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SENIORS IN
SHAPE

THEY GOT GAME

MEET SOME OF
THE AREA'S
ELITE STUDENT-
ATHLETES



Happy Hour
Deals You'll
Drink Up

Stephanie Davison

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WHEN MAPLE GROVE SENIOR HIGH basketball players Ellen Edison and Stephanie Davison talked about their experience at the state tournament in March, memories flooded my brain as if the fountain of youth had sprung a leak. Their eyes lit up as they recalled the excitement that seemed to captivate the entire school. Crimson Crazies T-shirts were sold by the hundreds as their classmates showed up in droves at the Target Center in support.

I remember that feeling. Ten years ago a couple of classmates and I organized the original clan of Crimson Crazies, designing shirts and stirring a frenzy of support for the Crimson guys as they made the basketball program's first state tourney appearance in the school's fourth year of existence. Current Maple Grove athletic director Ron Zopfi was the coach. Former Gophers captain Brent Lawson was the star. The Crazies—an intimidating force that drowned out all visitors who stepped foot in the MGSB gym—were the sixth man.

I didn't have to play on the team to feel like I was part of it, which is the great thing about high school sports. It's one of the rare opportunities in life where your favorite team is full of the people you eat lunch with, carpool to school with and (um, sometimes) copy answers off of in math. (I don't recommend or condone this; I'm glad to see some of the best athletes in town are also some of the brightest students.) Read the Prep Sports feature, which includes Davison and Edison, on page 18, to see for yourself.

I also remember the heartbreak that followed the Crimson boys' loss to Tartan in the state title game, a feeling the 2010 girls team and fans can relate to after losing in the quarterfinals to Wayzata. But for every "season's over" chant, a new class gets an opportunity to pick up the pieces and add some new ones of its own. The names, faces and statistics change, but I'm glad to hear some things never do. Keep it going, Crazies!

Bobby Hart, *editor*
maplegrovemag@tigeroak.com

LETTER OF THE MONTH

→ Thank you very much for your help with giving the National Marrow Donor Program some exposure. [Cable] Channel 12 News saw the article ("A Bone-a-fide Worthy Cause," May 2010), and they are going to do a story on the fall marrow drive. I have already had a couple of Maple Grove businesses agree to donate items for the annual gala event. All in all, you really helped an important cause and made my volunteer work easier. THANK YOU! —Ann Marie Forshay Leonard

FROM THE EDITOR

→ Thanks to the local prep athletes, their parents, coaches and athletic directors for working with us to knock the 2010 Prep Elite issue out of the park. These spirited student-athletes represent everything there is to love about local high school athletics, showing us the class, integrity, passion and competitive fire we should all look forward to seeing in the 2010–2011 season.

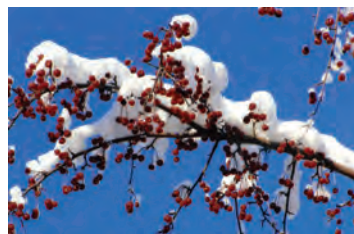


PHOTO CONTEST | Want to put your photography skills to the test? Or maybe snapping photos is simply a hobby you'd like to share with us. Either way, it's worth a shot. Go to maplegrovemag.com to see the contest rules and categories, and submit your nominations today! Winners will take home up to \$100 in gift certificates to local restaurants/shops, as well as a chance to have their photo published in the magazine.

SHARE YOUR EVENTS | Do you have an upcoming event you'd like Maple Grove to read about? Give us a heads-up via e-mail at maplegrovemag@tigeroak.com to submit an announcement for consideration in our calendar section (see page 26–27) by the 10th of the month three months prior to publication. If you miss the deadline, we can still consider it for our events or blogs online at maplegrovemag.com.

GALLERIES GALORE | *Maple Grove Magazine* can't be everywhere at once, but we'd sure love to be. Be our eyes and ears by taking photos and names of people at a local event (with their permission, of course) and submitting them to maplegrovemag@tigeroak.com to be considered for our gallery section (see page 28–29).

A Force of Leadership

Hannah Peterson earns a rare opportunity with the U.S. Air Force Academy.

BEING A LEADER IS SOMETHING THAT COMES NATURALLY to Heritage Christian Academy 2010 graduate Hannah Peterson. But as with every skill she's acquired, she's had to work at it. Both qualities—leadership and hard work—laid the foundation for why Peterson was one of 1,400 (out of 10,000 applicants) in the class of 2014 appointed to the United States Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs) training program.

Starting last summer, Peterson went through a lengthy application process that included not only applying to the academy, but also to each state senator and representative. Her grades, ACT scores, course loads, recommendation letters, physical fitness and examples of leadership were carefully sifted through before she earned her official appointment in March. "I was freaking out," says Peterson of finally being accepted. "I was pretty excited."

Peterson exercised her leadership ability on the soccer field as a five-year varsity player for Heritage and a three-year Premier League player. She captained both teams. "She was a true leader," Heritage head coach Luis Holguin says. "She was very demanding of her teammates, but also fair. She was a winner." On the field, Peterson was all-state in 2009, team MVP (2007–2009) and four-time all-conference for Heritage. Off it, she earned highest honors (2006–2010), academic all-state honors in basketball in 2008–2009 and served as student body vice president (2009–2010). —Bobby Hart

PHOTO BY MARSHALL FRANKLIN LONG



WHAT STARS ARE MADE OF

THE AREA'S ELITE STUDENT-ATHLETES
HAVE BIG-TIME TALENTS, BRAINS
AND HEARTS.

While sports are tracked by wins and losses, they're defined best by those who play them. This month we profile some of the area's most promising student-athletes as they approach their senior year. These stars shine bright on and off the field with superior skills, class, sportsmanship, teamwork, intelligence and hard work.

BY BOBBY HART
PHOTOS BY MARSHALL FRANKLIN LONG

LAUREN WILLIAMS

SPORTS: Volleyball, golf

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 3.95 GPA, 2009-2010 all-state and 2007-2010 all-conference volleyball, highest honors for three years, student mentor, winner of choir and math contest awards, served in student government

★ VOLLEYBALL STORY ON
PAGE 23



LIBBY WARREN

SPORT: Volleyball
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 3.8 GPA, National Honor Society member, on the Head Master's List (3.67 and above) since sixth grade, received two academic letters, two-time all-conference volleyball player (2008–2010) and junior captain

**JOEY
SONNENFELD**

SPORTS: Football,
basketball, track and field
ACCOMPLISHMENTS:
2009-2010 all-conference
football, 2009-2010
preseason all-state
football, 2009-2010 all-
conference basketball





Air Orioles

When the Friday-night lights illuminate the Osseo Senior High football field in September, the Orioles won't hesitate to let the ball fly. Featuring two of the elite wide receivers in the state, **Jameer Jackson** and **Joey Sonnenfeld**, the Orioles' main question isn't if they will throw the ball; it's will there be enough balls to throw? "Oh yeah," reassures head coach Derrin Lamker, "As much as I like to put the ball in the air—we call it the Air Orioles [offense]—there will be plenty of balls in the air."

If history serves as any indication, Jackson and Sonnenfeld will be ready to grab them. Jackson, who earned first team all-state and all-metro honors last year after transferring from St. Thomas Academy, led Osseo with 86 receptions for 1,139 yards and 15 touchdowns. Sonnenfeld, all-conference as a junior, caught 25 passes for 485 yards (19.6 yards per catch) and seven touchdowns.

Although they play the same position, Jackson and Sonnenfeld are birds of a different feather. At 6-foot-3, 220 pounds, Jackson prides himself on being a physical receiver who can run over defenders and run spot-on routes. His 19 receptions against Andover last year set a state record for the most in a game. Sonnenfeld, at 6-foot-4, 190 pounds, has the rare combination of height and burning speed, which also made him a standout safety on the defensive side of the ball with 47 tackles and two interceptions last year. His large frame makes him an easy target for long bombs, and his 4.6-second 40-yard-dash is the fastest on the team. "Nobody can stop him because he's so fast," Jackson says.

Jackson's and Sonnenfeld's personalities differ just as much as their skill sets. "Joey leads by example. He's quiet, and whatever you tell him to do, he does," Lamker says. "Everyone looks up to him because he's a great player and a great leader that way. Jameer is a vocal leader. He'll be yippin' and yappin' and talkin' and getting people excited and fired up. They really mix well with their roles."

Both of Osseo's star receivers are being recruited to play football at Division I colleges. The Minnesota Gophers and Wisconsin Badgers are looking at Sonnenfeld, whose father Randy was a tight end for the Gophers. Wyoming and Stanford are both eyeing Jackson, who has a 3.0 GPA in an HP (high performance) class schedule.

But before they move on to the next stage of their football careers, Jackson and Sonnenfeld will try to mesh their talents and steer the Orioles, who were 4-6 last year, toward a state title. "We have experience with each other now," says Sonnenfeld, "so we're going to be that much better." Lamker agrees. "One thing in football: If you have one receiver, you can be good," he says. "But if you have two receivers, you can be great."

JAMEER JACKSON

SPORTS: Football (participated in lacrosse, hockey and wrestling at St. Thomas Academy)
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 3.0 GPA in high performance classes, 2009-2010 first team all-state, 2009-2010 first team all-metro, 2009-2010 all-conference



STEPHANIE DAVISON

SPORTS: Basketball, volleyball

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 4.0 GPA, 2009-2010 all-conference, 2008-2009 all-conference honorable mention, 2009-2010 Channel 12 all-area team honorable mention, Maple Grove High School Link Crew leader, committed to the University of Northern Iowa

An Inseparable Pair

For as long as they can remember, the lives of **Ellen Edison** and **Stephanie Davison** have revolved around an orange leather ball. As lifelong teammates, neighbors and close friends, the upcoming seniors at Maple Grove Senior High like to say they're "attached at the hip": Their lockers are right by each other, they live on the same block, and they study—and goof off—together. But their passion for basketball, a bond forged in kindergarten, is what binds them.

Neighborhood boys have been learning this the hard way on Davison's backyard basketball court. "Their goal for the summer is to beat us," Davison says. "We don't let them. That's what we do all summer."

"Let's just say we have some unfinished business."

—Stephanie Davison,
on the upcoming season

Even after years of high school and Amateur Athletic Union basketball, Edison and Davison still refine their skills via backyard street hoops, a longtime

tradition that keeps fun infused in the game. "We used to make up the most intricate plays possible, and we wouldn't leave until we could get it perfect," Ellen says. That chemistry between the girls carries over on the court for the Crimson. "I can throw it up the court," Davison says, "and I know [Ellen] will be there."

Both three-year varsity players earned all-conference honors for a Maple Grove team that had a breakthrough 27-3, 2009-2010 season, highlighted by a section title. Edison, who averaged 13 points per game as a junior captain and has 145 career steals, is best known for her defense. "Ellen is the most tenacious on-the-ball defender I've ever coached," says Crimson head coach Mark Cook. Davison, on the other hand, is a jack of all trades, scoring nine points per game and racking up 128 rebounds as a junior. "Steph does so many different things well," Cook says. "She's such a long player [at 5-foot-11], she just kind of creates problems for kids."

The Crimson suffered a heartbreaking upset in the state quarterfinals to Wayzata in March. Edison and Davison are using the loss as motivation for their senior season and are already pounding the backyard pavement to improve. "Next year we know what we need to do to get back to the point we were at," Edison says. "We're going to up the ante a little bit ... Let's just say we have some unfinished business."

ELLEN EDISON

SPORT: Basketball
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 3.9 GPA,
2008-2010 all-conference,
2009-2010 Minnesota Coaches
Association all-state honorable
mention, 2008-2010 Channel
12 Sports Jam all-area team,
2009-2010 Maple Grove High
School Link Crew leader

Serving Up Respect ★ FROM PAGE 18

When **Lauren Williams** and **Libby Warren** are on the same court, a net and a conference rivalry stand between them. Williams of Heritage Christian Academy and Warren of Providence Academy will be among the top senior volleyball players in the Minnesota Christian Athletic Conference come September, and it's a good bet they won't slip under each other's radar.

"Lauren is the biggest threat from Heritage," says Warren. "She's a great player. She's one of the best attackers in the conference, and even the state." Williams shares the same respect for Warren. "She was definitely the main person we were worried about from Providence," Lauren says. "She's a good hitter, and I had to watch out for that block. I was

very aware of her on the court."

The girls played on the same club team at age 12, but have since been key building blocks in their respective high school programs. Warren, who has been a varsity starter since her freshman year, earned all-conference honors the past two years despite missing nearly half of last season with a back injury. "She has the talent," says Providence Academy head coach Kylie Glaser of Warren, "but her heart and spirit is what really makes her a great athlete and a great leader."

Williams, who made her varsity debut as a seventh-grader, is also a leader, primarily by example, says Heritage head coach Tom Fuglestad. "Last year she was a go-to person for our team," he says. "In terms of her domi-

nating skills and abilities, those have become stronger and stronger." So much so that Williams was all-state in a junior campaign that included 448 kills and 85 blocks.

However, volleyball isn't the only priority for Williams and Warren, who also serve as role models for their younger teammates off the court. Warren is a member of the National Honor Society and has been on the Head Master's List since sixth grade. Williams has attained highest honors since freshman year, has served in student government and completed two mission trips.

So for all that stands between Warren and Williams, common priorities—athletic performance, work ethic and classroom discipline—connect them. //