

Students balance workload with sports

With the school sports season in full swing, students share how they have adapted their schedules to allow them to play sports while maintaining focus on school work.

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ILLUSTRATION BY EVA MARRIOTT-FABRE

With the addition of sports this semester, some students made changes to accommodate both their workload and sports. The arrival of sports means setting clear priorities and having to sacrifice other extracurriculars.

Abby Dichter ('23) said she does track and field four to five times a week along with participating in Model United Nations, Mock Trial Club and the Political Science Club. However, she said she now prioritizes certain activities over others.

"Track is my priority so sometimes I won't go to one of those extracurricular meetings, and I'll give that up just so I can do track," she said. "You don't want to overload yourself with too much."

In the current season, Peter Aroner ('22) is playing tennis, which he said has a unique, flexible schedule due to COVID-19 regulations which allows athletes to choose whether they want to go to practice depending on the day.

Nico Schmidt ('21) said he is also currently taking part in tennis and does extracurriculars such as Robotics once a week.

For Schmidt, the most important part of being back to in-person school was being able to hang out with other people and getting outside.

"Being cooped up over lockdown showed a lot of people the importance

of exercise and mental health," he said.

Schmidt said he finds sacrificing his free time for sports is worth it.

"I'd rather spend my time outside playing tennis with others than on my bed," he said.

Aroner said he also appreciates the sports season after lockdown because he can interact with his coaches and peers in addition to playing tennis.

"I didn't have that much time with other people, so it's definitely nice to go outside and to, you know, spend time with others," he said. "It's another opportunity to enjoy yourself."

Amelia Moore ('24) said she plays tennis and takes a martial arts class. She said she also is excited for the new sports season.

During distance learning, Moore said she regularly exercised by doing yoga and going on long walks. However, she said this exercise never had the same effect as being around a team and exercising with them. Moore said she enjoys this engaging atmosphere rather than being "a sad puddle of gasping breaths on the ground."

Dichter said sports and academics go hand in hand. She said sports make her more productive, so that as soon as she gets home she is ready to begin working.

Aroner said in order to balance his schoolwork, tennis, and other activities

he enjoys, he maps out his schedule accordingly so he has enough time to complete what's necessary, and minimize stress.

Similarly, Schmidt said he found that a set schedule was helpful and the feeling of stress due to having incomplete assignments also motivates him.

"A schedule really helped, and just like stress moves me to action, not inaction, and I think some people's stress can lead to inaction rather than action," he said.

One of the trade-offs Aroner said he has to make due to the time commitment of sports is that he may not have as much time to spend with his family, or for his personal interests such as going to the gym or playing video games.

While on weekdays he might be more busy, Aroner said he is able to make up lost time with his family and himself on weekends.

"I'm able to make it up to them, you know, on the weekends," he said.

“**Just try to find that balance in your life where you put everything in and push yourself, but not too hard.**”

Peter Aroner ('22)

Although Moore said she enjoys having a variety of activities and opportunities to try things out while still being flexible.

"I'm just busy, but I like it, it's a good kind of busy, it's not an anxious, upsetting kind, it's just having things to do and that's really wonderful," she said. "I like to think of life as more of an ocean wave than it is a straight river flowing through."

"You don't have tennis, you don't have as much school."

Moore said she also sets priorities when balancing sports and schoolwork.

"My kind of philosophy is not to spend so much time on schoolwork that you don't have any time for anything else, but also to know when to know when to cancel things you'd rather do so you can get that schoolwork done," she said.

Aroner said when he faces any problem regarding his schedule, he consults with his teachers and his coaches, who he said are supportive and considerate.

"Especially at this school, the teachers and the coaches are very cooperative with each person, and they're going to be able to cut you some slack when you need it," he said.

Additionally, Dichter said the return of sports allows for socialization with students in other grades.

"When you're at school, you don't get to talk to as many people, it's more about listening," she said. "But during sports you can talk to whoever you want when you're outside. It's a nice contrast."

Aroner said students who struggle to balance their workload yet are passionate about sports should do sports, and communicate with others if they are feeling any pressure.

"Just try to find that balance in your life where you put everything in and push yourself, but not too hard."

Moore said she encourages other students to be active and participate in a sport despite any concerns.

"Nobody is not an exercise oriented person, unless they're really making an effort not to be, and you're generally just going to feel better about yourself whenever you do something that makes your body happy," she said.