



Junior Ayden Houseman and senior Alex Skinner celebrate after a play. Both players are captains for the football team. **Kenzie McAtee** photo

Senior Keegan Lane, tennis captain, hits his forehand during his match. He plays No. 3 varsity singles. **Kenzie McAtee** photo

Sophomore Kaden Wilking passes the ball to junior Zeigen Mahachanh against Franklin Community. Wilking and Mahachanh are captins for the soccer team. **Leah Beaman** photo

Junior Victoria Ortman prepares for her serve against Franklin. She holds the captain title on the team. **Ethan Lobb** photo

## Leadership thrives in Woodmen athletics

By **Dom Williams**  
editor-in-chief

Every season across almost every athletic team, coaches and players elect team captains to represent their team.

Team captains boast characteristics that the rest of the team should look to inherit through playing their sports.

“One characteristic Coach Runge and I looked for when choosing our team captain for tennis this year was mental toughness. Sports can be a mental battle, and it’s important to have someone that can keep a positive attitude. We also wanted someone who was a hard worker and especially a player that’s willing to challenge his teammates to be better,” Mr. Trey Graft, tennis coach, said.

Girls basketball coach Jenny Pfeiffer agreed that her team captains should be leaders.

“When looking for someone to lead the team, I usually look for someone who really gives their all to the team; someone who shows up to practice early and is willing to stay late to help teammates and someone who is a silent leader,” Coach Pfeiffer said.

Some sports allow the team to elect their own team captains.

“I actually have the team vote for their captains, but I remind them when voting what characteristics they should be looking for in their captain. I normally

tell them to keep things in mind like dedication, holding people accountable, and being really engaged with teammates. Something else I look for in a captain is not letting little things slide. A good captain shouldn’t be afraid to speak up when something isn’t being done correctly,” Mr. Zachary Mackie, volleyball coach, said.

Past team captains have managed to set good examples for future players.

“When I coached in college, some of my team captains were really good. The best of the best would always lead by example instead of just telling people what to do. They also weren’t afraid to speak their mind about things that needed to be said,” Coach Pfeiffer said.

Other good examples of team captains are GHS alumni.

“I’ve had multiple good examples of captains, but some that come to mind immediately are Jenna Armstrong and Anna Crusier. Jenna was a really good leader and was really good about checking in with her teammates and making sure they always felt good about themselves. She always made sure to make the younger players feel welcomed, and she made herself available to them to go to for advice. Anna was a really tough player. She was really good about being aggressive when she needed to be but also being kind and caring to her teammates,” Coach Mackie said.

## Competition cheer perfecting new routine

By **Rachel Spivey**  
reporter

Flipping, tumbling, and soaring through the air are normal for the average cheerleader.

“We have two comp squads. Traditional (Gold squad) and time-out (Green squad). Traditional is a cheer and then a music section. Time-out is all a cheer, and we can only do a certain amount of stunts, nothing too elite so it is more competitive because it is easier. Sideline or what you see at games is us just doing chants and stunts cheering on the team. When we go to competitions, we compete our routines against other schools,” senior Avery Guilfooy said.

Junior Cadence Mobley talked about preparation.

“I think our team is fairly prepared for our upcoming competition. We have built better teamwork skills, and we try to get along, which we do for the most part. I especially try to maintain a positive attitude at cheer practice because not only does it help me it helps others. We definitely should have had more practices that would have prepared us a lot more, but I still think we will do great,” she said.

Sophomore Colbie Jones talked about what makes her nervous.

“I’m most nervous about State in October. We have upped the difficulty in our stunts and our routine this year, and this brings me especially a lot of anxiety about messing something up being the reason why our team doesn’t qualify is one of my biggest fears and brings me

some nerves,” Jones said.

Freshman Nora Bates also talked about it.

“This is my first year on the cheer competition team, and I am pretty nervous. I feel like I have a lot of unrealistic expectations. I expect myself to be perfect, and I am far from that. When I don’t meet my expectations, I’m hard on myself. Something I am going to do to calm my nerves is talk to some of the girls on the team. I am going to also try some breathing exercises, and I’m going to give some of the other girls words of encouragement,” Bates said.

Senior Abby Brooks has been in the cheer competitions all 4 years.

“My favorite part about being on the cheer team is the close friendships I have made along the way. I also get to push myself to be the best I can be by learning new routines or stunts. It is the best feeling when you try something new and you keep failing over and over again until you keep doing it and finally you get it. That feels very rewarding,” Brooks said.

A big part of being on the team is stunting.

“My favorite stunt is an inversion, which is when the flyer is inverted and thrown up into an extension. Something we need to work on is the pyramid. We have added new things into the pyramid trying to add difficulty to get good points for this season. We want to make it to State, so adding difficulty will get us there and hopefully place well,” Mobley said.

Making friends is what Bates said is the best part of being on comp cheer

“I love the environment that this team brings. A lot of the cheerleaders just light up the room by being there. The coaches are great role models. I look up to them as someone that I aspire to be like one day,” she said.



Seniors Abby Brooks, Avery Guilfooy and Ryleigh Canfield lift junior Sophia Hignite into the air. They are working on their inversion to one leg stunt. **Paige Glynn** photo

Both Green and Gold squads have a competition on Oct. 5. They have analyzed their competition.

“Our biggest competitor used to be Whiteland, but they moved out of our division. Right now, I would say it’s either Cathedral or Pendleton Heights. Cathedral is in both of the divisions we compete in. We beat them in both and won against them, but they have advantages and disadvantages against us,” Guilfooy said.

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