



# The High School View

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## Vineyard football and senior girls keep the cup

BY JULIA COOPER

Leading up to Saturday's football face off was a week full of spirit driven events, including the sale of rivalry themed shirts, a bonfire, the donning of the hallways in purple pride, and the hotly contested Powder Puff flag-football game.

On the chilly evening of November 14, senior and junior girls took to Dan McCarthy field for the annual Powder Puff flag-football game. The neon clad junior team arrived on the field early to practice under the guidance of their coaches, junior football players Tony Breth, Joseph Turney, Kyle Stobie, John Henry O'Shaughnessy, and Taymon Brown. The senior team, dressed in all black, entered the field, interrupting the junior practice and signaling to the game's officiating staff that it was time for the coin

toss. Senior captain Jenny Hart and junior captain Isabelle Wadleigh met in the center of the field, where the seniors won the toss and elected to begin the game in the position of offense.

After one half of high energy in the stands and significant scoring attempts by both teams, neither the seniors nor the juniors had any points on the scoreboard. The senior team adjourned to discuss their strategy for the next half. The senior coaches, football players Stuart Hersh, Harry West, Brandon Watkins, Nick Costello and Alec Tattersall, encouraged the senior girls to heed their advice, keep working hard, and push forward for a victory.

Said junior Mikayla Tinus, who participated in the game, "I knew we still had a chance of winning. We were holding our own and everyone was working really hard. We had practiced since



PHOTO BY SAM VALLEY

(From top left) Seniors Taylor Poggi, Alayna Hutchinson, Dylan Brockmeyer and Maggie Riseborough celebrate an overtime victory after the annual Powder Puff girls' flag-football game last Wednesday night.

early October and we really wanted to win it."

The action continued as the second half of the game

commenced. After some heated exchanges between junior and senior players, a touchdown recalled from the

junior team, some disagreements with the referees, and some chaos in the stands, the second half concluded with the score remaining at 0-0. The game would go into overtime.

The game finally concluded with a touchdown by senior Maggie Riseborough, giving the victory to the seniors. Said senior Tayla Kuehne, "Winning felt so good, but I almost wouldn't have minded ending with a tie because a lot of unnecessary disputes could've been avoided."

The players were not the only ones to be excited about the game's thrilling conclusion. Senior spectator Carl Gosselin said, "That

was easily one of the most exciting flag-football games I've ever seen. It was worth standing out here in the cold just to watch all of the excitement unfold on the field."

This level of enthusiasm carried over onto the field the following Saturday as the Vineyard football team faced off against Nantucket in the historical Island Cup. In an electrifying contest, the Vineyard made an unlikely comeback in the final minutes of the game, scoring two touchdowns in four minutes. Said senior spectator James Ulyatt, "Anyone who wasn't there to see the end of the game missed the best four minutes in football history. It was amazing."

The unlikely Vineyard win sparked an uproar of enthusiasm from the Vineyard fans, who rushed onto the field to celebrate the victory with the team. Coach Donald Herman, so enthused with the team's triumph, even shaved his iconic mustache. **MSV**

## Admissions officers offer insight on teacher recommendations

BY SARAH ORTLIP-SOMMERS

Autumn is a stressful season for high-school seniors. In addition to the rigors of senior year, many also are getting ready to apply to college. Letters of recommendation from teachers are often an important part of the application process. But what exactly are these letters supposed to say, and how will they affect a student's application as a whole?

There aren't necessarily any specific things individual admissions officers look for in letters of recommendation. The letter is simply a first-hand account of a student's performance in the classroom. Peter Osgood, Admissions Director at Harvey Mudd College said, "Letters of recommendation can play an enormously helpful role in identifying qualities that we think may suggest potential for success at our colleges. There are many,

many questions a teacher can answer for us about the student's behavior in a classroom." A recommendation can answer the question a transcript doesn't – who is this student? On an application filled with test scores and lists of achievements, letters of recommendation provide a teacher's perspective on a student's personality and character.

Many students worry that a teacher could write a letter that inadvertently has a negative impact on their application. Mr. Osgood said, "Students who come off as lazy or arrogant or disruptive can have a big [negative] impact on the intellectual life of a college community. Questions of character and personal integrity are major causes of concern."

It can be annoying to read a recommendation that doesn't portray a student's unique qualities, but simply describes him or her as a

good student. Sandra Sohne-Johnston, Associate Dean of Admissions at Colby College, said, "a recommendation that focuses on extracurricular activities rather than on academic strength is less effective."

Letters of recommendation are not necessarily more or less important than SAT scores or extracurricular activities. Each student is different. A recommendation's weight on an application is unique to each case. Taylor, a student intern at the admissions office of Bucknell University, said, "Some students excel at taking standardized tests, while others manifest their skills in another form."

Choosing the right teacher to compose a recommendation is difficult. Most admissions officers want to hear from teachers of core academic subjects like English, math, history, science, and languages. In fact, some colleges require recommen-



PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE PARKHURST

One senior at the regional high school looks to their future, contemplating their college applications.

dations to be written by a teacher of a certain subject. Generally, it's safest to select a teacher from an 11th grade class, especially an honors or AP course. However, exceptions are frequent. Often, a teacher of a ninth grade class has been following or guiding a student throughout high school. As long as a teacher can write about a student with honest, personal

insight, he or she would be a good choice. Another thing to take into consideration is the field of study that interests a student. It may be helpful for a student who wants to study biology in college to ask a biology teacher to write a recommendation.

"It's also nice if the teacher knows the student in another capacity, for example, the history teacher is also the

track coach, and the student is on the track team. The teacher can write about the student in the classroom, but also as a member of the track team," said Nina Shover, an admissions counselor from Gettysburg College. Choosing a teacher who also works with a student outside the classroom will allow him or her to incorporate more positive and personal details into a letter. Taylor said, "These are people who see your talents outside of a purely academic setting and will provide us with a sense of how well-rounded you are."

Honesty is best when it comes to letters of recommendation. Admissions officers aren't pleased with teachers who only brag about students. Writes Tania Glinkski, an admissions officer at the University of Massachusetts Boston, "A great recommendation comes from a person who can tell us who you are, what your challenges are, how you face these challenges, and what you are capable of." **MSV**

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