway. In other words, no unnecessary front office moves need to be made.

This game is a serious, legitimate baseball game. It’s challenging, fun, and extremely deep. Even if one is a casual baseball fan, this game should be purchased, because of its realism and how fun it is. Therefore, the sticker doesn’t lie. It is the best sports game out there, and one of the best all-around games as well. All PS3 owners should own it. I give it a perfect 10/10 rating.
MLB 2K12: Another Year Behind The Show?

By K.P. Frazier

MLB 2K12 was a disappointment this year. It looked a lot, maybe too much, like the installment of the game last year. The new features that this game was trying to promote were MLB Today season mode, the new pitching system, improved My Player Mode, and a brand new soundtrack. I like the MLB season mode. It lets you follow your favorite team and play their season with them. For example, if a player gets injured in real life and put on the DL, then that player will be on the DL on your team. I also like the new pitching meter. What that means is that when you throw and the pitch is hit, the rating for that pitch goes down, making that pitch more likely to be hit by the opposing player.

The one new thing I do not like is the new and improved My Player Mode. It really isn’t new and improved; it’s more like old and lame. I have made two players in this game and in 2K11, and I can honestly say there has been no improvement. The soundtrack is not that special. It’s just the stereotypical rock songs they include in every other sports video game. Even though the presentation is very realistic, in the sense of the players warming up and the starting lineups being announced, it’s the same as last year’s intro. Also it seems when you are playing there is no crowd. When you get a home field homerun, it’s like you are playing as the visiting team because there is nobody cheering for you. In saying this, the game does look crisper than last year; there is more attention to detail. The gameplay has not improved at all. It is the exact same thing. The only small details that are different are the throwing meters when you are playing defense.

Overall, I would give this game a 7 rating. Sure it’s fun, but it’s the same thing over and over. I think we all are looking for something new. It is a decent baseball game if you are playing on the Xbox, but if you are playing on PS3, I would recommend going with The Show.

Welcome the Latest Addition to the JS!

Morgan Anne Harvey
Born: April 24, 2012
Weight: 5 lbs, 12 oz
Height: 19 inches
Proud Parents: Jill and John Harvey
The Avengers:
Earth’s Biggest Blockbuster

By Reilly Dodd

Upon watching some of the other Marvel movies that recently came out, I noticed on one of them that they had an after credit scene which hinted at The Avengers, as did the rest upon review. The question is, does this movie live up to all the hype? Yes. It definitely does.

The movie starts with Nick Fury and top scientists studying a device called the Tesseract (well Madeline L’engle, now we all know what it looks like), a device said to be an infinite source of energy and a gateway to the Universe. Loki, after his exile from Asgard, meets up with an alien species called the Chitauri. After some help from them, Loki promises that he will conquer Earth in their name and give them widespread fame. He then infiltrates the S.H.E.I.L.D. and steals the Tesseract. Nick then tries to assemble the Avengers in an effort to stop them. The rest of the movie follows the struggle to see if they can make the odd dynamic work or will it buckle under the pressure. The actors all stay the same from their earlier clips except for the Hulk, who is played by Mark Ruffalo.

This movie is a suspenseful one because the main plot is always overshadowed by the fact that it could all fall apart if things go wrong, but then again this is a Disney movie. Another element of this movie is its melding comedies. In previous movies each character had a separate sense of humor, and I was surprised on how well they blended them together. Ironically, the most comical character was the Hulk. His ape like movements and simple minded nature found me laughing with the rest of the audience. In addition, Tony Stark’s brand of sarcastic humor made an appearance that added to the enjoyment of the film. Also, the character parts themselves were well played. Before this movie, Black Widow and Hawkeye were undefined characters and never really grew out of their subservient roles, but now they become their own people and define themselves in the movie. I loved this movie and give it a 9/10 for all its outstanding qualities.

One last thing, if you don’t take my word for it and are about to write it off as a stereotypical action movie, listen to the stats. With a $220,000,000 budget, this movie grossed over $200,000,000 on opening weekend, and $775,427,807 total (as of May 10th), which leaves it at a net gain of $555,427,807. The final irony for this movie though, is that Disney’s last movie, John Carter lost $200,000,000, so that means Disney is still in the red, $355,427,807. Way to go Disney….. Way to go. With that in mind, go see this movie; it’s worth it.
The Raven

Review

By Will Norton

For those of you who are not into mid-19th century literature, (i.e. Edgar Allan Poe, Jack London, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, etc.), the movie The Raven might interest you. I am not as well versed in early American literature as my mother, but having read some of his stories and poems such as “The Raven,” “Annabel Lee,” “The Tell Tale Heart,” and “The Pit and the Pendulum,” I was pleased with John Cusack’s interpretation of Edgar Allan Poe. Poe, regularly drunk, sobers up when a mass murderer rampages through the streets of Baltimore only to snatch away his love interest, Emily Hamilton (Alice Eve). As many of you know, Edgar Allen Poe was a dark and sinister writer, with many of his stories about murder and death. The evil was truly captured in this film, as many people are brutally murdered in the same gruesome fashion as Poe’s stories are written. There were people cut in half by a razor sharp pendulum, heads severed with a straight razor, premature burial, and much much more. The Raven received many bad reviews from “Rotten Tomatoes” with only 27% likes. Stephen Whitty quotes, “It lingers intolerably on some inessential scenes, rushes through others, and fails to provide any motivation either for Poe’s devoted (albeit fictional) love, or the film’s arch villain.” Richard Corliss says, “Until The Raven almost literally loses itself during a chase in the city sewers, it nicely balances its literary gamesmanship with a R-rated thriller’s mandatory gross-out tableaux.” I can agree with both critics; the film does have a lack of motive for the villain, which does lead to some confusion. However, on the contrary, it is a film meant to appeal to those who are not literary scholars. As a Poe fan and an English major, my mother was pleasantly surprised (apart from the intense gore). I was also pleased with this film (especially the intense gore) and the amount of detail they gave to the movie and its plot. I would recommend this movie to anyone up for seeing an intense mystery and a “before class discussion” in English class. I give this movie 3.5 stars out of 5.
The Hunger Games

By Benton Dodd

One weekend morning in late 2007, Suzanne Collins was sitting on her couch watching TV, just as every other self-respecting American would, when she turned on the news and saw a story about the invasion of Iraq. She watched this for a few minutes and then decided that she needed a backup channel for commercial breaks and turned on a reality TV show. But then she got a great idea: “What if the war and the reality TV show mixed?” She then thought, “Hey I should write a book about that!” Well, 800,000 copies later, and the inevitable film adaptation has come. I am sure most of the readers of Top of the Hill already know about the book, but for you guys out there who have been living under a rock or asleep during English class, I will give a summary. The Hunger Games is a 2012 science-fiction action-drama directed by Gary Ross, adapted from a book of the same name by Suzanne Collins. It is set in future North America, where The United States is destroyed, and the dystopian society of Panem rules, where the Capitol in the Rocky Mountains is surrounded by twelve poorer outlying districts. Once every year the capitol forces the districts to supply children, one boy and one girl, from each district, as tributes for the hunger games, which are gladiatorial contests where the children must fight to the death in an arena which varies from year-to-year and is created by the game-makers. The whole event is broadcast on national TV, and the citizens of Panem are required to watch. The movie is centered on Katniss Everdeen, played by Jennifer Lawrence, who is a sixteen-year-old girl from District 12, the most outlying and poorest district. She hunts daily with her best friend, and crush Gale Hawthorne, played by Liam Hemsworth. The film begins on the eve of the reaping ceremony, which is when the tributes are chosen. Katniss, Gale, and Prim all go to the ceremonies, hoping not to get picked. Prim is scared because it is her first time, but Katniss reassures her that the odds are in her favor. Prim is subsequently picked to compete in the games. (I guess the odds are never really in your favor......maybe that’s why I am so bad at multiple choice questions) However, Katniss immediately volunteers because she knows her sister’s lack of survival skills would be the death of her. The male tribute, Peeta, played by Josh Hutcherson, is then chosen, and they are rushed by bullet train to the Capitol, and in their minds, impending doom. Will she win the games? Will her whole family watch her die on national TV? These questions are floating through Katniss’ head, but as the seconds tick down to the start of the games, she realizes that the time for games is over and that she has to win. By the end she thinks, “Is death the only way to live?” Jennifer Lawrence makes an excellent Katniss, and she is portrayed just as I imagined her in the books. Josh Hutcherson is good as well, with his trademark laid-back/shy demeanor in full play as Peeta. I could feel his emotions play out on screen. Another noteworthy character was Woody Harrellson as Haymitch. He was perfectly cast to play the drunken mentor of Katniss and Peeta because all he had to do was be himself! Liam Hemsworth was allright as Gale, and I empathized with him because I’m pretty sure every guy would be pretty mad if the baker’s son stole his girlfriend on national TV. His part was relatively small in this movie, but it grows as the books progress. The soundtrack was allright after I checked the album out on YouTube, but there were only one or two noteworthy songs on it, one being “Safe and Sound” by Taylor Swift, but that’s not my area of expertise. The reader might want to check with the author of our album reviews for soundtrack info. I largely didn’t notice the soundtrack because I was enthralled with the story. The effects were cool, but not a major factor in the movie. My favorite effect was obviously the Nazi-Zombiesque Hell Hounds at the end.

Overall, I’m very impressed with this movie not only because of the emergence of several young actors who have great careers ahead of them but also for Ross’ ability to take a very emotional and sometimes dark story and convey it in a sophisticated and stark way rather than the over-exaggerated Hollywood style; he will be missed for the sequel. There were minimal differences between the movie and the book. One being that most of the book is Katniss’ thoughts and her strategizing through every situation, but it is hard to portray characters’ thoughts, so it didn’t bother me too much. In addition, the book portrayed the action in the games as very gory and violent, but Ross doesn’t have a history with violent set-pieces as his best previous work was Seabiscuit, and I didn’t mind, as violent fighting isn’t the main draw if you are going to see this movie. Another drawback is the fact that the movie is pretty long at 142 minutes, so if you bore easily it may not be the film for you. However, I didn’t realize it was that long until after the movie when I checked my watch because I was interested in the movie the whole time. This is also a decent movie to watch if you haven’t read the series. There isn’t too much backstory, so you can jump right in, although I always recommend reading the book before watching the movie. My Dad didn’t read the books, but he liked it. Overall, I thought it was an awesome movie to watch with your family and one of the best book-to-movie adaptations I have seen, the accuracy to the book was amazing due to the fact that Suzanne Collins co-wrote the screenplay with the director. The creative vision was perfect, and it avoided flopping like other book-to-film adaptations, cough...The Lightning Thief. I can’t wait for the sequel, and I am definitely marking my calendar for 11.22.13.
By Hunter Hamilton

1. *The Avengers* - I’ve already seen it, and it’s a great combination of Iron Man, Hulk, Captain America, Nick Fury, Black Widow, and Hawkeye. There are a lot of explosions and fighting scenes, and it’s a very exciting movie.

2. *Prometheus* - a group of explorers searches for the origins of life and end up fighting a battle to save humanity.

3. *The Amazing Spider-Man* - I know they already did a Spider-man series, but this movie still looks really good. It has the same plot as the original, but the graphics will look more realistic.

4. *Men in Black 3* - Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones are back for an all new alien-slaying adventure.

5. *Total Recall* - a remake of the original *Total Recall* with Arnold Schwarzenegger. The movie stars Colin Farrell as a factory worker whose memory has been erased. He soon learns of his incredible past.

6. *The Dark Knight Rises* - the finale of the Dark Knight series. It has a lot of action and looks like it will be a great ending to the trilogy.

7. *The Bourne Legacy* - a movie based on the books by Robert Ludlum and follows the life of a CIA operative.

8. *Seeking a Friend for the End of the World* - Despite being rated R, this movie still looks enjoyable. Steve Carell only has three weeks until a 70 mile wide asteroid hits the Earth. He goes on a journey to find his first love before it’s too late.

9. *Battleship* - A group of ships is forced to ward off alien battleships. It is a spin-off of the game Battleship and looks to be very similar to the Transformers movies.


**Worst Movies**

1. *Oogieloves in the Big Balloon Adventures* - I don’t even know why you would consider watching this movie, but just sayin’ I’d steer clear!

2. *LOL* - starring Miley Cyrus as Lola. It’s basically all about the drama of high school from her point of view. Why would you put yourself through that?
Blunderbuss
Review

By Peter Taylor

Album Name: Blunderbuss
Artist: Jack White of White Stripes fame
Release Date: April 24th, 2012
Record Label: Third Man Records

Jack White is one of the most outstanding musicians of the 21st century. Not only is he a guitarist with some sweet licks and a cool pitch shifting effect, he is an outstanding songwriter and lyricist, who is very versatile, doing everything from alternative country to garage rock to raw and dirty blues. His most famous group was The White Stripes, which split just over a year ago, where he wrote and recorded a bunch of great songs. If you’ve never heard their music, I strongly recommend you do so.

But we’re not here to sit around remembering The White Stripes. You guys want to know if Jack’s first solo album is any good or not. Well, first off I’ll say that it is. It’s got a bunch of cool tunes, some cool guitar riffing by Jack, and some very, very outstanding moments as a lyricist, especially on the lead single “Love Interruption,” where Jack, with help from an excellent female singer, sings that he wants love to “grab my fingers gently, slam them in a doorway, put my face into the ground…” It’s actually an acoustic song, believe it or not.

“Sixteen Saltines” has a heavily distorted guitar riff, the closest song on the album to The White Stripes raw blues rock style. “Blunderbuss” is a country/soul tune that I can actually stand, and it also marks a great moment for White as a songwriter. “Hypocritical Kiss” begins with what sounds like a classical piano part, with a prominent piano part throughout. The lyrics of “Weep Themselves to Sleep” have an almost rap rhythm to them, with another classical sounding piano part. “Take Me With You When You Go” is where Jack shines with a face-melting solo at the end. Are you starting to see the album’s diversity?

While listening, I noticed a few things that I should point out. The most obvious is that there is very little of the White Stripes/Raconteurs style garage/blues rock that Jack White is known for. The album is actually largely acoustic. This isn’t as much a complaint as a wish that there were a few more tracks with some rocking riffs.

Another thing I noticed is the influence of classical music. I’ve read a lot of interviews with Jack White where he mentions a lot of acoustic blues artists as his primary influences, along with Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, and Led Zeppelin. On this album, I’ve heard a lot of influence of both country and classical music. I knew Jack was into country, but classical?? I’ll have to do some more research into this.

My favorite song off of the album is “Love Interruption,” due its haunting melody and paradoxical lyrics.

The Verdict:
Jack White’s first round at making a solo album is very solid. The songs are great, and the instrumentation is sharp, but there’s no real standout quality of the album that will make you go WOW!!

I give the album a solid 8.5/10 rating, and I hope to see more of Jack’s more rocking stuff on the next go-round.
Musical Musings

By Werner Bradshaw

Everyone has an overwhelming amount of free time in the summer, but many spend this time differently. Some go on trips, some go to the pool, and some stay home and do nothing. No matter where you are or what you are doing, you are in a great environment to listen to music. The only problem with listening to music is that after a while, the songs on the radio get a little bit boring after you hear them five times an hour. So, while you are sitting at home, on the beach, at the pool, or in the airport, pull out your smart phone, laptop, or other mobile device, go to iTunes, Youtube, Spotify, or really anywhere and bless your ears by listening to these great artists.

Trampled by Turtles - A bluegrass group out of Duluth, Minnesota, Trampled by Turtles has a very melodic acoustic sound. They mainly base their sound off traditional bluegrass and folk sounds. The great vocals beautifully blend with the melody of the well-played fiddle and the always-beautiful banjo sound. Their songs have a wide variety of tempos, ranging from up-beat songs such as “Sounds Like a Movie” off their 2010 release Palomino, to slower songs such as “New Orleans,” also off Palomino. They most recently released an album on April 10, 2012, titled Stars and Satellites, and will be performing at many major festivals this summer.

Gardens & Villa - Santa Barbara natives Gardens & Villa have similar sounds to many Californian rock bands but add an electronic influence to traditional Cali-pop. It would be somewhat misleading to call them a rock band, but then again, there are not too many categories they fit into. The sound of their music varies from a very distorted and slow, spacey sound such as that of “Orange Blossom” off of their 2011 release Gardens & Villa to a higher-pitched and more upbeat sound with a heavy synth influence like that of “Black Hills,” also off Gardens & Villa. Their music is both very unique and very catchy. They recently preformed in Nashville and are performing in many cities all over the United States this coming summer and fall.

Neon Indian - Neon Indian is the project of Alan Palomo, a native of Monterey Mexico. Palomo’s Hispanic roots certainly played a role in the naming of his most recent album, Era Extraña, which roughly translates to “Strange Era.” With three albums out, Neon Indian, along with other groups, has fathered in a new genre of sound, identified by some as “chillwave” and by others as “glo-fi” or “hypnagogic pop.” Neon Indian’s first two albums, Physic Chasms and Mind Ctrl: Physic Chasms Possessed, contain songs that have a much lighter feel and are a little bit more laid back than the songs of Era Extraña, which have a much darker feel. Neon Indian will be performing worldwide this summer, including performances at many of the major festivals in the US.
The art of making albums has fallen out of the mainstream. I bet half of America’s kids don’t even know what an album is, let alone buy whole albums. Originally, bands would make whole albums, or records, generally with a theme or idea, then choose two or three songs to release as singles, generally the strongest songs, though some artist, notably Progressive rock bands like Rush and Kansas, just released albums, creating a type of rock called Album Oriented Rock (AOR).

Nowadays, it’s generally done the opposite way. An artist records a strong, catchy single, releases it, and creates an album around it, usually a very poor album. Though some artist still make albums the old way, like the Black Keys or Joe Bonamassa, or are able to make strong albums the new way, like Adele, most singles that you consider an artist’s “new song” are actually released months before on their album.

So now you may be wondering, “What did the old ways sound like?” If you want to experience music the good, classic way, grab a root beer, some popcorn and a pair of headphones or set of speakers, and cue up these albums. (For full effect, listen to the album from beginning to end, preferably at full volume.)

2. *The White Album* by The Beatles- “While My Guitar Gently Weeps”
3. *Dark Side of the Moon* by Pink Floyd - “Time”
4. *Live at Fillmore East* by the Allman Brothers Band- “Whipping Post”
5. *Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton* by John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers -“Have You Heard”
7. *Live at the Regal* by B.B. King.-“Sweet Little Angels”
8. *Fire and Water* by Free- “All Right Now”
10. *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* by David Bowie
Ron Artest’s Inexcusable Elbow

By Daniel Bishop

Many people have seen the jaw-dropping video, which depicts Ron Artest, now known as Metta World Peace, elbowing James Harden of Oklahoma City in his head. During his celebration of a dunk, Artest elbows Harden to the ground starting a fight on the court between the Lakers and the Thunder. Harden, an Oklahoma City starter, received a concussion from this vicious elbow. Artest was suspended seven games for his inexplicable actions. He will now miss the season-ending game and the postseason’s first games. If the Lakers’ postseason games end before the suspension is up, Artest will continue to serve the punishment next year. He has lost $348,000 off his salary for his actions. Ron Artest has made numerous attempts at apologizing to Harden on his website, ronartest.com, but even his teammate, Kobe Bryant, cannot find justice in his inexplicable actions. This is not the first questionable act by Artest; he is infamous for lengthy investigations in the past.

Artest’s rap sheet in the NBA is a full one. In the postseason last year against the Dallas Mavericks, he slammed his forearm into the Mavericks’ guard, J.J. Barea. He earned a one-game postseason suspension for that infraction. However, his lengthiest suspension of 84 games was given because Artest jumped into the crowd at Palace of Auburn Hills in Detroit to fight fans there. This 84-game suspension is the longest ban for an on-court incident in NBA history. He also has been suspended for off-court incidents as well. He served a seven-game suspension in 2007 because of his refusal to plea on a domestic violence charge. The NBA is not the only sports league cracking down on unnecessary hits, but many people speculate that the organization is being more lenient on punishments for stars. Chicago’s Andrew Shaw was suspended three games for his hit on the goaltender of Phoenix, Mike Smith. Spectators want violence in their sports, but now the organizations are trying to take this away. I believe Ron Artest was fairly punished for his inexcusable elbow on James Harden, but organizations need to allow players to play in these professional sports.
SPORTS

MLB Season to Date and Forecast

By David Gaw *As of Saturday May 12 games

There were high expectations put on many teams before the start of the 2012 MLB season, some of whom were the Red Sox, Angels, and Tigers. The Red Sox, with the exception of Dice K Matsuzaka, had a healthy pitching rotation for the first time in a while. Some experts thought Josh Beckett and John Lester could be the best duo of pitchers in baseball entering this year. It hasn’t proved so yet as Beckett is 2-4 with a 5.97 ERA over six starts, and Lester has pitched seven games and is 1-3 with a 4.29 ERA. This lack of consistent pitching combined with star outfielder Jacoby Ellsbury’s and third baseman Kevin Youkilis’ being on the Disabled List has put the Red Sox dead last in the AL East with a record of 14-19. The Los Angeles Angels made two huge moves this offseason which put them into the spotlight: signing former Rangers pitcher C.J. Wilson and former Cardinals slugger Albert Pujols to multimillion dollar contracts. Expects predicted the Angels and the Rangers to duke it out in the weak AL West for first and second and for the Mariners and A’s to be third and fourth in the division like always. The almost opposite has occurred because, yes, the Rangers are atop the division, but the Angels are struggling at third in the AL West. Also the scrappy A’s are overachieving for their talent level. The Angels are struggling because first Albert Pujols has only hit one home run, and also, the team is not playing as one; people are playing as individuals. Finally, the Tigers, had big expectations this year because they signed former Brewers first basemen Prince Fielder to a huge contract. This move forced slugger Miguel Cabrera to switch to third base. Also, 2011 AL Cy Young winner Justin Verlander had his sights on back-to-back awards entering this season. He has been solid this year with a 2.63 ERA and 49 strikeouts through seven starts. Overall, the Tigers have been subpar with a 16-17 record but are second in the AL Central.

There have been many memorable highlights in the early part of this season, but the greatest feat was accomplished by Philip Humber of the Chicago White Sox on April 21 when he pitched a perfect game. He struck out 9, recorded five groundball outs, and got 13 fly outs to a total of 27 outs. He struck out Mariners shortstop Brenden Ryan on a 3-2 slider to cap his perfect game. Humber has not pitched well after making history though, but he and the rest of the baseball world will remember the 21st perfect game thrown on April 21, 2012. Also another amazing feat was Jared Weaver’s no-hitter on May 2 versus the Twins. Weaver only allowed two base runners, one on a dropped third strike by the catcher and one on a walk. Both these pitchers, Humber and Weaver, will be remembered in baseball history for a while. The greatest hitting performance was Josh Hamilton’s four home run game versus the Orioles. His four home runs tie an MLB record, and his eighteen total bases are second overall in MLB history.

The MLB has experienced some exciting new players from the minors this year, but by far Nationals outfielder Bryce Harper has had the most publicity. He was called up from Triple AAA Syracuse on April 28 and played versus the L.A. Dodgers on that day. He grounded out to the pitcher in his first MLB at bat but had a double in the game. Harper hasn’t hit a homerun yet but has showed some power. He should get continuous playtime and an increased number of at bats. From what he has proved this year, Harper has a great MLB career in front of him. Also important promotions to the MLB include Angels outfielder Mike Trout and Red Sox third baseman Will Middlebrooks. Trout has put up a .298/.352/.532 line over 45 at bats. Also Will Middlebrooks was called up from Triple AAA Pawtucket for injured Kevin Youkilis and has played better than expected. He has four home runs and thirteen RBIs in about two weeks of play. Overall, these young players will continue to play well, and I think all of them will have breakout seasons.

Predictions:

AL Cy Young: Justin Verlander/Jared Weaver  ALCS: Rangers v.s. Tigers  Winner: Rangers
AL MVP: Josh Hamilton

NL Cy Young: Clayton Kershaw  NLCS: Braves v.s.. Phillies  Winner: Braves
NL MVP: Matt Kemp

World Series: Braves v.s. Rangers  Winner: Rangers in 5
1. **Angels sign Albert Pujols**
   The Angels made a huge splash this offseason by signing Albert Pujols to a 10 year 254 million dollar deal. This was the biggest contract this season and the second biggest contract ever behind Alex Rodriguez. Pujols is set to make $148,481.06 a game in this contract. This season Pujols hasn’t produced what he is worth, with only a .193 average, one homerun, and eleven RBIs. Hopefully he will start producing for the Angels’ sake.

2. **Tigers sign Prince Fielder**
   The Tigers are not far behind the Angels in big money contracts, signing Prince Fielder to a nine-year $214,000,000 dollar contract; that is an average of $23,777,777 a year. Fielder has produced better than Pujols, with five homers, sixteen RBIs, and a .266 average. The Tigers are still looking for more out of him though.

3. **Reds resign Joey Votto**
   The Reds locked up slugger Joey Votto for ten years and 225 million dollars. He has been and will be the face of the franchise for a while. His production has gone up over the years and led to a great season last year. I think he will have another great season.

4. **Jose Reyes signed by Marlins**
   The Marlins signed speedster, Jose Reyes, to a six-year 106 million dollar contract. Reyes has always been known to hit for average and steal bases. He has been a great addition to a lineup that has power hitters like Hanley Ramirez and Mike Stanton.

5. **Barry Zito resigns with Giants**
   Barry Zito has been the most constant part of the Giants’ rotation, and the Giants decided to resign him for seven years at 126 million dollars. This is the biggest contract ever signed by a pitcher. He has pitched well in 2012, and I predict he will make it to the All-star game.
Out of the Nashville Predators’ thirteen years of existence, fans of the team believed that this year would be the best one for the Preds to have a chance to win the Stanley Cup. Unfortunately, with high hopes comes high disappointment. The Predators ended their season with yet another mediocre playoff run. The Predators made it to the second round but could not find a way to beat Phoenix in round two. Of course, there were some positive aspects of the run, but those are hard to focus on when you don’t win the cup.

The playoffs began with a 4 versus 5 matchup between the Preds and rival Detroit Red Wings. The Preds had never beaten Detroit before this series, but they knew that this year was the year to do it. The Predators split the first two games at home, giving Detroit the advantage going back to Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Led by Kevin Klein and Pekka Rinne’s outstanding goaltending, the Preds took both games in Detroit. The Preds could win the series with a game five win. Bridgestone Arena was as loud as it has ever been, reaching 111.4 decibels, to help guide the Preds to a series victory over Detroit. Gabriel Bourque was the leading goal scorer with three in the series. Alexander Radulov led the team with four assists, and he also led the team with five points. Everything seemed to be going right for the Preds heading into their round two matchup with the Phoenix Coyotes.

The Coyotes had defeated the Chicago Blackhawks in six games in their round one series. The series was bound to be a goalie duel between Pekka Rinne (Predators) and Mike Smith (Coyotes). The NHL experts were proved wrong when teams scored a combined fifteen goals in the first two games of the series. Phoenix won the first two games, both by close margins, putting Nashville in a deep hole. With a spark from their crowd and a shutout from Rinne, the Preds won game three, setting up a huge game four. Mike Smith came back in game four to shutout the Preds, giving the Coyotes a monumental advantage for the rest of the series. The two teams combined for only three goals in games three and four. The Preds had to win to stay alive. The Predators did have a late comeback, but were ousted in five games by the Phoenix Coyotes.

In reflection, the Preds had an overall successful season. A concern for Preds fans this offseason is that they have so many free agents (fifteen overall). The management staff has some decisions to make for the future. Some big names that are free agents include Shea Weber, Ryan Suter, Alexander Radulov, and Andrei and Sergei Kostitsyn. David Poile, General Manager of the Preds, says that they are confident that they will be able to keep the core group of guys. There is some uncertainty on who will be in the lineup next year, but hopefully there will be a lot of the same names from this year’s team.
Is NFL’s Caution Causing Excitement to Fade?

By Cole Campbell

Is taking the violence out of football also taking the excitement away? Recently, the National Football League has taken precautionary measures to ensure the safety of their players. Such measures have included moving the kickoff line up to the 35-yard line instead of the 30. This has often prevented kickoff returners from running back a kick and possibly getting hurt. The league has also prohibited helmet-to-helmet hits to limit the amount of concussions. Players who have violated this rule have received massive fines. There is no question, however, that these new rules have made the game less interesting. For example, instead of seeing an exciting kickoff return, players are often forced to take a knee, resulting in no return and an automatic placement of the ball at the 20-yard line. However, these restrictions are not without cause.

During the early offseason, the New Orleans Saints were exposed for several players and coaches being involved in putting bounties on other players. This means that a player or coach would offer a large amount of money to any team member that could take another team’s player out of the game by hitting them extremely hard. Most of the people involved were suspended and fined. Among them was the Saints’ head coach, Sean Payton, who has been suspended for the entire next season. Another incident of importance was the recent death of Junior Seau, a beloved football veteran who had suffered multiple concussions and had killed himself from depression. The depression, called chronic traumatic encephalopathy, was thought to be caused by the damaging hits he had taken during his career.

While there are good reasons for instituting restrictions on player hits, the players know what they are getting into when they play the game. Most of them are well prepared to deal with the risks of injury. Otherwise, they would not be out there. The new safety rules in football may be making the game safer, but they are taking excitement away from the game.

Spring Fishing

By Mark Floyd

Fishing in the spring can be one of the hardest or most rewarding times of the year to fish. In the spring time, almost all gamefish spawn. During the spring (mating season), fish will go through three stages: pre-spawn, spawn, and post spawn.

Pre-spawn is a great time to get out and fish. When the water temperature reaches about 60 degrees, bass and other species will begin to gorge on shad and other prey to get ready for guarding their beds (nests where they lay eggs). During this stage, bass will almost pound any bait thrown their way, from plastic worms to crankbaits. During this time, bass will stage on points and hold to structure.

Spawn bass fishing is one of the most difficult, yet rewarding, times to fish. Bass and other fish will move onto their beds and lay eggs in very shallow water in protected coves when the water hits around 70 degrees. They do not hunt for food during this time, but will bite a lure if placed on their bed. Bass during this stage can reach peak weight when they have eggs. Sight fishing is a key to success, and polarized sunglasses are necessary. My personal favorite lure is any soft plastic crawdad imitation or lizard imitation worked on top of beds.

Post-spawn bass fishing is similar to pre-spawn bass fishing. Bass are weak at this stage from guarding their beds, so they are on the hunt for anything that comes their way. They will hit anything from frogs worked on top of grass to deep crankbaits. Try fishing points and coves holding small baitfish.
Microbe Rifle Team Has Successful Season

By Holland Lund

The MBA Microbe BB team traveled to Livingston, Tennessee, to compete in the state rifle tournament. Competing against the local 4H teams, MBA stood a good chance at taking home some trophies. 4H teams are local people and families that are on a rifle club team. This club will go to competitions just like a team. The BB team dominated the scoreboard, placing Dean Cheevers in 2nd place as an alternate shooter. Tony Neuhoff shot so well in the standing finals and finished the state with a season high score of 2308 points. MBA precision squads captured the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 7th spots overall. The team worked very hard all year and they are glad to have won the state championship for the fourteenth time in the last sixteen years.

When a shooter in the eighth grade becomes a rifle member he shoots on the sporter squad until he shoots a high enough score to make the precision platoon. The way an eighth grader becomes a member of the Cardinal platoon (precision) is to shoot a 480 in score. It is a big accomplishment to become a precision shooter in the eighth grade. The eighth-grade precision rifle members who succeeded in accomplishing this feat were Luke Cianciolo, Jamie Payne, Tanner McCormick, and Dani Beigl. The eighth-grade sporter members were Will Norton, Alvin Zhang, and Richie Scherrer. All of these boys represented the Microbes well this year. The team hopes next year to win another state championship with the help of very talented shooters arriving from the seventh grade BB gun team.

DO NOT ENTER RIFLE PRACTICE MBA

RIFLE

Varsity Rifle Continues to Amaze

By Luke Cianciolo

On April 14, 2012, the MBA rifle team won the state championship against many well-prepared schools in the state. The match was held in our own range: The Rochford Family Shooting Center. The winning squad, led by team captain Joe Scherrer, guided the first squad to victory with a personal best score of 584. The team had an undefeated season and finished the state with a season high score of 2308 points. MBA precision squads captured the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 7th spots overall. The team worked very hard all year and they are glad to have won the state championship for the fourteenth time in the last sixteen years.

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With only one run away from winning the HVAC tournament, you can say that the Microbe A Baseball team has had a successful season. Under coaches Golenor and Malone, the Big Red finished 13-5, with a 8-5 league record and a dominating out-of-league record of 5-0. The very talented squad only grew as the season progressed and clearly showed an increase in chemistry.

The team had a few weeks of practice before getting the season under way against the Nashville Monarchs. The Big Red dominated from the start, taking the game 10-0. Next, the microbes took on Croft. Croft was a tough, early season test. The Big Red won with a little bit of luck from the weather, ending it early for a 3-1 victory.

The team had the whole Spring Break to prepare for Ensworth. The game was a pitching duel, until Gray Adelman led a late inning rally, leading the Big Red to a 4-3 thrilling victory. The team handled their next opponent, a well-coached, but talent-lacking Harding squad. The next challenge for MBA was an away-and-home series with Nashville Catholic. The first game, at Catholic, was an extra-inning thriller. The game went back and forth between the two teams. Carter Lovvorn had a three-hit game, and Sam Rhodes closed it out for a 8-7 win in 9 innings. With the Irish down, the Big Red came back and took game two to sweep Nashville Catholic. Next, the Big Red had two tough losses against Battle Ground Academy and Brentwood Academy. The Big Red run-ruled the next two games. The first, against Nashville Christian, was led by two-hit performances by David Gaw, Glenn Coleman, and Cole Cross. The second game was another dominating performance, this time against Franklin Road Academy. With a great pitching performance from Gray Adelman in their next game, the Big Red fell just short of BA in a 6-5 loss. The Big Red beat a very strong CPA team 14-0 the next game. MBA closed out the season before the HVAC tournament going 3-1 in their last four games. Highlights included beating CPA and BGA.

In the first round of the HVAC tournament, the Big Red played in a pitching duel against CPA. Parker Bryan had a clutch hit to give the team a late lead, and Brandon Bennett shut the door with two innings of great pitching in the end. Finally, the Big Red had reached the HVAC championship. After a first inning with six errors, the Big Red came back, and got within one run. BA held on and took the HVAC championship.

Overall, the team had a great season with many ups and downs. Thanks to the coaches for all that they did for the team (especially Coach Malone’s banana pudding). Also, Wes Richardson and Joe Noser were a huge help in the manager position.
Microbe B Baseball: A Season of Hard Work, Dedication, and Sportsmanship

By Andrew Kaplan

The MBA Microbe B Baseball Team had a great year. The team finished successfully with a 7-4 record. Coaches Lee, Harris, and Webb were all key in the success of the Big Red, through great strategy and the will to win. Great season performances by Turner Johnson, Sam Morris, Michael Lee, Brandon Glaser, Jack Anderson, Perry Matthews, Drew Davis, Ryan Kosson, and Dylan O’Donnell, these players all consistently played well and put the team in a great position to win. The dedicated team went out to 42nd Avenue every afternoon on school days and worked on refining skills and plays to further execute in the games. Some highlights of this hard work were clutch plays by the unstoppable catcher, Sam Morris, and Dylan O’Donnell’s spectacular catches in the outfield.

The Big Red played eleven games, including a season opener against Bellevue Middle with a tough close loss, a great first home win against West End Middle, two wins against the Nomads, a tough loss to the Monarchs and Croft, another two spectacular battles against FRA, one of which was a shutout and the other a victory, two wins by the Big Red. Nashville Catholic played a great game and found a way to win 8-7 against the battling, hot MBA team as well. MBA also played Ensworth in a game in which team captain and leader Ryan Kosson went 3-3.

The Big Red had outstanding performances from opening day until the last out of April. Other great season contributions were brought by William Peter, Jake Evans, Will Hansen, Drew Martin, Drew Davis, Austin Streaty, Matt Braun, and me, Andrew Kaplan. This successful season looks to be a great platform for the coming years in the Big Red Baseball program. This dedicated, hard working and team oriented squad fought every game to the end, winning and losing close games at the wire. This season has been a great one for the Big Red.
The Junior School Tennis Team got off to a great start this season when they drove to Chattanooga and beat McCallie, and then, for only the second time ever, they beat Mountain Brook from Birmingham. This team went through the HVAC season without losing a single match. There was no one who could compete with this team. They went into the HVAC tournament in the first division bracket with Brentwood Academy, Ensworth, and USN. MBA won the tournament without losing a match, knocking off the second place finisher, Brentwood Academy. The winners of the HVAC individual tournament were: Number 1 singles George Harwell, Number 2 singles Richard Baker, Number 3 singles Cole Thornton, Number 1 doubles Rishi Mallipeddi/Ben Ramon, and Number 2 doubles Ben Rosenthal/Magnus Campos.

This tennis team made history in many ways; it never lost a match in the HVAC season or in the tournament. They beat Mountain Brook for the second time ever and kept Ensworth from repeating as HVAC champions. In addition, they looked to make a streak of their own, and they did it all with a team in which nine out of the twelve players are seventh graders. This Junior School Tennis team might just have been the best ever, and there is only more to come. It looks like the High School has a very bright future for varsity tennis.
The Microbe Track Team had a great season this year. Coached by Coach Russell, with help from Coaches Reynolds, Paolicchi, Bailey, Dougherty, Ham, Swett, and Ferrell, we gradually improved both individually and as a team over the course of a 10-week season. We learned about proper running form and how to perform a successful transfer of the baton, and some learned how to high and long jump, as well as pole vault.

Coaches Bailey, Reynolds and Paolicchi were the distance coaches, leading a dedicated group of distance runners in intense daily workouts. Highlights of the distance team were Will and Tom Peters, Collin Ragsdale, Call Bainbridge (who doubled as a sprinter), Will Warren, Robert Dedman, Mack Smithing, Jack Carey, and Jordan Rosdeutscher. The 4x8 relay team proved to do especially well, winning a majority of their races throughout the season.

Some of our 800 runners at the Highland Games after a successful race: Call Bainbridge, Jordan Rosdeutscher, Robert Dedman, and Collin Ragsdale


Our throwers and Coach Swett did exceptionally well too, with strong throwers including Warner Lamar, D’On Coofer, Dan Parks, and Diggs Truitt.

The team did fairly well throughout the season in light of two canceled meets. We won both the Highland Games as well as an unnamed meet at Battleground Academy, an impressive feat, considering that all of our eighth-grader runners were on their class trip to Georgia. We placed third in the HVAC championship at the USN River Campus, losing only to our rivals Brentwood Academy and Ensworth.

We had a great track season, and I thoroughly enjoyed my time. I learned a lot from the coaches, and we improved very much both individually and as a team. I look forward to another great season next year.
The Big Red 7th grade team had a decent season this year. We had a 6-7-1 record, and many of our losses were from overtime victories by one goal. The team captains, Joe Waller, Hayes Alley, Mac Lassing, and Jacob Kovick were great leaders, pushing the team to its full potential. Our coaches, Coach Ardisson, Coach Dean, and Coach Shumacher were always enthusiastic and eager to see us win. Overall, we had a great time, and many newcomers to the game learned and got better.

Our first game was against Brentwood. Pumped for a quick and easy win, our team underestimated Brentwood, and we were beaten 8-2. After such a bad loss, the team was determined to be resilient and work harder in preparation for our next game.

On March 26, the Big Red played Grassland at 42nd Avenue. Our hard work in practice paid off. We outworked Grassland and played great defense and aggressive offense. We had a huge win of 9-3, which boosted our confidence for the next games. We then played Woodland three days later. The Woodland team was intimidated by us because we outsized them, but they were not hesitant to play a great game. MBA was up 3-0, but then coming back from out of nowhere, Woodland struck back and scored three goals quickly. In the 4th quarter, we could tell that Woodland players were getting tired, and we scored two more goals and seized the victory 5-3.

At the next game, we had our second meeting with Franklin. We knew this team, and we were ready to earn back what we had lost. Coming out in the first quarter, we scored three goals quickly. Then on defense, we had a shutout. The game finished out 7-0.

As one of our biggest games of the year, we were very excited for the Nashville Catholic game. We came out and were in a standoff for most of the game. As regulation time ran out, so did our energy. With almost one minute left, Nashville Catholic scored to tie the game up. At the end of the 1st overtime, there were no scores. Then within the first half of the second quarter, Nashville Catholic scored, and the game was over 5-4.

Our most important game of the year came under a rainy sky, as we treaded slowly onto the campus of Ensworth. With a wet field, rainy conditions, and poor spirits, we certainly did not play our best game. We scored early, but Ensworth almost instantaneously answered back with a goal. After several attempts to pull ahead, we went into overtime, but overtime ended quickly with a goal from Ensworth after a missed shot attempt from MBA.

Coming straight back from our loss, we played Woodland for the second time. We knew this team’s strengths and weaknesses, and we were determined to get the win. We maintained a five-goal lead for most of the game, but Woodland managed to score one on us. We came back late in the 4th quarter, and Logan Cashwell made it a five-point game again.

In our last home game versus Brentwood, we hoped that this game wouldn’t go the same as the last matchup. We came out strong with an early 3-0 lead in the first half, but we didn’t hold the lead, letting in three goals and tying it up. We then scored once more, but Brentwood came back and pulled off the win after scoring two more goals.

We played Harding in our next game, and many things did not go our way. The experienced Harding team came out 8-0 off of goals scored mostly in man down. Goals from Wyeth Patton and Caleb Jernigan lifted our spirits, but they were quickly dashed as time ran out. The final score was 8-2.

We matched up against Franklin for the third time. Our team had beaten Franklin once before and expected a blowout again. We were up strong 3-0 in the first quarter after goals scored by Nick Ray, Jacob Kovick, and Christopher Owen. Franklin then scored two goals in the first quarter and another quick one in the third. We were tied. Then we scored twice more, and MBA led 5-3. The team was getting tired, and we let two goals get scored on us. The final score of the game: 5-7.

Our final game to close the season was at the River Campus against USN. After holding out relatively well for the first two quarters, we slipped away in the final quarters. Duncan McGinn had two goals in crunch time, but the team outplayed us in just about every aspect of the game. The final score was 3-8.

Our team had its flaws, but we were a strong group of players, and we show potential for the upcoming 8th grade season. Even though we lost many games, our team were never deterred, and our attitudes were always great. Our coaches and players are looking forward to the next few seasons of Big Red Lacrosse.
The MBA 8th grade lacrosse team had a very successful season this year. The team went 17-3 on the season and was undefeated in city games. The team’s three losses came at the hands of MUS, Walton, and the South Forsyth Longhorns. Two of these losses occurred in the McCallie tournament against club teams.

The Big Red started out the season strong by going 2-0 in the Nicholas Caroland Jamboree. Behind the leadership of captains Benjamin Graves, Taylor Asher, John Kelly, and Peter Briggs, the Big Red started out the season by steamrolling over Brentwood and Grassland. After the first four games of the season, the team had outscored its opponents 38-to-3. The team went into their next game a bit scared because they were playing Father Ryan’s High School JV team; however, the team pulled out a whopping 16-1 victory. Then the Big Red took on Woodland and Hendersonville, beating them both by double digits. The team proceeded to easily handle Harding 11-3 and USN 6-2. With the team in the middle of its season, they ran into some tough competition. They won a nail-biter against the Franklin Knights in a 3-2 win. The team walked over to Ensworth and had a come from behind victory in a 6-5 win. The team played a better and more experienced Woodland squad for the second time and won 5-2. Finally, on a windy Saturday morning, the MUS Tigers rolled into town for a game with the team. After a late rally lead by captain Taylor Asher and key goals from Werner Bradshaw the team came to within 1 goal with seconds left. This game was the first loss for the Big Red in a heartbreak 7-6 losing effort. The team moved on and handled Brentwood 7-2. With only weeks left in the season, the team drove to McCallie where they faced their biggest challenges of the year. The team laid down a crushing 12-0 victory on the Knoxville Warriors. Next, the squad played Walton. The Big Red were handed their first loss of the tournament in a 4-6 loss. Then the team played the South Forsyth Longhorns but also lost this game 7-8. After a pep talk from head coach Dan Cooper, the team travelled back to Nashville more determined than ever to win the city championship.

The Big Red received a #1 seed in the tournament due to our stellar record during the season. The team played Hendersonville first and pulled out a 13-2 victory. Then the team played a fiery Harding team who was looking for revenge after the early season smash down. It was close after the first half with the team only up 3-2, but in the second half the team was relentless and came out winning 6-2. The Big Red knew they had a challenge in the championship against cross-town rival Ensworth. The Ensworth squad was looking for payback after losing the game on their home turf earlier in the season. The Big Red came out strong with a 7-1 lead at halftime. Even though the Big Red appeared to have it in the bag they continued to fight, and put up 8 more goals in a whopping 15-1 victory. The 8th grader’s hard working season had finally paid off, and they felt it as they lifted the city championship trophy.
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