

# SPORTS



## It's Better than NFL Football... It's Paper Football

marisa biondi and gaby haddock

"Blue ... Blue 44... CHARGE! Go! Go! Flick!" No, these people aren't engaging in a rousing round of crazy eight's, playing ultimate or writing an essay, they are participating in the most prominent form of football on campus, the only football that can be played any time of day or night. They are playing paper football (no pads necessary) and the word from the sports rumor mill says they are enjoying themselves.

Grinning mischievously, Junior Jenny Saleeby sets her sights on the "goal": the fingers of her hallmate, Junior Gia Upchurch. She flicks... and misses. Saleeby goes for shot number two. She flicks the tiny paper football once more. When it continues to soar in the air and falls behind the dresser in Upchurch's room, both girls groan. The match takes a brief halftime for the manufacturing of a replacement football.

While Saleeby is hard at work, *The Stentorian* interviews Gia Upchurch.

ST: So, how long have you been playing paper football?

GU: I'd say off and on since about third grade.

ST: So what are some of the advantages of being a paper football player?

GU: Increased muscle strength and flexibility, mostly. And the Speedo's are definitely a plus.

Jenny Saleeby joins in the interview, bearing a freshly folded football.

ST: How do you make the football so quickly, easily and efficiently?

JS: Well, nothing in life is easy. Just as they said at the convocation, things take time. Patience is the key. I use my nails to make sharp creases, and everything is mathematical. Each fold is a small, yet crucial part of the football as a whole. Well, I think that pretty much sums it up.

ST: Fascinating.

JS: Isn't it though?

A sport traditionally finding its following on the elementary school circuit, paper football is finding a fresh new audience at Science and Math.

It is a captivating sport, co-ed, which can be played almost any time of the year. No experience is necessary and spectators are always welcome.

"Paper football in physics is good," Senior James Grant said.

The equipment, one piece of paper, can be found in any student's room or in their notebook for class (hopefully). There is little risk of injury for the participants, but if a player is concerned, they can always wear the safety goggles available in any science lab.

Despite all this, paper football remains unappreciated around campus. As a common topic in the elevator, most students reply, "Table WHAT?" as did Junior Sharon Robertson. However, no one knows exactly how to spread the word about this interesting, yet all-too-unpopular sport.

"Paper football is finger-licking good," Junior Hans Choe said.

Even so, no fliers have been posted as of yet, and no club has been formed to support the players of paper football, though informants say one

is in the works. Neither the cheerleading squad nor the spirit club have expressed an interest in supporting the Science and Math paper football teams in competition. Since there is no marching band at NCSSM, there will be no show during halftime. There is also no intramural system for the pre-existing paper football teams at NCSSM.

Yet through all this, it is rumored that the ladies on third Beall have formed a strong team for this season. Debate occasionally breaks out whether to use colored or plain paper, but the girls all agree that notebook paper is the best choice. Their purpose is purely recreational and their practice times are any time that is available. The paper football movement is quickly picking up speed and may eventually spread to all members of NCSSM at one time or another.

You may wonder, as Nigel Kirby did, "What the heck is wrong with these people? Why play such a silly, childish, worthless game?"

Jenny Saleeby responds, "It's not just a game. It's a way of life."

## Volleyball '99

kiki murphy

Competing against the NCSSM Unicorns may not inspire fear in the hearts of our competitors. Yet, seeing 6'2" Junior Laurin Ariail "kill" (a hard spike) the ball, puts a smile on Diane Lloyd's face. Coach Lloyd promises a competitive, if somewhat green team. The Lady Uni's first conference win against Ravenscroft has set the pace.

With a 4-3 record the team is pushing harder at practice and working towards winning future games. Expressing her excitement for her sixth year coaching, Coach Lloyd said, "We have the defending state champions in our conference, Cardinal Gibbons High School, and we hope to challenge them for the conference title."

The leaders for this upcoming team are none other than the three returning starters, Holly Shankle, Emma Hardison, and Jill McFee.

Shankle said, "This team has potential. With talent in every aspect of volleyball, all we

need is more practice with communication."

The Lady Uni's are also getting ready for the Conference Tournament that is just around the corner. This year's new talent has a positive view about the ongoing season also.



Senior Emma Hardison watches as fellow teammate sets up for a kill.

Senior setter, Erica Healey, said, "With the combination of new talent and senior experience, the team really stands a chance of winning the tournament this November."

Junior Shaleka Covington doesn't mince words about the first few games experience. "They [the other teams] aren't intimidated by us at first, since we're considered nerds. But, when they see a great pass, a well-placed set, and then a power kill, something akin to awe fills their eyes."

"Lady's" volleyball doesn't quite seem to be what it once was. The reputation that NCSSM has as overachievers might just be smeared considering the rampage these girls are on. So get out of your dorms every home game and keep cheering for these talented sportswomen!

## NCSSM student is ranked #2 in badminton standings

jacob schonberg

When people think of sports, the ones that usually come to mind are basketball, baseball, and football. Everywhere else, the major sport is soccer. Other than these few sports, there aren't any major sports prominent in the international community. Or are there?

"Most people don't know this," said Junior Rohit Prakash, "but badminton is the second most popular sport in the world." Prakash has been playing badminton for about eight years now, and is currently ranked second in the nation for the under sixteen age group.

Badminton is a game that requires a lot of skill and

quickness. The net is about five feet high, and the rackets have a long, thin handle and what looks like a smaller version of a tennis racket head on the end. The object is to hit a small ball with feathers coming off one end, called a birdie, back and forth over the net until one person misses, giving the other player a point. According to Prakash, badminton is the highest trajectory sport, with the birdie sometimes traveling as fast as two hundred miles per hour.

Prakash was inspired to start playing badminton by his father.

"He played in college, with a certain group of people," said Prakash, "And he just happened to meet those same people when he moved here [to Durham]."

"I really enjoy playing. It's a lot quicker and takes more finesse than tennis, it flows better, and unlike in tennis, the serve doesn't really matter," Prakash said when explaining why he took up badminton

rather than another sport, like tennis.

"Before I came here [to NCSSM], I was given the choice of coming to school here, or going to Olympic training for the Summer Olympics," he said, "And I obviously chose to come here."

It's very clear that Prakash is good at what he does. In addition to playing in a circuit of junior tournaments,

he has also trained with some of the best players in the world. For a while, Prakash was receiving coaching

from an Indonesian named Ardy Wiranata, the number one ranked player in the world for the past five years

"Badminton is a pretty big deal for some people," said Prakash, "And I hope it will continue to grow and become more popular." Prakash has recently sent out mailings concerning the formation of a Badminton club here at NCSSM, hoping to find both student interest and a sponsor for the club.



Rohit Prakash

Jonathan basirico