

TOM TOM SPORTS



Sequoits will square off at home tonight against the North Chicago Warhawks. See Page 14

Cheerleaders plan for new IHSA rules with early competitions



Sequoit Cheerleaders use boys basketball games to practice skills for future competitions. The girls cheer at the game against the Grant Bulldogs.

By Maggie Bodanyi

As the winter season starts for the Antioch Community High School Sequoits, the boys basketball team is not the only group of athletes working hard at the games. The ACHS cheerleading squad is getting ready for the opening of their competition season.

According to Jill Mayers, ACHS senior, the girls have

practices for about three hours each day after school. But to her, basketball games are also more practices.

"We use the fans at the basketball games to prepare us to cheer in a crowded room at competition," said Mayers.

This 2005-2006 season has also brought many changes. According to Robin Gwinn, coach of the squad, IHSA allows every squad to participate in five competitions called IHSA Invitationals. When the team competes at Sectionals, the top five teams will be picked to move on to state. State will have a preliminary round and a final round this year.

The girls' first competition will be held on Jan. 7 at Libertyville High School, with a competition at Lake Zurich High School the next day. Kim Conley, captain and ACHS senior, likes the idea of two competitions in a row.

"By having competitions two days in a row it will be good practice for state," said Conley.

Mayers agrees that the two competitions in a row will be beneficial.

"I know that all of the girls will do what they came to do. It's actually helpful to compete so closely together," said Mayers.

According to Gwinn, the squad will be competing in the Medium Varsity category, which will cause

five alternates to compete with junior varsity.

Mayers is upset that some of her teammates will be missing from the mat at the competitions.

"It will be sad to not have them there to compete with us, but we know that if anything were to happen, they would be ready to come compete with varsity," said Mayers.

On Dec. 6, Meagan Yarc, ACHS sophomore, fell to the floor during a stunt at the Round Lake boys basketball game. She was air lifted by Fight For Life to Lutheran General Hospital. According to Gwinn, Yarc suffered a severe concussion. She will return to practice next week.

Conley stated that the team will be focused on their own presentation.

"We can only control ourselves so we will

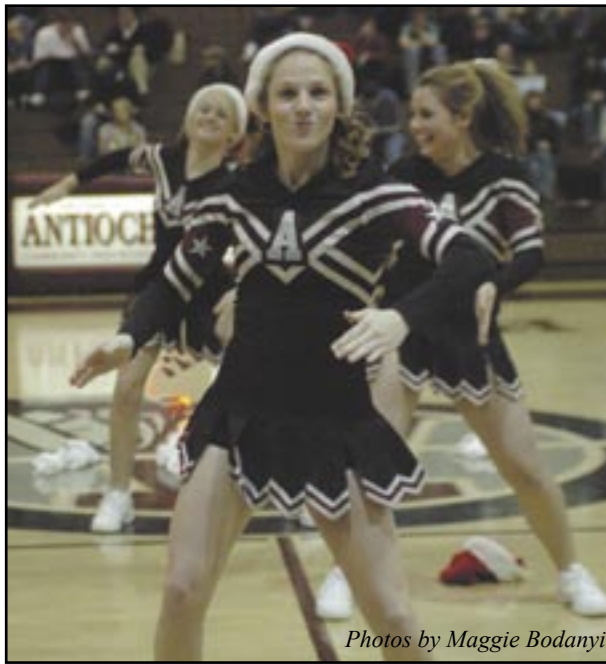
only worry about our own performance," said Conley.

According to Mayers, along with team goals she has personal goals, as it is her last year competing as a Sequoit.

"I think that every year there is that pressure to go to state, you have to set different goals for yourself and the team," said Mayers.

Gwinn agrees with Mayers' goal of being a highly competitive team at state this year.

"If [the girls] can do what they have the potential of doing, they can be one of the top teams at state," said Gwinn.



Photos by Maggie Bodanyi

Sequoit



Sports Briefs

Girls Bowling

The girls bowling team currently holds a 3-0 record in the Prairie Division of the North Suburban Conference. They matched up against St. Edwards on Dec. 14. Scores were not available at press time.

Girls Gymnastics

The ACHS gymnastics team opened their season against Vernon Hills and Libertyville on Dec. 14. Scores were not available at press time. Their next meet will take place on Jan. 4 at Lakes Community High School, where the girls will compete against LCHS and Lake Forest High School. This year, the team is being coached by Meredith Duggan and Steve Cacchione.

Wrestling

The Sequoits wrestlers open their season with seven straight losses. The boys competed yesterday, against North Chicago. Scores were not available at press time. The boys will compete tonight at 4 p.m. at the Harvard Invitational.

Offensive coordinator resigns...

Walker to retire after 20 years of coaching

By Dan Goggin

After 11 years as the offensive coordinator and more than 20 years coaching for the varsity football team, John Walker has called it quits. Walker has helped

coach the team to six playoff appearances, but after this season he made the decision to retire from coaching.

"It was not a quick decision at all, said Walker. "I had been thinking about it for the past two

seasons, I wasn't sure."

Walker stressed the fact that there were no underlying causes for his retirement, he just felt that it was time to move on.

"There are no negatives at all," said Walker "I'm looking forward

to spending time with my family, and watching my son and nephew play football."

Del Pechauer, head coach, said that he will be sad to see Walker go. The two have been coaching together for 20 years.

"It's like losing a friend. We've been coaching together 20 years. It's the people that you miss when it's over, not the games and long hours," said Pechauer.

Coach Pechauer is not the only person that will be disappointed to see him go, players will miss him as well.

Many returning players will have to adjust to playing for a different coach, which is not always easy.

"It came as a shock," said Brad Fortney, ACHS junior. "I thought he'd be there all three years I played. I will have to learn a whole new offense."

According to Walker, he has enjoyed every year of coaching, and has many good memories to show for it.

"You always get excited when your players do well. We had a player named Brad Rubash rush for over 300 yards and seven touchdowns in one game, and Nick Nathan rushed for 360 yards and six touchdowns in a game last year," said Walker.

There have also been other regular season games that have been special to the coach.

"In '99 we won the last game of the year at Stevenson in overtime to get into the playoffs. And this year we won with a field goal as time ran out against Zion, I think that was a turning point in our season," (Sequoits were 1-3 at the time) said Walker.

As to whether he will coach again, Walker stated that it is unlikely but not out of the question.

"Not next year, but I would like to think that if I wanted to coach again I could," said Walker.

Walker said that he enjoyed working with the players and coaches most of all.

"I enjoyed working with the players. You get a different relationship with them than you do through school. We have four guys coaching now who used to play for me. It is cool to see them involved, it becomes a part of your life," said Walker. "I will miss the camaraderie with the other coaches too, we spend a lot of time together."

A replacement for Walker has not yet been named, but both coaches indicated that members of the current staff would be considered for the job.



Photo courtesy of John Walker

John Walker, offensive coordinator, directs his team from the sidelines. This was his last season coaching the Sequoits. Walker is a 20 year veteran of the Sequoit football program.