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the CATALYST

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THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

@theNDBCatalyst

Volume 11, Issue 4

1540 Ralston Avenue, Belmont, CA 94002

January/February 2025

Basketball players team up to “Knockout Cancer”; Varsity defeats SHP in overtime



VIRGINIA FITZGERALD / THE CATALYST

Varsity basketball members Jane Hipps and Lizzie Johnson honor the latter’s mother and her courageous battle with cancer (left). Sophomore Sammy Kakala prepares to attempt a 2-point play (right).

by Virginia Fitzgerald
Sports Editor

The NDB basketball team hosted its first “Knockout Cancer” game and played against Sacred Heart Preparatory on Tuesday, January 21. The scores of JV and varsity games were relatively close, but they both eventually came out on top. The varsity team secured a 51-43 victory in overtime, marking an exciting start to a new tradition.

The event, for-

merly known as “Catfight,” was a highly anticipated spirit-point game that students would attend. However, while the usual basketball games focus on athletic competition and performance, the Knockout Cancer game seeks to go beyond the game itself. The event aims to channel the energy and enthusiasm of the sport into a cause that touches nearly everyone in some way: cancer. Whether it is through personal experiences or the experiences of loved ones, cancer is a

universal challenge, and this event serves as a tribute to those affected by it. Since it was the inaugural year of the rebranded event, the JV and varsity basketball teams, athletics department staff and Associate Student Body (ASB) worked diligently to ensure its success. Varsity players Jane Hipps and Lizzie Johnson were the primary organizers. Team members designed and sold t-shirts, with all of the proceeds going toward individuals fighting cancer.

“We first went to the athletics department for their support of rebranding ‘Catfight’ to ‘Knockout Cancer,’ so the game has a cause to play for,” shared Johnson. “We then reached out to Hailey Kockos on ASB and got her support. We had a meeting with ... the JV captains, Hailey, Coach Christina and Mrs. Bergholm. ... The basketball team had to make decorations, reach out to the

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MarComm captures NDB moments



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAT ADAMIS

MarComm is comprised of Rebecca Welte, Genevieve Land, Claire McCoy and Kylie Fernandez.

by Rebecca Welte
Features Video Editor

At NDB, there are several student leadership boards to get involved with. One of the newer boards, formed only two years ago, is the Marketing and Communications Board (MarComm). It often works behind the scenes, taking photos and videos, designing social media posts and always capturing the moment around campus. Seniors Genevieve Land and Claire McCoy collaborate with juniors Kylie Fernandez and Rebecca Welte during weekly board meetings advised by Communications and Marketing Manager Cat Adamis. They typically share ideas for NDB’s social media accounts and schedule which school events to attend in order to generate content. President Genevieve Land is responsible for filming

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Students dance in a “Night in New York” at Winter Formal

by Page Krensavage
News Co-Editor

On Saturday, February 1, students gathered at the Crowne Plaza in Foster City to enjoy this year’s Winter Formal, which was themed a “Night in New York.” The doors opened at 7 p.m., providing Tigers with exciting memories until 11 p.m., when the dance ended.

The National Honor Society and California Scholarship Federation Boards, led by moderators Jonathan Tomczak and Helen Ciernick, respectively, made up the Winter Formal Committee, which planned the dance. The members of these boards were split into five sub-committees: Reveal, Advertising, Decorations, Food & Hotel and Entertainment.

Junior Adrianna Chu played a critical role in making the reveal video come to life, helping write the script along with other students on the board. Staying true to the theme, they were diligent in incorporat-

ing New York references that happened to include members of the staff. “Student involvement in the dance is important because, at the end of the day, it’s a dance for the students. So, getting the student’s active inputs makes the dance itself more engaging and more up-to-date,” shared Chu. Before the dance itself took place, members of the Advertising Committee constructed a bulletin board to publicize the event and encourage students to purchase tickets. Thanks to the hard work of the Decorations Committee, students were immersed in a New York theme for the entirety of the night. The venue heavily featured the New York City skyline with mason jar centerpieces displaying this image and a lit-up depiction on a wall. There were also various street signs put up outside the ballroom to make attendees feel like they were in the city.



PAGE KRENSAVAGE / THE CATALYST

Students and their guests attended NDB’s “Night in New York”-themed Winter Formal.

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Basketball team knocks out cancer

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marketing team to promote the game on socials, design the shirts and [do] ... behind-the-scenes work.”

Johnson dedicated the game to her mother and recent breast cancer survivor, Dr. Mary Kmak Johnson ‘84. Proceeds went to cancer patients at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford.

“I really hope the Knockout Cancer game serves as a powerful reminder that anybody fighting cancer is not alone. By coming together as a community, we can raise awareness, support those affected and increase hope,” shared Hipps.

Though only the first year of this event, the team hopes to make it a

new tradition and turn the Knockout Cancer game into an annual one. The dedication, energy and support displayed throughout the event inspired the players to continue building on its success.

“My hope for the future of this event is for it to continue to reach a bigger audience and be able to fundraise more for the children at Stanford Children’s Hospital,” expanded Johnson. “Moving forward in future years, I hope to continue the things we did, like dedicating the game [to someone] every year, posting up ‘Knockout Cancer’ signs, decorations ... maybe adding a video and getting more girls to the game.”

Though she is graduating this year, Hipps

hopes to stay involved in the future.

“We want to increase participation next year by encouraging more people to get involved, whether through donations, volunteering or simply just attending,” expressed Hipps. “It’s really important for us to get as many people engaged and excited about the game as possible in order to maximize the impact of the event”

The spirit and energy within the Moore Pavilion was exhilarating and the sense of competition showcased the team’s incredible resilience, sportsmanship and teamwork. Whether it was aggressive defense, swift maneuvers or impressive shooting, everybody gave it their all.

“It was a pretty

tough game, but I think everybody played their absolute best and really pulled through, especially once we got into overtime,” stated Hipps. “The energy from everyone in the stands really pushed us and motivated everyone to play all the way until ... we secured the win.”

A major turning point occurred when sophomore Mika Cary sank a 3-pointer, giving the varsity team a small, but vital lead. This helped tie the score and bring the game into overtime, where the Tigers scored over ten points, closing the game with a win. The physical game showcased the best of the athlete’s abilities, but the shared goal of raising awareness for cancer made it unforgettable.



VIRGINIA FITZGERALD / THE CATALYST

Varsity basketball players Mika Cary, Julianna Loar, Sammy Kakala, Lorea Melander and Lizzie Johnson pose after their 51-43 victory over Sacred Heart Preparatory during the first “Knockout Cancer” game.

NFL: Eagles win Super Bowl LIX

by **Maddie Mitchell**
Staff Writer

The Super Bowl is one of the most watched sports events ever, with the annual game between the last two football teams of the NFL battling for the ultimate title of the best in the world. This year, it was the Kansas City Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles.

The Chiefs were going for a 3-peat, which means they were hoping to win three Super Bowl titles not just ever in the Chiefs franchise, but in a row. The Chiefs had one of the most successful regular seasons

in the NFL this year, winning 15 of their games, and only falling short to two teams. While both of these teams showcased skill during the regular season and the playoffs, there can only be one winner, which is what the Super Bowl is all about, bringing the NFC Champions to play the AFC Champions.

This year, the Philadelphia Eagles won the Super Bowl on February 9, with a score of 40-22. The Eagles have had a successful regular season, winning 14 games and losing only three games. Additionally, the Eagles also had

a successful playoff season, knocking out teams like the Washington Commanders, and scoring a total of 55 points.

Eagles coach Nick Sirianni has led his team to a victory, and with inevitable injuries throughout the season, he has put trust in Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts. Hurts began his career at the University of Alabama, leading his team to consecutive College Football Playoff National Championship appearances in 2016 and 2017. Throughout the season, Hurts made runs and passes to his teammates, including Saquon

Barkley, who scored three touchdowns in the game against the Commanders.

It is no doubt that the Eagles have had a victorious season, with winning the Superbowl being the highlight. After winning the Super Bowl, the Eagles won their second Super Bowl game, with their first being in 2018 against the New England Patriots.

Overall, the 2025 Super Bowl might not have been a game that the Bay Area loved to watch, especially with the San Francisco 49ers not being in it, but there is no doubt the Eagles’ hard-earned victory



Winter Sports Wrap-Up

by **Camila Qaquandah**
Multimedia Editor

As the winter sports come to a close and spring sports begin, the basketball, soccer and wrestling teams reflect on their seasons. With the inaugural year of wrestling, new leadership for soccer and a nearly undefeated non-league record for basketball, this winter season was one to remember.



SOCCER

Coach Ozhan Ghajar, Luis Sanchez and Ryann Leyte-Vidal led this year’s varsity soccer team. New additions to the team, including sophomores Cadence Goblirsch and Ashley Turek as well as freshman Ella Leyte-Vidal, brought exciting energy and skills to games. In addition, captains Olivia Caballero, Emilia Luis, Kayleigh O’Reilly and Bella Svanberg have made collective efforts to strengthen the team’s camaraderie and to express encouragement throughout non-league and league matches.



WRESTLING

The newest sport added to the NDB calendar is wrestling. The small, but mighty team consisted of freshmen Catherine Dorf, Kathy Dinger and Jiya Panchal; sophomore Taylor Hom; and senior Alondra Ordonez. Their first ever home wrestling match was hosted on campus on Thursday, January 9, a collaboration between the Serra HS and NDB programs. Both teams battled against Riordan HS, starting their legacy as a team and showcasing their skills to students, staffulty and parents.



BASKETBALL

Led by coach Samantha Rossi, the varsity basketball team consists of many returners from last year and its newest addition, freshman Lorea Melande, while the JV team welcomed additional freshmen to its roster. Varsity captains Jane Hipps and Julianna Loar led the team off to a nearly undefeated non-league record, an accomplishment highlighted in the San Mateo Daily Journal. This was also the year of the first ever Knockout Cancer game, an event that was spearheaded by Hipps and junior and varsity player Lizzie Johnson.