Participation Greatly Affecting the Cross Country Team

Evan McGlinn
Guest Writer

On a good day, the Loy Norrix Men's Cross Country team has seven runners. However, at many races, they are forced to run with only five or even four runners. In cross country, your top five runners score, meaning that on a day that the team has to run with four, they are disqualified.

"Having a small team kills us, if we had the seniors back from last year, we would have a definite shot at going to State."
-Alex Ehrnstrom

To put it in perspective, imagine our basketball team playing a game without a point guard or the soccer team playing a game with no goalie.

Senior and team captain Alex Ehrnstrom said, "Having a small team kills us, if we had the seniors back from last year, we would have a definite shot at going to State."

Having a small team puts extra pressure on the runners because if one individual has a bad race, then it greatly affects the team as a whole. Also, it affects the strategy of the team. Larger teams can pack run, which is running in pairs or small groups so that you can single out runners from other teams and pass them. The small Loy Norrix team can't do this because of their size.

Despite the small size of the team, the guys train extremely hard both before and during the season to stay in shape. Before the season, the men's team goes to camp where each runner runs about 80 miles in one week.

Ehrnstrom said that this week was very rigorous and intense for the runners. "If you can survive camp, you can handle pretty much anything." he said.

The small size of the men's team has had some advantages. It forces the members to push hard every race and it has caused a number of the racers to step their running up for the good of the team. It has also made the team a lot closer.

Derek Kusa, a member of the team said, "The team is closer than in any other sport."

This year the Women's Cross Country team is on the opposite end of the spectrum. The team is one of the largest women's cross country teams that Loy Norrix has had in a while with 14 runners. Out of the 14 runners, eight are seniors this year. This benefits the ladies because the seniors can share their experiences with the younger girls.

Having a large team is also a benefit because they have a lot of runners that can be in the top five for the team, putting less pressure on a few runners and spreading it throughout the team. The runners can also run in a pack and push each other.

The girls also practice intensely during the season and before. They can run up to nine miles in a day during their training. They go to camp with the men's team and for many of the girls, this is one of the most memorable events of the cross country season.

"The week is very intense, but at the same time it is a bonding experience," said Captain Addie Drillock.

This year the LN cross country team is very optimistic. They have set their goals high and hope to make it to the state tournament at the end of the year.

JENNY HILL/ GUEST PHOTOGRAPHER

The Loy Norrix Men's Cross Country Team warms up for a race at KVCC. The men's team placed forth in the division, and the Women's Team tied with Portage Central for first in the division. Also Senior Jana Graudins qualified for the MHSAA State Championship Meet.

Title IX a Detriment to JV Tennis

ANILASH PANIKULANGARA/ KNIGHT LIFE

Sophomore Brian Craig warms up for a match at the Wayland Tournament. Craig is number one in doubles.

Daedal Derks
Guest Writer

The Loy Norrix Tennis Team has the winningest record of any sport here at Norrix. At 7-3-2 they are currently in second place in the Central Division. Their only losses have come against Portage Central, Battle Creek Lakeview, and Mattawan.

Both PC and BCL have finished very high in the State competition in recent years. Although this is about what Coach Williams expected from the team this year, it is better than No. 1 singles player, Mark Denenfeld thought they were going to do.

"[It's] a pretty big accomplishment. We even made gold bracket in the conference tournament."

Making the gold bracket was a goal set by the team at the beginning of the year.

This is the first year in which the Title 9 decision has come into effect. Along with the loss of some key seniors such as David Gumbleton, Andrew Welch, and Jordan Balduf, the tennis team looked like it might have a tough year. Norrix has been fortunate this year in that they have not lost a large number of players to other sports such as soccer or cross country, but this is not the case for many schools in the area.

Junior Varsity has been greatly affected at schools such as Kalamazoo Central, Battle Creek Central, and Mattawan. BCC's JV tennis program is nonexistent this year, while KC and Mattawan have two and three players respectively.

The new season has created a surplus of men's sports in the fall season. With soccer, football, cross country, and tennis, it is hard for schools to get enough athletes to have full teams for JV and Varsity of all the sports. Some students have actually decided to do two sports during the same season.

Sophomore Andrew Darryl, for instance, is a member of the Men's Tennis Team, playing in the No. 2 singles spot and is also one of the best runners on the cross country team. Students participating in two sports are required to declare which one is more important and attend that when there are conflicts. This often causes Andrew to miss practices and sometimes even matches.

Another worry of coaches is the higher potential for injuries. With students trying to play two sports, they have twice the opportunity to get hurt, which would hurt both teams they are a part of.

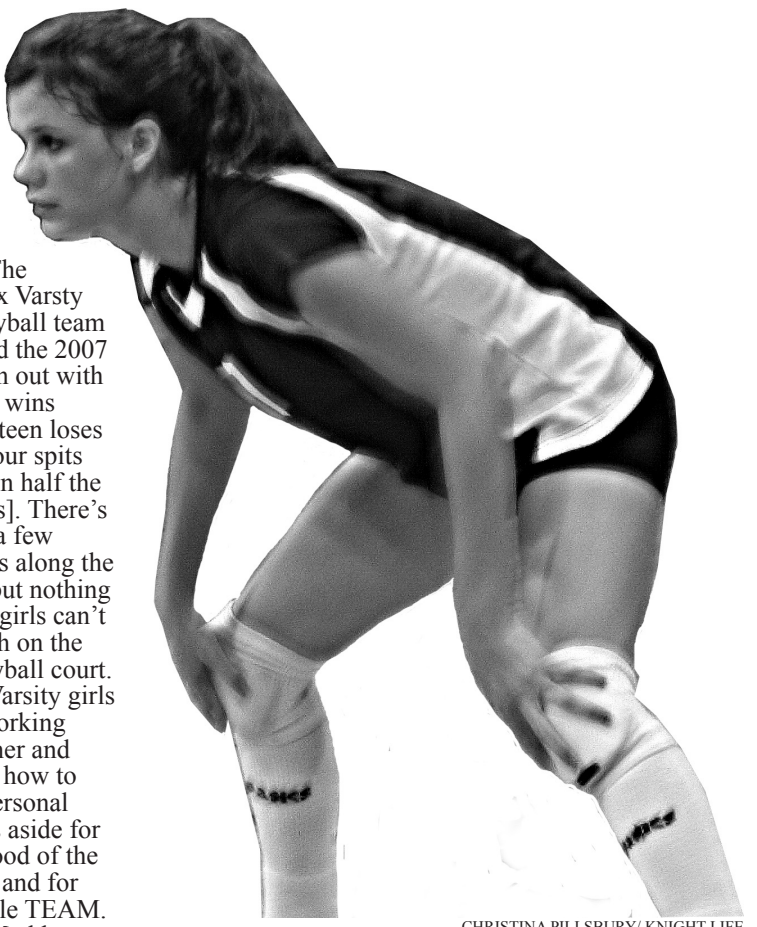
The season change has also affected schedules. The Loy Norrix Tennis Team had to miss out on the Woodhaven Warrior Invitational Tournament which they have been a part of for 25 years, just because it conflicted with the GK tournament.

It is also important to realize that the season change will affect girls tennis as well. With the girls' season now in the spring, it will create a density of girls' sports in the spring. With track and field, softball, tennis, lacrosse, and soccer all being in the spring, it will create big problems for girls tennis teams throughout the state.

"Many of our girls play softball or participate in track in the spring and it's anybody's guess as to what sport they will decide to do," says Coach Williams.

LN Volleyball at the Top of its Game

Summer Chambers
Guest Writer



CHRISTINA PILLSBURY/ KNIGHT LIFE

Junior Anne Brown has been on the Loy Norrix Vollyball Team since her freshman year. She usually plays right side.

The Norrix Varsty Volleyball team started the 2007 season out with seven wins seventeen loses and four spits [to win half the games]. There's been a few bumps along the way but nothing these girls can't squash on the volleyball court.

Varsity girls are working together and know how to put personal issues aside for the good of the game and for the title TEAM.

Madden Miller, senior middle hitter said, " Everyone's giving it their best shot at the game, having fun and hopes to make this the best year yet." Injured senior player Madden was out based on a pulled hamstring but now has returned.

"We're working our butts off to have a winning season. Even though our record says one thing, our team is what makes the difference."
-Elena Charles

Varsity girls stick through their tough practices everyday to get better. Elena Charles, senior libero [defensive specialist] said,"We're working our butts off to have a winning season. Even though our record says one thing, our team is what makes the difference".

This team has great chemistry on its hands. Charles said, "Their new coach, coach Snow definitely cares about them as a team but more importantly as individuals."

Madden said, "Everyone gets along with him, a lot better than last year's coach."

According to Snow, " [The] team is becoming more competitive as [the] season goes along and learning what it takes to win, to be successful."

LN standout players are Carly Wheaton, a senior leading in kills [termination of the ball] and Alyssa Laney, a junior also killing on the court.