Sometimes in the most challenging times we are reminded of what makes a community special and how much we need one another. The Charlotte Catholic athletic community received a cold blast of reality this past month when they learned that Jane Moll, a well-known and loved parent had been stricken with ovarian cancer.

Jane’s enthusiasm and personality is famous in Cougar athletics. She is known as the Mom that proudly rings her cow bell at the football games and is the first to join the cheer leaders in a rousing rendition of “All together lets fight”. The girls and boys at Charlotte Catholic look to Mrs. Moll as one of their most vocal fans and supporters. She is truly loved by all in the Charlotte Catholic community.

Jane is also the mom to current Charlotte Catholic junior varsity football player Michael Moll. Another son, Mark is a freshman football player at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. Jane and her husband Steve have been mainstays at Charlotte Catholic games for many years.

It was no surprise that when the news about Jane’s fight against cancer became public, the community rose to action. Brielle Smith a member of the JV cheer squad came up with an idea to harness the pain that everyone was feeling. “All of us felt terrible, we love Mrs. Moll and could not just stand by feeling helpless to do anything,” said Smith. Brielle organized the JV and Varsity cheer squads in an effort called 1,000 Bells Against Cancer.

The cheer squad hand painted 1,000 replicas of Mrs. Moll’s signature cowbell with the words “All together let’s fight” next to a Cougar paw. “We wanted Mrs. Moll to know that we are cheering for her as she fights cancer. The bells will be on sale on September 4th for the annual Cook’s Cup game versus Charlotte Country Day.”

When 1,000 bells ring together at the Cook’s Cup game, we hope that she’ll hear us,” said Smith.

The bells will sale for $7.00 at Charlotte Catholic football games and all proceeds are being donated to the American Cancer Society.

The South Charlotte Sports Report salutes the Charlotte Catholic Cheerleaders for taking on this meaningful project. It’s not often that you have a chance to make such a strong statement in life and more importantly stand together in support of someone you cherish.

Yes indeed, bells will be ringing in Cougar Country for Jane Moll.

RING THOSE BELLS COUGARS! RING THEM LOUD FOR JANE AND OTHERS FIGHTING CANCER!
As many of you are aware, middle school sports in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools came within a couple of days of being erased by Dr. Peter Gorman, CMS Superintendent. Thankfully, this program was extended at the last minute and even more importantly many of the teachers that were laid off saw their positions reopen just a week before the start of school. As nearly all of us have experienced, there just isn’t as much money to go around this year. One good thing a budget crunch can lead to is trimming of the fat and some of that has occurred as of late.

I want to share a few of my experiences and thoughts on the entire middle school sports issue in CMS and then move forward. I am a “positive news” kind of person and this hasn’t been the most positive of issues to deal with.

Our email box was flooded with thoughts on this subject all summer long. Many people were concerned about the elimination of middle school sports and recognized the value they bring to students; leadership training, discipline, organization, exercise and life-time memories. So many of the middle school coaches serve as valuable mentors to students across the county. Year after year, former students return to middle schools to say thank you to the coaches and athletic directors that made a positive impact on their lives. CMS Board of Education Member, Joe White, spoke about how important of a role youth sports and coaches played in his life and I know he served as a mentor to many kids that he coached in his career.

Over the last few months, I addressed the subject in my column and offered many alternative ideas. We also offered these ideas to Dr. Gorman and all the members of the CMS Board of Education. It’s important to note that I only received correspondence from three of the board members. I must commend board member Trent Merchant for always being quick to communicate. I also attempted on repeated occasions to arrange an interview with Dr. Peter Gorman on this subject. Once the interview was agreed upon, I submitted questions via email as requested. It’s very disappointing to report that Dr. Gorman did not respond to any of the questions, many of which were questions our readers and the families he serves had submitted. I am going to hold off on any further opinions on the failed interview as I prefer to steer my focus back to the youth in our community.

As has been written in my column, The South Charlotte Sports Report has advocated an overhaul of the current middle school sports program in CMS School. We believe the program can be much improved to create more opportunities and we believe it can and should operate without public funds.

There are two options that I have addressed on many occasions. I believe that middle school sports should be self funded. Each participant should pay an athletic participation fee to cover the costs of the athletic programs. As we are all aware, athletic fees are a part of youth sports. If you choose to play at one of our local athletic associations, there will be a fee. Youth playing Pop Warner football will pay $250 and more to play in the area. Baseball, basketball and soccer bring fees of $100 and more. There simply is no reason that this should be free in middle school. If you are going to play, you are going to pay; no matter where you reside or sport you choose to play. To cover the $1.2 million dollars in the CMS athletic budget, athletic fees per person would be a lot less than the fees noted above. Additional revenue may be created with admission fees as in the $3-4 a game range.

Another option that I have witnessed up close over the last four years as Publisher of The South Charlotte Sports is the operation of middle school sports by athletic booster clubs. This is the model used in Union County for all sports except basketball and winter cheerleading which are operated by Union County Public Schools. These booster clubs offer a wider range of sports than CMS, creating more opportunities for students. Football Saturdays in Union County are special days, with families tailgating and creating a full day of spirit for the 6th, 7th and 8th grade teams.

The South Charlotte Sports Report urges Dr. Gorman and the CMS Board of Education to begin looking at other options. If we ignore the issue, then I strongly believe that middle school sports will get placed on the chopping block for many years to come. I have volunteered my time to serve and even lead a committee to study this issue, but I have gotten zero response. Why put off until tomorrow, something you can do today?

I will end this column with something that came to me in an email this summer on the issue.

“If you want something bad enough, you will find a way to make it happen.”

I hope CMS can work for the future and secure the success of a positive middle school athletic program.
LOGAN RATLEDGE CASTS HIS FUTURE WITH THE WOLFPACK

Seventeen year old Ardrey Kell High School baseball player Logan Ratledge has never been one to sit around and wait on things to happen. The son of Lisa Ratledge and AJ Wright has made an early commitment to attend North Carolina State University on a baseball scholarship. In spite of only entering into his junior year, Logan elected to accept an early offer from The Wolfpack and enjoy his last two seasons of high school.

The hard hitting shortstop has opened the eyes of many college scouts in his first two seasons at Ardrey Kell. As a freshman, Logan stepped into the starting lineup and helped the Knights advance to the state championship series. This past season, Logan moved up in the lineup and helped to anchor a solid infield. A late season injury derailed Logan for the last few games of the State Championship run. After sitting out a few weeks, he returned for an outstanding summer of baseball with The South Charlotte Panthers Showcase Team.

North Carolina State was actually one of the later schools to begin showing interest in Logan.

“North Carolina State was one of the later schools in the process. I first spoke with them about half way through the school season. After a long season and a state championship I took my first real visit in early June. After that I took two more trips to the campus.”

“North Carolina State is a great school and had many majors that I was interested in. Also they are an ACC school with a good baseball tradition and after my first visit I knew it was the place for me.”

Logan chose the Wolfpack over North Carolina, Clemson, Virginia, Virginia Tech, College of Charleston and East Carolina.

Logan reflected on his decision to commit before the start of his junior season.

“During the process I decided that it did not matter to me how early or late I committed as long as it was the fit for me. Getting this over with so early takes a lot of pressure off me and allows me to really concentrate on getting better as a player along with focusing on winning two more state titles.”

Logan’s brother Jonathan currently plays baseball at East Carolina University and was a big help to Logan in the recruiting process. Jonathan played for Logan’s head coach, Hal Bagwell at South Mecklenburg and was a top recruit for South Carolina. Injuries have limited his ability to reach his full potential during a career that has gone from South Carolina to East Carolina.

“My brothers experience with the whole process has helped me in so many ways. Out of high school he chose South Carolina and was their top recruit going in. I learned that staying healthy is the main key to having a successful college career. Unfortunately his career has been limited due to all the injuries that have occurred.”

Ardrey Kell Head Baseball Coach Hal Bagwell had the unique pleasure of coaching both of the Ratledge boys in baseball. He is well qualified to speak on the skill set of Logan.

“Logan Ratledge has tremendous upside. The kid is winner and truly leads by example. He was a high level division I recruit for a reason. As a 2 year varsity starter he has a skill set well beyond his age. He’s improved every year and is one of the most advanced junior players I have ever coached. He’s also mature, dedicated, respectful, and extremely tough! Talk about a hard worker...wow! Sometimes I got nervous he’ll injure himself because he lays out for everything. NC State is very fortunate to have Logan Ratledge!”

With the decision out of the way, Logan wanted to take the time to thank a few people that have helped him over the years.

“First of all I would love to thank my Mom and AJ for taking me everywhere and allowing me to be in a position to get exposure. I also would like to thank my brother for being there for me throughout the process and opening a lot of doors for me. I would like to thank Coach Bagwell for handling all the recruiting and being there from the start to finish. And Coach Don Hutchins for giving me the opportunity to play for his South Charlotte Panthers team. Last I would like to thank Coach Bo Robinson for always being there for me as a go to guy when I really need some help when it comes to baseball.

The South Charlotte Sports Report congratulates Logan Ratledge on his commitment to North Carolina State University. The Wolfpack has secured the services of an outstanding baseball player. Over the next two seasons, we expect Logan and his Ardrey Kell teammates to lead The Knights to many wins and possibly another state championship or two.
Next time you’re at Home Depot, pick up a box of rubber nails. I warn you, it might be tough because they don’t exist. That makes sense because rubber is too bendable to make a good nail. If you dropped a hammer on it the rubber would just mush.

Now imagine your torso is the nail and your legs are the hammer. When you set up for a jump, your last two steps transfer your horizontal energy to vertical. That’s, in essence, dropping the hammer. If the muscles in your torso (or “core”) are weak, then you’re hammering a rubber nail. All of that power just bleeds out of your rubber torso and you end up not jumping as high.

So, how do we turn that rubber into hardened steel? Well, here’s where things get a little cutting-edge. It’s NOT by doing sit-ups. In fact, sit-ups are the enemy because they teach your torso to bend. If you think about it, the reason abdominal muscles work in sit-ups (and give us a 6-pack) is because they’re not designed to stabilize the bell in many different, dynamic positions.

As soon as your forearms are blocked by your inner thighs, reverse the swing of the bell and forcefully extend your hips and knees. Keep your back straight throughout the entire movement. When the bell gets to eye level, re-hike it down between your legs to repeat the swing. You want to sit back into the swing and try to keep your weight rooted on your heels. I suggest you perform 10-30 swings in a row depending on the weight of the bell.

**The Kettlebell Swing**

This is the most basic kettlebell exercise and probably the best because it is so similar to the joint angles of a jump. It also gets your muscles used to not only stiffening, but rapidly relaxing. Most sport movements involve pulses of stiffness followed by relaxation, and the swing trains that. To perform it, grab a bell or a dumbbell by the handle and “hike” it between your legs like you would a football—but don’t let go.

Similarly, the muscles of your lower back are there to prevent flexion, not aid hyper-extension. Your torso muscles are there to help you create core “stiffness,” and when you perform exercises that bend, twist, extend or flex your lower back, you’re missing the point and putting your lower back at risk of injury.

**The Halo**

I like to do these at the beginning of my workout because they not only force the torso muscles to stabilize together, but they also warm and strengthen shoulder musculature. Start with the kettlebell or dumbbell in front of your chin, bell up. Slowly rotate it around your head, keeping it low and close. The bell will be up in front and down in the back.

Concentrate on not letting your body move from the chest down. Take it around your head 5 times to the right and 5 times to the left.

**The Turkish Get-Up**

There are few exercises better than this one for creating bulletproof shoulders because it forces your rotator cuff muscles to stabilize the bell in many different, dynamic positions.

Start on your back with the bell pressed toward the sky in the “firing range” position. From there, punch upward driving off the heel of your best leg and rolling slightly to the side as you brace yourself with your free arm. From that position, raise your hips into a bridge and then shoot your straight leg under and through until you’re kneeling on that knee. Then just stand up. Throughout the entire Get-Up it’s important that you keep your wrist tight (don’t let it hyper-extend backward) and elbow locked. Try 3 on each arm and progress to getting not only up, but down as well.

When you add a couple of kettlebells or dumbbells to your standard push-up, you make that push-up a lot tougher. First of all you have to balance on top of the bells, which isn’t easy. Secondly, you can get much deeper into your push-up which increases the toughness. And lastly, when you add the single arm rows afterward, you realize that you’re working your entire shoulder girdle while maintaining a stiff plank position—a triple threat of strength. We sometimes do these moving forward through the sand, but they’re just as tough in place. Try a set of 5, making sure to keep your hips and torso from tilting as you row the bells.

It’s OK to keep your feet wide to ensure stability of the torso.

**KB Push-Up to Row**

When you add a couple of kettlebells or dumbbells to your standard push-up, you make that push-up a lot tougher. First of all you have to balance on top of the bells, which isn’t easy. Secondly, you can get much deeper into your push-up which increases the toughness. And lastly, when you add the single arm rows afterward, you realize that you’re working your entire shoulder girdle while maintaining a stiff plank position—a triple threat of strength. Try a set of 5, making sure to keep your hips and torso from tilting as you row the bells. It’s OK to keep your feet wide to ensure stability of the torso.

**Partner Drop Bridges**

I think the standard bridge or plank is a fantastic exercise for teaching core stiffness. Unfortunately it’s also really boring, so I like this variation. Get into the standard prone bridge position while your partner lifts your ankles off the ground. For 30 seconds your partner can randomly drop either ankle. Your job is to not let your ankle drop very far. You can do these prone or supine (on your back with elbows in the ground). I’ll warn you, 3 rounds of 30 seconds is all most athletes can handle.

**Partner Drop Bridges**

When you add a couple of kettlebells or dumbbells to your standard push-up, you make that push-up a lot tougher. First of all you have to balance on top of the bells, which isn’t easy. Secondly, you can get much deeper into your push-up which increases the toughness. And lastly, when you add the single arm rows afterward, you realize that you’re working your entire shoulder girdle while maintaining a stiff plank position—a triple threat of strength. Try a set of 5, making sure to keep your hips and torso from tilting as you row the bells. It’s OK to keep your feet wide to ensure stability of the torso.

Jed Hartigan is a regular contributor to South Charlotte Sports Report and is the Sports Performance Director at Velocity Sports Performance in Charlotte NC. Jed is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and has trained many collegiate and professional athletes. He can be reached at jhartigan@velocitysp.com for any questions.
BASEBALL AND T-BALL

REGISTRATION IS OPEN UNTIL SEPTEMBER 12TH

OLDE PROVIDENCE RECREATION ASSOCIATION IS PROUD TO OFFER ADDITIONAL OPENINGS IN THEIR SUCCESSFUL BASEBALL AND T-BALL PROGRAMS FOR THIS FALL.

OPENINGS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE T-BALL, COACH PITCH, MACHINE PITCH, MINORS, MAJORS AND BABE RUTH DIVISIONS!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.OPRASPORTS.COM
SOUTH CHARLOTTE SPORTS REPORT

Registration is $125 per camper and will include big league instructions from Tony as well as members of the UNCC baseball team and staff. Registration deadline is September 9, 2009. Join us for a day of fun!

Each participant will receive:
• a Camp Womack T-shirt
• a Gift Bag
• Lunch from Moe’s Southwest Grill
• an Autographed Item from Tony.

Open enrollment for boys ages 9-16 only.

The Tony Womack Baseball Camp TO BENEFIT THE STEALING HEARTS CHARITY
Saturday, September 12, 2009
Registration from 8:30-10AM
at Robert and Mariam Hayes Baseball Stadium
UNC Charlotte Campus

Registration is $125 per camper and will include big league instructions from Tony as well as members of the UNCC baseball team and staff. Registration deadline is September 9, 2009. Join us for a day of fun!

Each participant will receive:
• a Camp Womack T-shirt
• a Gift Bag
• Lunch from Moe’s Southwest Grill
• an Autographed Item from Tony.

Open enrollment for boys ages 9-16 only.

REGISTER TODAY AT 90feet.com

If you have any questions please
email us at info@90feet.com
or call Mike Dixon at 919-388-5886 ext 105
Ten year old Bryan Petta has been selected as The Winning Awards Young Athlete of the Week. The son of Steve and Kristen Petta attends Weddington Elementary and enjoys playing baseball. This summer Bryan played baseball for The Weddington F-10 Twisters. He played pitcher and first base, helping the team to win a couple of tournaments.

Congratulations to Bryan Petta for being named the Winning Awards Young Athlete of the Week.

To nominate an area athlete for The Winning Awards Young Athlete of the Week, please email Tripp@southcharlottesports.com. The Young Athlete of the Week award is for students 6th grade and below.
Carolina RISE Volleyball and Union Volleyball Club (UVC) are proud to announce the merger of their respective clubs to form “Carolina UVC”. Co-Directors Barbie Curry and Carrie Powell are thrilled about the opportunity to be working together and sharing resources, facilities and expertise. In addition to Powell and Curry, Carolina UVC staff will include John Brannon (On Court Operator), Beth Phifer (Club Administration) and Shelton Collier (Senior Director and current Head Coach at Wingate University).

Carolina UVC will provide an opportunity to girls, ages 12-18 from Union, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus and other surrounding counties, to play competitive travel volleyball. Carolina UVC will offer both “National Teams” and “Regional Teams”. Our National teams will compete in some Carolina Region tournaments, along with several out of region tournaments, as well as National Qualifiers. Our Regional teams will also compete in the Carolina Region and a few out of region tournaments.

Carolina UVC’s mission is to develop and teach strong volleyball skills for all our players. With the board and staff members assembled, our players will have a solid understanding of what it takes to play at the college level. Club coaches will include Carrie Powell (Weddington High School), John Brannon (Butler High School), Cory Tidwell (Former Ole Miss Player), Jim Zorn (Former UVC Coach), Ashley Yocum (Former Wright State Assistant Coach), Sara Christie (Queens College Assistant Coach), Kristen Hullinger (Charlotte Latin JV Coach), Chip Porter (Porter Ridge High School), Brook Sandburg (Marvin Ridge High School, former UVC coach) and many others.

Carolina Courts will be the home facility for Carolina UVC, and is scheduled to host several Carolina Region Tournaments during the 2009-2010 seasons. Carolina Courts is a 44,000 square foot facility that holds 5 basketball courts that converts to ten volleyball courts. Carolina Courts is also home to Rhymer Fitness, focusing on Speed, Core Strength and Agility training. Carolina UVC also plans to use Weddington High School as an alternative practice facility.

Tryouts for Carolina UVC will take place the week of November 9th through 13th. For more information please contact Barbie Curry at Barbie.curry@carolinacourts.com or Beth Phifer at beth.phifer@carolinacourts.com.
Anyone can make you tired.
Not everyone can make you better.

DYNAMIC SPORTS PERFORMANCE
Charlotte’s ONLY facility specializing in youth conditioning and athletic development.

9U CHARLOTTE MEGASTARS

The 9u Charlotte Megastars Elite Team won the 2009 National Championship, by winning the USSSA Elite 92 World Series at the Wide World of Sports complex in Orlando, FL. The Megastars battled their way through the nations most competitive tournament of the year with victories over many nationally ranked teams.

The pitching staff dominated the tournament with great individual performances. The pitching was led by: Logan Mullis, Sam Mennitt, Seth Caddell, Will Sprinkle, Josh Swartz, and Brandon Poplin. The pitchers allowed (44) total runs - 4.4 runs per game. In addition, the team consistently out-hit their competition with 10+ hits per game. The team scored (93) total runs, an average of 9.3 runs per game. The following players received special awards: Sam Howell (Offensive Player of the Game) and Seth Caddell (Tournament MVP).

Megastars team members include: Cameron Greene, Jason Odem, Matthew Lucas, Chase Barnett, Woodson Alexander, Logan Mullis, Brandon Poplin, Josh Swartz, Dylan Gathings, Sam Mennitt, Sam Howell, Will Sprinkle, and Seth Caddell.

Coaches: Anthony Greene (Head Coach), Gary Poplin (Assistant Coach), and Duke Howell (Assistant Coach).
Written by Brendon Reid, Cuthbertson High, Class of 2011

Geoff Vincent is a 16 year old 11th grade student at the newly built, Cuthbertson High School. With support and inspiration from his family, he looks to continue to develop as one of the county’s top football players. After showing real potential as a starting middle linebacker on Weddington’s varsity squad last year, he has high expectations for the Cavaliers upcoming season.

What is it like to play at a new school?
“It’s difficult. It’s definitely difficult. There is no senior class, so we don’t have much experience. It’s hard to expect the younger guys to step up but that’s what needs to happen in order for us to succeed.”

What is your favorite football team?
“Hands down, St. Louis Rams. I know they haven’t been good lately, but that place has a lot of history.”

What motivates you on the football field?
“Having fun. That is the number one thing. I wouldn’t play football if it wasn’t fun. Also winning. Winning definitely helps. To me, the more you win, the more fun it is.”

Has it been tough for the team, made up of players from 4 different schools, to bond?
“You know, you would think that it would be tough, but it wasn’t. We don’t have any Marvin cliques, or Weddington cliques, or Parkwood cliques. Just a Cuthbertson football team. On the field and off the field, we’re all Cavaliers.”

Who is your favorite football player?
“(Arizona quarterback) Kurt Warner. He used to be a St. Louis Ram and he led us to two Super Bowls. The guy is just a beast!”

What are some of your personal goals for this season?
“I really want to continue to grow as an athlete. Every practice, my goal is to get better, whether it is my footwork, my conditioning, or my strength I am going to go hard. I also want to grow as a person.”

What are some of the team goals?
“We just want to come out strong in our first year, and set the standard for future teams.”

What are some of the challenges of playing two positions (Linebacker and Left Guard)?
“It’s hard. You need to learn both offense and defense and all the plays that they each have. You need to be in shape, otherwise you’ll get killed. You also have to just be a football player. Yes, you need to know all the plays, but late in the game when you’re tired, and don’t remember the play, you just need to make the play. Be an athlete.”

What inspires you to play?
“(He laughs) Just being able to go and hit someone as hard as you can. I mean, think about it. What other sport, other than boxing, can you just beat on someone. It’s great!”

What are your expectations for the team this year?
“We are going to compete in every game. We will work hard and are going to give every team we play this year a run for their money. I think we have a very good chance at playoffs.”

LOGAN KOCH

Age: 15
School: South Mecklenburg High School
Grade: 9th
Parents: Donn and Ellen Koch
Words people use to describe me:
A Team Leader, 110% Baseball Player, Tireless and Hardworking, Practicing Baseball and Video Game Tournaments
Hobbies:
My Family and my work ethic
If I could donate $100,000:
I would give it to Elevation Church
If I could travel anywhere:
It takes Talent, (hours of) Training, Teaching (proper instruction) and (mental) Toughness to succeed. The 4 Ts.
Favorite Subject:
English
Favorite Jersey #:
31

Athletic Accomplishments:
Logan is one of the top young baseball players in our community. He was one of only three members of the Class of 2013 to make the 2012 15U USA National Team Tryouts in Jupiter, FL. Logan has clocked one of the fastest POP Times (time recorded from ball in catcher’s mitt to ball in second baseman’s glove) in the country for his age, 1.94 seconds. His on the field resume earned Logan a position on the 2009 Battle of the Border All Star Showcase team for North Carolina, where he has the unique distinction of starting the game at catcher and closing the game as a pitcher.

Logan also earned MVP honors in basketball and was named all-conference in middle school.

Academic Accomplishments:
Logan achieved a 3.9 grade point average in middle school and also played the lead role in his middle school musical “Bugsy Malone.”

GARLAND AUSTIN

Age: 15
School: Charlotte Latin School
Grade: 9th
Parents: Wade and Lilla Austin
Words people use to describe me:
Determined, outgoing, and competitive
Hobbies:
Softball, basketball, art, volunteering, and spending time with friends.

I am most proud of:
Latin softball team’s success my Freshman year
If I could donate $100,000,
I would give to Compassion International, an organization sponsoring children in Africa; many of whom have lost one or both parents.

If I could travel anywhere:
I would depart for Kona, Hawaii, which is not only a beautiful destination, but is also the name of my family’s Flat Coat Retriever.

Best Advice I was ever given:
“If you work hard enough for something, you will achieve success; and if you don’t, then you haven’t worked hard enough.”

Favorite Subject:
Math
Favorite Jersey #:
5

Athletic Accomplishments:
As a Freshman in softball, Garland was voted All-Conference, Conference Player of the Year, All-State and was selected to play in the Battle of the Border showcase. She recorded 162 strikeouts, 29 walks, .565 BA, 24 runs, and 33 RBI’s.

In basketball, Garland started on Latin’s varsity team. She averaged 12 ppg and was honored by the Cavaliers upcoming season.

“I really want to continue to grow as an athlete. Every practice, my goal is to get better, whether it is my footwork, my conditioning, or my strength I am going to go hard. I also want to grow as a person.”

What are some of the team goals?
“We just want to come out strong in our first year, and set the standard for future teams.”

What are some of the challenges of playing two positions (Linebacker and Left Guard)?
“It’s hard. You need to learn both offense and defense and all the plays that they each have. You need to be in shape, otherwise you’ll get killed. You also have to just be a football player. Yes, you need to know all the plays, but late in the game when you’re tired, and don’t remember the play, you just need to make the play. Be an athlete.”

What inspires you to play?
“(He laughs) Just being able to go and hit someone as hard as you can. I mean, think about it. What other sport, other than boxing, can you just beat on someone. It’s great!”

What are your expectations for the team this year?
“We are going to compete in every game. We will work hard and are going to give every team we play this year a run for their money. I think we have a very good chance at playoffs.”

To sponsor the Student-Athletes of the Week Award, email Tripp@southcharlottesports.com

To nominate a Student-Athlete, please email Tripp@southcharlottesports.com
Turn and Burn Lacrosse Presents:

-Fall Lacrosse for boys and girls. Open to players in grades 3 through High School;
- Co-Ed Fall Lacrosse “Jr’s” for players ages 5 - 8.

Location: MARA’s Aurlthur Goodman Park.

For more information and to register please visit, www.tblax.com

BEYOND THE GAME
WITH JAKE WHITAKER

Written by Kelly Pope,
Marvin Ridge High School, Class of 2011

Thirteen year old Jake Whitaker is an 8th grader at Marvin Ridge Middle School and shares a first name with Carolina Panthers quarterback Jake Delhomme. Both Jake Whitaker and Jake Delhomme also share the love for the game of football. With the support of friends and family Jake hopes to pursue his football dreams and play on the Marvin Ridge High School team next year.

What is your favorite subject in school and why?
“Language Arts because I always get interesting teachers that make learning more fun.”

How long have you been playing football?
“I have been playing for 3 years. I started on the Marvin Ridge Middle School team when I was in 6th Grade.”

What is your most memorable moment while on the field?
“It was a home game against Forrest Hills and it was my first play that game. The ball wasn’t supposed to be passed to me, and I wasn’t sure what to do but I ended up catching it!”

What is your most embarrassing moment while on the field?
“My most embarrassing moment was when we were playing against Weddington on our home field and I chickened out on a block because the guy in front of me was bigger than me.”

What is your favorite football team?
“My favorite team is the Panthers because I have lived in the Carolinas for my whole life and I grew up with them!”

What is your favorite quote?
“An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind” – Gandhi

What is your favorite movie?
“My favorite movie is Rudy because Rudy is a football player who is dedicated to the game and inspired to get good grades.

If you had a million dollars to donate, who would you give it to?
“I would donate to The Ronald McDonald House because they help a lot of people and a lot of families.”
ASHLEY FINKE IS DETERMINED TO FIND VOLLEYBALL SUCCESS

By Hannah Davis, Providence Day School Class of 2008

Ahhhh Ace! This is the sound of volleyball season coming just around the corner in the fall. As a rising freshman at Charlotte Latin, setter Ashley Finke will be finishing up a week of tryouts, and she turns her focus to developing her basic skills and pushing her team.

According to Finke, the reputation of the volleyball program at her school was her first motivation to get into the sport. “It’s been really successful, and I wanted to be a part of it, so I just want to do well for the team. My parents have supported me in all of the sports I play, so that’s been really great as well.”

To say that Ashley is a well-rounded athlete is an understatement—volleyball in the fall, basketball in the winter, and soccer in the spring. Ashley loves the nature of competition and challenge. She admits, “Losing is part of the game, of course, but winning feels really good, so you want to succeed and try your best.” Such a positive attitude will certainly serve her well this season.

In speaking with Finke, she seems to be the kind of athlete and teammate that coaches dream about. She recognizes that her biggest challenge in volleyball has been developing her basic skills. She knows there is always room for improvement, and she is willing to put in the time and effort to make it happen. “In volleyball, there is no such thing as the perfect player. You can’t be a perfect passer or a perfect hitter; there’s always room to get stronger and better.”

Ashley then applies this mentality with her practice off the court. Just as she does during the soccer season, Finke hits a ball against the wall or goes out with her sister, who is also a volleyball player. This is the best way to train, she says, and “you should take advantage of any opportunities that your school gives you. Go to open court summer sessions and camps, and get involved wherever you can for the best kind of training.”

Finally, she lives and practices it through her Latin team forward to a great season. According to Finke, the reputation of the volleyball program at her school was her first motivation to get into the sport. “It’s been really successful, and I wanted to be a part of it, so I just want to do well for the team. My parents have supported me in all of the sports I play, so that’s been really great as well.”

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ATHLETES ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON

11U ALL STAR TEAM SOUTH PARK YOUTH ASSOCIATION

The South Park 11-year-old all-star baseball team recently won the Dixie Youth District Tournament in Kannapolis. South Park’s squad went undefeated in the four-game tournament, scoring 40 runs and only allowing nine.

For their achievement, the team has been awarded The Buca Di Beppo Team of the Week Award. Each team member will receive a prize from Buca Di Beppo located in Pineville!

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All activities are at local elementary and/or middle schools.

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Cheer Activity Fee: $75 (uniform not included)
Contact our cheer coordinator Brandie Smith at 704-493-0063 or email at maracheer09@yahoo.com.

www.marasports.org

TEAM CAROLINA

Team Carolina recently finished its fifth summer of competition with semi-final appearances at two national recruiting showcases. Team Carolina posted an overall 17-4 record on its way to final four appearances at the Gait Cup in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and Champ Camp in Baltimore, Maryland.

Team Carolina was led by several Charlotte area lacrosse student-athletes including Jordan Taylor (Ardrey Kell), Angelo Acitelli, Stephen Banick, Josh Campbell, Michael Italiano, Matt Sawyer (Charlotte Catholic), William Anderson, Dave D’Alessandro, Connor Dunaway, Derek Passenent, Thomas Passenent (Charlotte Country Day), Kevin Sherrill (Providence Day School) Braxton Deaver, and Konner Scroggins (Providence). The coaching staff featured Charlotte area coaches Tim Price (Ardrey Kell) and Kevin Gowin (Lake Norman) and Team Carolina founder Mike Desmond.

Bottom (L-R): Davin Olsen, Dave D’Alessandro, Connor Dunaway, Austin Hardy, Josh Campbell
Middle (L-R): Angelo Acitelli, Michael Italiano, Stephen Banick, Matt Sawyer, Konner Scroggins
Top (L-R): Braxton Deaver, Alex Walthall, Adam Hardy, Jordan Smith, Kevin DePopas, William Anderson, George Schlaeppi, Jordan Taylor, Alex Vander Hoff, Nate Poulos, Derek Passenent, Kevin Sherrill, Evan Bozymski, Hunter Edens, Thomas Passenent
The 8U Carolina Sharks took home “the gold” this season. The team, recently assembled, played in the CharMeck Girls Softball league before deciding to take the leap and try a tournament. It was a big one to debut in, but they persevered with a first place trophy.

Front Row: (L-R) Sophia Catan, Katie Stahl, Haley Robertson, Alex Jugenheimer, and Jasmine Loftin.

Middle Row: (L-R) Kara Boroughs, Alyssa Jones, Lauren Murillo, Jayla LeFlore, Carly Gardner, and Ashley Maskeri.

Back Row (L-R) Chris Maskeri, Kevin Gardner, Michael LeFlore, and Brad Stahl.

Weddington High School football coach Justin Hardin captured the first win of his Weddington career on Friday night. Coach Hardin is recognized across the area as one of the top young coaches. His arrival at Weddington has brought a new found level of confidence to the Warriors this season. Justin comes from a family of football coaches, his father Bruce is recognized as one of the most successful head coaches in North Carolina and currently leads the Providence Day Chargers program. His brother, Blair, is the head coach at Porter-Ridge High School.

Congratulations to Justin Hardin for being named The Q Shack Coach of the Week.

To nominate your coach for this award, please visit The Q Shack or www.southcharlottesports.com. The winning coach will receive a $25 gift certificate to The Q Shack.

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