

PRESSING ONWARD

Athletes return to sports after months away because of COVID-19.

By Kayla Grenwis

Along with changes to what school looked like this year, the pandemic completely altered extracurricular activities. In nearly every sport, practices were either cancelled or highly restricted. "We used to practice 5 hours per day, 5 days a week," said gymnast Kira Taormira (8). "After COVID hit, we had NO practice for months." Other sports were cancelled as well. Swimmer Taylor McQuitty said, "The pool had a very small capacity so we went from practicing 6 days a week to 2 days a week for months." This was a shocking change, especially for athletes with such demanding athletic schedules. "I usually practice for a couple of hours around 4 days a week [excluding] tournaments. [I usually] start [by] warming up, doing a few drills, playing some matches, and then playing a game at the end," said tennis player Emerson Bonner (7).

It is easy to imagine that returning to

sports was quite a change. Toarmira described her experience as, "Good and bad. Good because we finally got to go back. Bad because we were so out of shape."

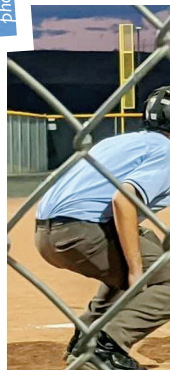
Even with the major setbacks, athletes were content with finally returning to practice. "When I returned to baseball I felt happy and excited because I could see my friends again and I could play more baseball games," said Talon Nicholas (6). These limitations also made for a great learning experience. Hockey player Nolan Feir (7) said, "It's a privilege to skate and I'm so glad my parents let me play." Sports teach athletes not only how to win, but also valuable life lessons that students can take with them into their everyday lives. "Playing tennis has taught me that I can do anything even if it's scary," said Bonner.

Being a part of sports outside of school has greatly benefited student athletes by providing a chance to learn in non-academic ways. As McQuitty said, "You make so many new friends, and you have a lot of fun while also improving at the same time."



photo donated by Kelly Bonner

YOU GOT SERVED! Emerson Bonner (7) prepares to hit an incoming tennis ball. Bonner has been playing tennis since she was 5, but COVID-19 has put a damper on her practice time for the past two months. "Returning to tennis has made me very happy because it takes my mind to a whole different place. It has made me take a step out of boredom and into a lot of fun," said Bonner.



BEST BITS

Q & A with swimmer Taylor McQuitty (7).

Q: How did swimming change during COVID-19?

A: It was made harder because we could not practice every day and went to only 2 times a week.

Q: What is your favorite subject in school?

A: Social studies because it is fun to learn about the past.

Q: What do you like about hybrid learning?

A: It is fun to see only half of the people there because it is not chaotic and distracting.

Q: What is one thing you would like people to know about you?

A: I am a competitive swimmer.

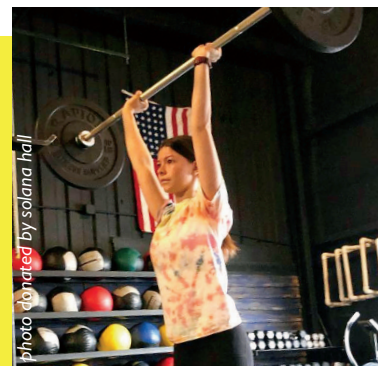


JUST WEIGHTING AROUND.

Solana Hall (8) uses a dumbbell as part of her workout. "You try swinging a dumbbell through your legs with a moderate to heavy weight," said Hall.



photo donated by solana hall



BAR MINIMUM. Hall works out using a bar. "You lift the bar over your head and do it over and over," said Hall.



BRRRRR! Nolan Feir (7) takes the puck to goal. Feir has been skating since he was 3 years old. Nolan likes the fast pace of hockey. "The game is really fast so your never bored and always thinking," said Feir.

photo donated by mindi feir



photo donated by sarah nicholas



photo donated by her father, too ming

BATTER UP! Talon Nicholas (7) prepares to hit a pitch. Talon has learned a lot from baseball. "Playing [baseball] has taught me to be a leader on and off the field," said Nicholas. **SET THE BAR.** Kira Taormira (8) flips over the high bars with the help of her coach. Kira competes in gymnastics. "It combines my two favorite things: traveling and gymnastics," said Taormira.

STILL PLUGGIN' ALONG

Athletes pursue their favorite sport despite changes caused by the pandemic.



"Football changed because we could not do playoffs. We were supposed to play a team who beat us once and we beat all of the other teams. We really wanted to play them once more."
-Liam Dennehy (8)



"I was excited [to return to playing sports] because I could socialize and I did not have to stay at home and in front of the computer all day long."
-Mya Lee (6)



"It felt great because I could play [football] out in the open [rather than] having to play in secret."
-Levi Lueck (7)



"I started playing when I was 4. I like soccer because it's such a active sport and you never stop moving. It's so exciting and there is never a boring moment. I really like the game, the games are the best part!"
-Callie Browning (8)

Q: How did you get into Crossfit?

A: My mom thought that it would be good for me and fun and I would make friends. I started Crossfit about 4 months ago and so far I'm enjoying it.

Q: What would you tell someone interested in starting?

A: I would tell someone that it's a great easy way to get into shape and meet new people. Everyone there supports each other and is really nice.

Q: What's a normal workout like?

A: There aren't really normal workouts because every day we work on something else. We do barbells and deadlifts or something completely different like squats and push-ups.

Q: What has Crossfit taught you?

A: I have learned that I am a very competitive person because every time I try and do my best and lift more than I did last time. I have also learned that I'm very persistent.

Q&A with Crossfit Athlete Solana Hall.

GET FIT

TIME TO