Barbara Hanscom to Receive Hopkins Medal

Barbara Hanscom, longtime Assistant to the Head of School, will retire at the end of this school year and has been awarded the Hopkins Medal in celebration of her career. The Hopkins Medal is the school’s “highest honor,” awarded to “that person who has shown unparalleled commitment, loyalty and devotion to Hopkins School.” Past winners include former Chairman of the Board of Trustees David Newton and alumnus and corporate pioneer John C. Malone. Head of School Barbara Riley said, “Barbara Hanscom has been, quite simply, the heart, soul and institutional memory of Hopkins.”

Hanscom began working at Hopkins in 1978. She had been a stay-at-home mom and had no intention of maintaining what would become a thirty-five-year career at Hopkins, over which she would work for seven different Heads of School. “I had a friend who was [former headmaster] John Wilkinson’s secretary,” said Hanscom. “The woman who was the receptionist, typist, and helper for the head advisors and athletic directors, was having her sixth child, and they had to replace her temporarily. My friend called and said, ‘Would you like to interview for a job at Hopkins? And I said, ‘Not really.’”

Hanscom eventually decided to interview for the job, and after the interview, said Hanscom, “I went home and I didn’t think I had a chance…. But I got a call the next morning asking if I would start the next day, because the woman who was pregnant was put on bed-rest, so they needed somebody right away.” Hanscom’s success in this post eventually turned into the opportunity to work for Acting Head of School John Heath as his secretary.

Explaining the nature of her job, Hanscom said, “It’s so diverse, it’s so exciting. It changes every minute. You just never know… But I would say that my charge is to keep the office running smoothly, and that anyone who needs to see the head school gets in, and that when the head of school isn’t here, we don’t miss a beat.” In addition, Hanscom works with the Board of Trustees. “I like to think of myself as the link between (the Head of School and the Trustees).” “Few people,” said English and Science teacher Canny Cahn, “on or off campus comprehend the scope of Barbara’s position.”

Over her career, Hanscom has also worked intimately with the Financial Aid Committee, and now sits on that committee. Strongly believing in making financial aid available to those who required it, Hanscom “found there was a need to communicate. Some of our families weren’t familiar with private schools and how they worked, and they could call me and come in any time… I worked for four or five chairs of the Financial Aid committee, and I’ve loved that.”

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Snow Prompts Classday Schedule Changes

Sophie Cappello ’16
Assistant News Editor

As of the day this issue went to press, a total of eight snow days had impacted the Hopkins school year. While students rejoiced, the Administration addressed the issue of lost class time. Two years ago, Hopkins missed a relatively similar number of days due to weather. At that time, the Administration decided to cancel finals - a change that subsequently impacted both course placement (which is usually based on exam grades) and the next year’s testing.

This year, the Administration decided to take an alternate path by extending the school day on five half-day Wednesdays. By way of explanation, Dean of Academics, David Harpin said, “In the 2012-2013 academic year, we set up two extended Wednesdays to recover some class time that subsequently impacted both course placement and the Activities Period end at 1:30 P.M. Hopkins has the academic day end at 12:30 P.M. "In the 2012-2013 academic year, we set up two extended Wednesdays to recover some class time that subsequently impacted both course placement and the Activities Period end at 1:30 P.M. Hopkins has the academic day end at 12:30 P.M."

The normal schedule for Wednesdays at Hopkins has the academic day end at 12:30 P.M. and the Activities Period end at 1:30 P.M. This allowed for sports teams to travel to different schools around the state for games. Harpin explained how sports will be affected by the schedule changes: “The Athletic Director was able to adjust times for games, but some teams will need to be dismissed early on these Wednesdays (although it is true that early athletic dismissals increasingly occur on other days of the week, as well).”

This problem will not apply just to athletic commitments, but also to any extracurriculars that meet on Wednesday afternoon. Harpin noted: “Similarly, students who have outside obligations and appointments will need to be excused from Wednesday afternoon classes if they cannot reschedule their obligations.”

Students have mixed feelings about the changed schedule. Many athletes have expressed concern about missing critical class time because of Wednesday away games. Philip Grunakoplos ’16 said, “I understand that the school had to do something about the missed school, but I don’t understand why such drastic measures were taken this year, and not last year. I remember having equally as many snow days, but we didn’t add on school to five Wednesdays….. it shows inconsistency on the Administration’s part.”

Student discontent contributed, in part, to a petition authored by Athena Mayor ’15, who took a stand against the Administration’s decisions. The petition made a number of claims, including the argument that Hopkins already had allotted extra days at the end of the school year for snow. The petition also key-ed in on student concerns regarding a plan to remove review days.

The petition quickly gained popularity. In only a matter of two weeks, it had already gotten 340 signatures - almost half of the Hopkins student body. After receiving the petition on February 19, Head of School Barbara Riley discussed the issue as part of the faculty’s monthly meeting.

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Billy Collins to Speak on Campus in April

Former Poet Laureate of the United States Billy Collins will be visiting Hopkins on April 10 to speak to the school and conduct Q & A sessions with smaller groups of students.

Corbis Images

Inside this issue... Winter Sports Wrap-up, New Haven Jazz, Sochi Olympics, and more
Barbara Hanscom to Retire

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Hanscom's impact on those working at Hopkins has transcended her fixed job responsibilities. Assistant Director of Athletics Cynthia Chase said, "Mrs. Hanscom has been my go-to person for nearly anything and everything for many decades." Said Administrative Assistant to the Front Office Holly Paul, "I really got to know Mrs. Hanscom six years ago when she encouraged me to apply for the position of Assistant to the Front Office in Baldwin. She assured me she would be just across the hall and, in fact, we have become partners in many duties. This has been a very happy and positive learning experience for me and I will always be grateful for her encouragement and kindness." Carla MacMullen, Dean of Faculty, summarized, "I find myself constantly in awe at the number of students and families that Mrs. Hanscom has guided over the years with her thoughtful and selfless manner. She is always ready to help." Assistant Head of School John Roberts said, "I can't imagine what the Hopkins universe is going to be like without her."

Hanscom explained her decision to retire by saying, "I feel like I could keep working. I feel like I have another ten years. You just come to a time when you start wondering, 'Well, in ten years am I going to be healthy?' I just started assessing my life." With this period of assessment came many plans for her retirement years. She wants to go "to Europe," "to walk three miles a day," "to sit down and read a book from to nine o'clock," "to do volunteer work for her church," and "to raise a seeing-eye dog." In addition, Hanscom said, "I'm interested in volunteering with hip hop. I think that would be fascinating." Hanscom is also retiring to spend time with her father. "My dad's ninety-two… I want to give him more time." Though Hanscom has been a witness to much Hopkins history, when she was asked for favorite memories from her time at Hopkins, she gravitated to small, unhistorical moments, like the memories from her time at Hopkins. "Because of the bad weather," said Hanscom, "Commencement was in the Reigeluth Gym (now the Knueel Squash Courts) and when I walked in, every class banner that we had at the time was hanging — it took my breath away. It was one of the most special things I had ever seen. I remember watching the seniors processing into the building and I was very moved." Other memories Hanscom cites are "The first time I saw the Forest Road pear trees in full blossom, all at the same time — a truly unbelievable spectacle" and how every fall "Mr. Roberts takes Mrs. Paul and me outside the front door to see the first red and orange leaves on the huge trees in front of Baldwin Hall." This care for detail and responsiveness to moment-to-moment pleasures and needs of life are what has made Hanscom so loved at Hopkins.

Over her long career, Hanscom has witnessed tremendous campus change. "The school's consideration of students' time and obligations are more balanced than they were 50 years ago," Hanscom said. "Obviously the campus has changed tremendously (buildings, landscaping, parking etc.), and technology has changed the way we function — from attendance to grades and comments to communicating with Hopkins and with the rest of the world. Finally, it's very rewarding to see how the school has grown over the years — more students, more faculty and more staff members."

Hanscom is perhaps most renowned not for her longevity or administrative savvy, but for her personality. "Mrs. Hanscom is the consummate professional and a most caring and generous person," said Carla MacMullen. Hanscom also represents that the fulfillment of lofty aims is dependent on unromantic practicalities—Hanscom described her work with the Board of Trustees as "the more mundane things, scheduling committee meetings, and doing paper work"—and that these practical contributions can be fulfilling.

When asked what Hopkins has meant to her, Hanscom replied, through tears, "Everything." The same may be said of what Hanscom has meant to Hopkins.

Alec Gewirtz Wins Prudential Spirit of Community Award

Alec Gewirtz ‘14 has been selected as Connecticut’s top high school volunteer for 2014 in the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. Gewirtz has worked as a peer mentor for autistic teenagers and has studied autism in various laboratories. More recently, he’s created a social network for teens with social disabilities called Speakasy (speakatson.org). Gewirtz will travel in May to Washington, D.C., for an award ceremony and will be considered for one of America’s Top 10 Youth Volunteers of 2014.

Snow Prompts Changes

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On February 25, Riley sent an email to the Hopkins student body, addressing the petition and the revisions to the schedule. In her school-wide email, Riley explains the reasoning behind these added days. "Although we have added some days (about five) to the academic year in the past several school calendars, those days were not, in fact "cushions" for snow days. Rather, their purpose was to bring Hopkins, low on school days in comparison to our peer schools in Connecticut, closer to a standard independent school year. Those additional days were not, unfortunately a cushion for snow days or other school cancellations."

The petition made it clear that the student body was very displeased with the review days being taken away. Riley sympathized and, in her email, she said, "In one of those "oddly at Hopkins moments, your real concern was with lost review days at the end of the year school year. Your point is well taken - and, as I mentioned - shared by your teachers. Here, we are making a change. Although the changes in school days and school hours will hold, we are ending Terms II classes on Friday, May 23; the four days following Memorial Day will be full-day review days with 55-minute classes, and every class will have at least three review sessions."

In the first week that the schedule change was announced, many students were upset - hence the petition. However, now that some time has elapsed, most students are starting to sympathize with the administration and understand that they made the best decision possible. Avery MacMullen '16 said, "When I initially heard about the extended school days, I was equally upset as everyone else. But then, as I thought about it, I couldn't think of a better solution. We commit to going to a challenging school, and I disagree with the petition to return to the normal schedule. I agree that the review days were a tough compromise, but extended Wednesdays shouldn't be a reason to rebel. ... The administration did its best to make up missed time and anticipate more missed time. Two extra classes on five days is something that seems reasonable, as long as our vacation isn't taken away!"

Julian Markese '15 also sympathized with the administration's decision, and was surprised at the popularity of the petition. "People need to calm down. What do you expect to happen after losing so much school? It makes sense. Mrs. Riley is trying to make up for all of the lost time."

The five extended Wednesdays are February 26, March 5, April 2, April 9, and April 16; different blocks will fill in to make up for the classes that missed the most time due to snow. The number of school closings definitely caused problems for the regularity of the Hopkins schedule, but as Riley noted in her letter to the community, "We are a far-flung community geographically, and simply getting to 986 Forest Road can pose an unacceptable risk, particularly for our youngest drivers, hence our delays and closings."

Spring is around the corner. If Mother Nature has looked at her calendar, weather may not pose any further issues to the curriculum on The Hill.
Hopkins students recently took the Independent School Health Check, a survey designed to monitor the mental and physical health of students at private schools across the country. The results of the survey will be analyzed by statisticians, as well as by school psychologist Dr. Joshua Brant. The results of the survey will help the Hopkins Administration make changes to increase the emotional health of students. The survey is supervised by Dr. Peter Wells, Hopkins’ former school psychologist.

According to Brant, the primary goal of the survey is “to assess both the physical and psychological health of the Hopkins student body. Through this type of evidence-based research, we can more accurately determine where we, as a school, might need to improve upon our current health programs, as well as to help better guide future programs.”

After the same survey was administered to the student body in 2010, student answers led to the creation of the Hopkins Advisory Committee on Diversity, or the HAC. As a school, we might need to improve upon our current health programs, as well as to help better guide future programs.

The responses of Hopkins students are statistically compared with those from 44 other independent schools across the country and one in Beijing, China. This diversity, says Brant, “gives us a rich database to use as a comparison to our peer schools.”

Many Hopkins students reacted favorably to the survey. Brian Kianan ‘15 commented that he had noticed high levels of stress in the student body and was pleased that “[stress levels] are being responded to in a school wide yet private and anonymous manner.”

Chris Cahill ‘14 said that, “The health survey was good because it touched on a lot of topics that Hopkins needs to know about, such as stress, sources of stress, homework loads, and sleep levels.” Cahill elaborated that it was an efficient way to see how “the whole student body feels as a whole.”

Chris Cahill ‘14 said that, “The health survey was a great tool for technology to help us measure the effectiveness of our interventions,” said Brant. “The results of the 2014 survey should be able to help us make the effectiveness of our interventions,”

Tyler Clark ’15 concurred with Cahill’s sentiments. “I enjoy the idea of having a health survey at Hopkins,” said Clark. “It provides the adults at Hopkins with an insight into the life of a student and allows them to make changes to improve our lives.”

Sara Seymour ’14, also acknowledged the positive impact that such a survey could have on student stress levels. She also added, “I realize that the survey is created by a third party, but I think the value of the survey would be greatly increased if a comments section were included. I am a senior, so if you were to ask me about my stress level first term, you’d get a very different answer from now, and I wish I had been able to voice that distinction during the survey.”

Samira Bandaru ’14 summarized, “If an hour of our time can help the faculty understand and consider students’ experiences then it’s only beneficial.”

Over the next few weeks, the survey results will be extensively analyzed. Relevant data will be announced at an all-school Assembly. Students can also meet with Brant to review the data individually. As it has done with previous student surveys, The Bavar will present detailed coverage of the Independent School Health Check as the results become available.

Hopkins Administers Independent School Health Check

Abigail Soloway ’14 Features Editor

Alexandra Batter ’17

The thought of a DJ conjures up images of a shadowy club in NYC thumping to a primal rhythm. Therefore, who would have guessed that the bright and cheerful Walter Camp Athletic Center is the home to Hopkins’ very own DJ group? This cadre of highly polished mix masters are the ones who regale students with a musical compilation during morning assembly. Every Monday and Friday mornings, they rose students from their sluggish state and send them along to “carpe diem” with a selection of tunes reverberating in sleepy heads.

This year’s DJ group started out with “DJ Fresh” Dana Monz and DJ Uma Guarinaccia. They turned over the reins in January to another skilled duo of DJ Bobby “MistaJam” Davis and DJ Nathaniel “Flicka” Flicker. The group enjoys its work. According to DJ Davis, it’s “a life changer.” DJ Monz noted that she enjoys watching “the students sing and dance to their songs even after the assembly ends.” Each DJ has a unique take on the process of song selection. “Anything to put a smile on their faces,” DJ Flicker explained, while DJ Monz and Davis claimed to want to please some teachers with “oldies” as well as contemporary beats for the students.

Given that the students are usually quite somnolent in the morning hours, the Hopkins scholars should be grateful for the including “Love Train,” by the O’Jays. Asked how someone would become a part of this preeminent group, all of the DJs recommended starting with Roberts. Auditions will be starting mid-winter of next year. All grades are welcome to try out, although Juniors and Seniors are usually picked. Current DJs Flicker and Davis playfully alluded to a cryptic audition process but admitted that enthusiasm and varied musical tastes usually lead to success. Prospective musical mix masters should choose tunes that are appropriate for the early hours, and to choose tunes with vibes that appeal to all.

The new January exam period cannot be called a “midterm.” The January exam period will take place at mid-year, not at midterm. “Midterm” means that exams will happen at the midpoint of Term I (fall) or Term II (spring), which will not be the case. The new exam policy adds an exam period at the end of Term I (in January and thus mid-year), in addition to the exam period at the end of Term II (in June).

The statement in the article that “exams will focus only on the content of the preceding term” is true with the following qualifications: a June exam in a cumulative or sequential subject, such as math or language, may include skills/topics from Term I, where necessary. This is because for a subject such as math it is impossible to exclude other topics completely. For example, a student will need to add and subtract even on an algebra 2 exam.

“Teachers will be required to review the last week of school before exams in the context of their classes” said Brant. The main point of this statement is that we will no longer have the half-day review days before exams; exam review will take place during regular class periods during the weeks prior to an exam period. Right now there is no strict requirement that all teachers stop new material during the week before an exam period, although all of the departments acknowledge and even emphasize the need to review carefully before each exam period.

The new exam system of Term I and Term II exams will begin in the 2014-15 school year. This year exams (in June) will be the same as they have been in the past.

If anyone has questions about the new system of Term I (mid-year) exams and Term II exams, please let your advisor or Head Advisor know. Any of the Department Chairs or I would also be happy to answer any questions.
Juliette Verlaque '16
Assistant Features Editor

As a historic Faculty Meeting in 2008, Hopkins teachers Enrol Saunders and Michael Van Leesten stood up in front of the entire Hopkins faculty and asked them the following question: “What does a student need to be able to do to succeed as a Ninth Grader in your classes?”

The faculty was divided into its academic departments, and each group made a list of the learning skills needed to succeed in their respective disciplines. The content of these lists now form the basis of the curriculum of Breakthrough New Haven, for which Van Leesten and Saunders are the Director and Assistant Director. “You could honestly say that the entire faculty had a hand in making Breakthrough what it is,” said Van Leesten.

The creation of Breakthrough’s Hoplogo is a story in itself. Roughly a year earlier, in the spring of 2007, Van Leesten was interviewing for jobs teaching middle school math, having spent the previous two years as an assistant teacher at Foote. He chanced upon a posting for the position as Director of Breakthrough New Haven, part of a nationally recognized academic enrichment and preparation program. Van Leesten successfully interviewed for the position, accepted the offer, and has spent the last seven years recruiting students for the program. His responsibilities include hiring teachers, raising money, and assisting New Haven families and their children with the process of high school application.

“It’s been very fulfilling to help motivated students and families achieve their hopes and dreams,” said Van Leesten. “My favorite moments are when a student who’s having a difficult time in life or class becomes a happier and more productive person because of the support, encouragement, and friendships developed at Breakthrough.”

He works closely with Hopkins’ history teacher) Es- rol Saunders, who first got in- volved with Breakthrough in the summer of 2004, while still an undergraduate at Yale. Saunders applied to the program mainly to find something to do over the sum- mer, but he credits the experience with completely chang- ing his post-college trajectory: “Before I taught at Breakthrough, I thought I would go on to law school and eventually move back to California after I graduated from Yale,” he recalled. “Breakthrough is the main reason that I became a teacher and that I applied to teach at Hopkins School.”

Breakthrough is a two-year program focused on academic development, teacher training, and high school admissions counseling. In the fall, 2013, Van Leesten visited public and parochial schools in New Haven, presenting Breakthrough to seventh graders and encouraging them to apply. Once the pair receives applications, they review them, select candidates to interview, and meet with the students and their families. “We always include the families in the interviews because, in the end, the program can’t suc-ceed without the support of the parents,” explained Van Leesten. Once accepted, students commit to two years of twice-weekly classes during the school year, six weeks of classes during the summer, and rigorous preparation for the SSATs and high school applications. Beginning in January of their seventh grade year, students are bussed to Hopkins on Tuesday and Thursdays, and take classes in Thompson Hall. The seventh graders attend SSAT Preparation courses, while the eighth graders study History Research and Topics in Algebra. During the year, their teachers are Hopkins sophomores, juniors, and seniors, who have spent the first half of the school year in an intensive tutor-training program. “Having student teachers was actually more enjoyable (than having adult teachers) because they were much more re- laxed; making a fun environment,” explained former Breakthrough student Allison Cofrancesco ’16.

B e f o r e the students can actually get up in front of a class- room and teach, students must first learn how to plan lessons backwards from class objectives, write lesson plans, manage classrooms, and en- gage with and assess students. The program is intensive and time-consuming, taking place in roughly thirteen sessions between October and January. “[We] meet with Hopkins teachers once a week, as well as working more closely with our co-teachers to develop lesson plans,” explained Ruth Tomlin ’16. “Each student teacher prepares to teach a once-a-week class in a single subject. We learn methods to encourage students to think for themselves and collaborate.”

Though intensive and time-consuming, participants have said that the experience is rewarding for all involved. Both Van Leesten and Saunders were recently recognized for their efforts on a statewide level with their receipt of the 2013 CAIS award, which recognizes a person or group of people who have provided an example of leadership in the area of education for Connecticut. Van Leesten also explained that, in teaching others how to teach, he has developed an increasingly comprehensive view of the art of teaching. “When teachers serve as Instruc- tional Coaches at Breakthrough, we often engage in a much more rigorous analysis of our own teaching,” Van Leesten said. “Breakthrough has definitely made me a better teacher.”

Likewise, students involved in Breakthrough are provided with immeasur- able opportunities to grow and succeed. Many students go on to rigorous and select-ive high schools like Hopkins and, from there, become the first in their families to go to college. “You’re helping a program that gives students an incredible academic op- portunity that they would not otherwise have,” said second-year teacher Valerie Daifu- tis ’15. “You’d be surprised at what seventh and eighth grade students are capable of!”

Valerie Daftis ’15
Assistant Features Editor

Nowadays, Fido and Fluffy provide more than just companionship; they can actually improve their owner’s health. Hopkins students, though offered excellent support through advisors, teachers, friends, and family, still struggle with the typi- cal stress of being teenagers in high school. It may seem trivial, but a simple wag of the tail at the end of a hard day at school can do more for your mood than you might think.

In a 2002 study at the State University of New York at Buffalo, results showed that when people were faced with a stressful task, those in the presence of their pets had lower heart rates and blood pressure than sub- jects by themselves and even subjects with close friends or family members. Morgan Quental ’15 can attest to this. Referring to her Cockapoodle-Poodle mix, Finn she said, “It’s always nice to come home after a long day and have him by my side when I’m up late doing homework.”

According to a study by University of Maryland researcher Dr. Robert Cupp, pet owners’ need, whether it’s a late night study companion or a lis- tening ear. Bethany H echt ’15 explained, “Whenever I’m sad, my dog, Hubbell, can sense it and he’ll lay his head on me. Petting him calms me down.” Lauren Kranzlin ’14, couldn’t imagine life without [her] dog, Spencer,” Kranz- lin, a second-semester senior, said, “Spencer definitely helps me deal with the stress that I get from going to Hopkins.”

In addition to reducing blood pressure, lowering heart rates and a whole slew of other health concerns that pets seem to know exactly what their own- ers are worrying about, just yet, pets provide good, old-fashioned, unconditional love. Brian Kitaro ’15 said, “My cat, Pernilla, loves me so much that she brings me gifts and puts them on my pil- low. My Pernilla present is often the highlight of my day.”

In addition to presenting us with physical gifts, pets also bestow us with limitless emotional gifts. “Pernilla raises my self esteem and body image because she’s so large,” ex- plained Kitaro. “Every time I see her I feel better about myself.”

According to Sophie Liebergall ’15, her Great Dane, Mahal, is the best gift she could ask for. “I come home from school everyday and she is always there to give me a lick in the face,” remarked Liebergall. But, it’s not just dogs and cats that can reduce stress and improve m o o d s. H o p k i n s s t u d e n t s turn to oth- er animal companions for friendship, love, and com- fort. Cam- eron Morris ’16 said that he “would take a frog over a dog any day!”

The charm of a pet is often attributed to their unique personalities. Ezel continued, “It may seem hard to love and find companionship in a small, not very cuddly pet such as a frog or a lizard, but they do have their own indi- vidual personalities.”

Whether people find contentment playing with their pooch, prancing with their pony, or frolicking with their frogs, there is no denying that pets make life infinitely better.
Media Maelstrom for Human Rights

Annie Hughes ’15
Entertainment Editor

On the first day of the Sochi Olympics, Google changed its logo as a statement against discrimination. The “Google doodle” depicted winter athletes against a rainbow backdrop, rather than the company’s usual arrangement of primary colors in their logo. Underneath the doodle was a quote from the Olympic charter which reads, “The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.”

This change was one of many media responses to Russia’s anti-gay propaganda law. Passed in 2013, it bans the distribution of “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” to minors. Athletes from around the world spoke out against this discrimination; some called for a boycott of the games, while others tried to organize protests at the games themselves. Concurrently, several high-profile companies rallied in support of LGBTQ Russians and athletes during the Olympic games.

American Apparel released a line of clothing employing Principle 6 of the Olympic charter which states, “Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement.” All proceeds from the clothing sold went to LGBT groups in Russia fighting discrimination.

Visa tweeted, “A world where everyone is accepted everywhere: that’s where we want to be. #everywhere #sochi2014,” along with a picture of gold, silver, and bronze medals hanging from rainbow-colored ribbons. Likewise, AT&T posted in their consumer blog, “We support LGBT equality globally and we condemn violence, discrimination and harassment targeted against LGBT individuals everywhere. Russia’s law is harmful to LGBT individuals and families, and it’s harmful to a diverse society.”

In a more subtle, but equally powerful show of support, many companies released ads that both promoted their products and showed solidarity with the movement. Many companies opted to include a rainbow in their ads, the symbol of gay pride and universal inclusiveness. Chobani yogurt released an ad depicting yogurt containers stacked in rainbow order. Absolut Vodka pictured a multicultural bottle with the caption “Absolut Rainbow,” and another that read “In an Absolut world, there are no labels.”

Coca-Cola did not back down from the controversy surrounding their Super Bowl XLVIII ad featuring “America the Beautiful” spoken in seven different languages, and instead released a ninety-second version of the ad during the Olympic opening ceremony on NBC. They added, among other things, a longer shot of two dads roller-skating with their daughter, an image that took on a greater meaning in the context of the Sochi Olympics.

Norwegian sports retailer XXL released a controversial video advertisement featuring a lesbian couple roller skating. While Tim Nudd of adweek.com called it “an over-the-top, absurd blockbuster of an ad,” he conceded that “it’s heart is generally in the right place.” The Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion released a similar video featuring two lagers and the message, “The Olympics have always been a little gay. Let’s fight to keep them that way.”

Ironically, a ban on “gay propaganda” actually inspired it outside of Russia, prompting companies from around the world to lobby for gay rights. It begs the question: is this a genuine show of concern or just good marketing to boost public relations?

While these protests and shows of support may not accomplish anything, they served to bring the issue into the eye of the public and started a global discussion.

Low Strung Intoxicates Hopkins

Yale University’s Low Strung, a Rock N’ Roll ensemble of classically trained cellists, performed during morning assembly on February 28. Playing selections ranging from “Blackbird,” by The Beatles, to “Toxic,” by Britney Spears, the “largest all-cello rock group in the world” energized Hopkins’ students and public alike. Supporting the “largest all-cello rock group in the world” earned Hopkins’ students, faculty alike with its animated renditions of classic rock and pop songs. Conceived in 2006, Low Strung soon became a hit on Yale’s campus and has since performed all around the world. This spring’s response to the Olympic barking on a tour of California, which includes an appearance at Upstairs at Vitello’s, a favorite hangout of Frank Sinatra and the Rat Pack.

A Very Merry Spring

Annie Niedl ’17
Ellery Sallick ’17

Along comes another spring, and another spring Shakespeare production on the Hill, The Merry Wives of Windsor directed by Hope Hartup.

The Merry Wives of Windsor was first published in 1602. “It is the only play that Shakespeare wrote about contemporary [Elizabethan] middle-class life.” So it is a very different Shakespearean world. It is historical,” said Hartup.

In the play, Falstaff, a slightly unattractive, comic character moves into a new town with the hopes of seducing a woman and collecting presents in the form of a dowry. Instead, he falls upon two women, Mistress Page and Page (Eva Mullineaux ’16) and a son (Ellery Salluck ’17) until the point, wrote Anne E. Meritt in the Wall Street Journal, “How the end of the play will stack up with its predecessors is an open question.”

The Merry Wives of Windsor is usually when some of the younger kids are very accessible. It is delightful Shakespeare that entertaining evening in the theater. It is going to be a really fun, entertaining evening in the theater. It is delightful Shakespeare that will keep you on the edge of your seats. “I just really think it’s going to be a really fun, entertaining evening in the theater. It is delightful Shakespeare that will be a wonderful force. They [characters] are very accessible. It’s just a great story with wonderful characters which will be the most fun for the cast and crew to work on,” said Hartup.

With a combination of the hilarious plot, the technical elements, and the broad and capable cast, The Merry Wives of Windsor is sure to be a huge hit on the Hopkins campus.

Performances will be May 1, May 2, and May 3 at 7 PM in Townshend Auditorium.

Where it all begins! Annie Ayres-Brown ’15 and other cast members receive their scripts on the first day of rehearsal.
The Beat

Bridget Donovan ’15
The Beat Editor

New Haven is gearing up for another lively season of jazz at Firehouse 12, Yale’s Sprague Hall and other venues. An array of professional and student performances will be sure to interest dedicated and curious fans of jazz, both in the city’s music community and beyond.

The jazz running through New Haven has been garnering on-campus interest. Drew Marima ’15 said, “I feel like it’s great that jazz is still popular on the East Coast, especially in New Haven. It shows that jazz is still alive and kicking.” English teacher Ian Melchinger said, “The jazz that excites me the most comes in three categories in New Haven: Firehouse 12, the Yale-funded programs run out of Sprague Hall, on which Willie Ruff often brings in legends; and the acts built into the Festival of Arts and Ideas.”

Fans of jazz at Hopkins encouraged other students to look into the genre. Jared Rosamilia ’16 said, “Jazz is great because of its improvisation and variation. There are many different genres. There’s bebop, cool jazz, fusion, straight-ahead and more. No matter what kind of music you mainly like, you can find something parallel in jazz.” Marina mirrored this sentiment: “Upcoming concerts are a good way to get into jazz. The main appeal of jazz is its improvisation and free form, so the best way to get into it is to see it live. Because the artists stray so far from their composition, you’re hearing what they want you to hear in the moment.”

Firehouse 12 on Crown St. will host its Spring Jazz Series beginning March 21 with the Ben Allison Trio. The remodeled firehouse triples as a recording studio, concert hall, and bar. It regularly features celebrated contemporary jazz artists in an intimate performance room, which, as Melchinger described, “feels like New York [but] I can see someone like Bill Frisell from ten feet away.” On their website, Firehouse 12 explained its concert hall is “unique in its design… all performances happen in an acoustically balanced, soundproofed space with installed sound reinforcement and stage lighting systems… The build-out of this space creates a perfect venue for music that benefits from close listening.” New York Times journalist Nate Chinen said, “[Firehouse 12] has earned a reputation as the pre-eminent spot for improvised music in the region.”

Though the Festival of Arts and Ideas is a summer event, Yale University’s jazz concerts will be regular throughout the spring. The Yale Jazz Ensemble and Undergraduate Jazz Collective are two of their most active musical groups. The Collective will feature performances by several advanced students at the Underbrook Coffeehouse in downtown New Haven on March 28.

Besides showcasing student talent, Yale funds and hosts touring jazz professionals in Sprague Hall. As Melchinger enthused, Willie Ruff is both the founder and director of Yale’s Ellington series. He hosts both well-known classics and avant-garde musicians on the university campus, carrying on a New Haven tradition.

New Haven is a long-standing hub for jazz, with the musical genre having taken hold in the early 1910’s. In a documentary on Jazz Haven, Rebecca L. Abbott explained, “New Haven’s patchwork of ethnic communities held diverse musical traditions, but the growing popularity of phonograph recordings and radio helped bridge cultural barriers, and fueled enthusiasm for the new sounds of jazz.” By the 1920’s and through World War II, New Haven lit up with a craze for jazz music. Dixwell Avenue was lined with clubs open late and crowded every night. The city was, however, known for jazz by more than its local residents. “New Haven was host to many of the greatest performers in the nation,” said Abbott. “The Shubert Theater showcased Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and many others.”

The jazz community today lacks some degree of public recognition, but continues to sustain itself with local talent, attracting widely acclaimed jazz artists in the process. Currently the buzz is about the jazz lineup this spring, but jazz in New Haven is available year-round. The Festival of Arts and Ideas this summer, as well as the New Haven Jazz Festival, organized by Jazz Haven, will be the city’s next big shows after the spring season closes.

Restaurants Thrive Near Campus

Kristine Ahn ’16
Assistant Beat Editor

Whether it is before a play performance, for a team dinner or just to hang out with friends, many Hopkins students go to local restaurants near the Hill. Five restaurants around New Haven worthy of recognition are Cilantro Mexican Grill, Michaelangelo Pizza & Subs, Stone Hearth, Daiko Japanese Restaurant, and Athenian Diner.

Cilantro Mexican Grill is a stylish and flavorful Mexican restaurant, boasting its diverse menu of burritos and tacos. They have recently renovated their small spot at 3158 Whalley Ave, invigorating the place with more color and giving it a more modern feel. The theme of their furniture is wood: wooden chairs, wooden tables, and comfy chairs with wooden patterns on them. On the brick walls, bright-colored posters with dogtags such as “Guacamole is Best Mole” are hung. The next and simple design of the small space gives it a cozy yet modern atmosphere. An employee, named Maggie, said, “A lot of students come here from Yale and Hopkins. I guess it is because the food is kind of cheap. Also, tacos and burritos are easy to eat; you can kind of just shove them into your mouth.” Although Cilantro does not do delivery, it is only a three-minute trip for students who can drive. Natalie Passarelli ’16 lauded the food at Cilantro and added, “Cilantro’s to me pretty much seems the same as Chipotle. I don’t get why people drive all the way into downtown New Haven to Chipotle when Cilantro’s is right there.” When asked about the difference between Cilantro and Chipotle, Maggie replied, “Chipotle has less variety in their dishes, and our food is more authentic. Besides, their food is bland while our stuff is more flavorful.”

Michaelangelo Pizza & Subs at 425 Derby Ave is a casual setting for pizza and other Italian dishes. Bryan Schaffer ’14, one of the players on Varsity Football, said, “I order chicken Parmesan and pasta from Michaelangelo’s for take-out for team dinners. It’s really good and convenient because it’s near both Hopkins and my house.” Griffin Smith ’15 applauded Michaelangelo’s buffalo chicken: “The spice flies off the bun and awakens my mouth from the chill of Hopkins’ air. I would recommend it to any brave soul.”
**The Razor: The One-Page Razor**

At 838 Whalley Ave, Stone Hearth brings together farm-to-table ingredients, specially cooked in a brick oven.

**The Big Profile**

Hailing from the City of Angels, Errol C. Saunders II ventured to New Haven to enroll at Yale University. Saunders considered heading back to the Pacific Coast to become a lawyer, but found his way onto our Glorious Hill instead. Smart move, Saunders.

Nowadays, you can find him discoursing in his New Haven History or J-School history classes or leading the next generation of lifelong learners within the Breakthrough Office. Though Saunders prefers not to drive, he will give you a good high-five. Saunders loves his No Frown Fridays, and knows how to get down on this day better than Rebecca Black ever will. He gives his students his pesky number, just remember not to text him while he is doing Zumba or his Salsa class. His glasses are the best things this side of the Mississippi, but his affability is truly his greatest feature. This marching-band hero delights in the sweet virtues of the “Sevies” just as much as he invests in the success of his sensational seniors.

Errol Saunders, you truly are one of The Hill’s strongest assets. You can talk about the treasured past of your home in the 06515 anytime!

**The Meh List**

1) Snowdaycalculator.com
2) Forking it over for Prom
3) Gold iPhone 4s
4) AP fees
5) J-schoolers’ assembly migrations
6) Netflix’s continuous play
7) H. Ross Perot
8) Burt’s Bees

**Eggs Benedict**

**Compare and Contrast:**

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<th>Eggs Benedict</th>
<th>Benedict Cumberbatch</th>
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<td>“At once concise and comprehensive, it’s perhaps the Idiots Benedict the egg-loving world has ever known.” -NY Times reviews Wylie Dufresne’s eggs benedict.</td>
<td>“His look is quirky... His appeal is quite intellectual. [Cumberbatch] is never going to play an ordinary man.” - “Sherlock” producer Steven Moffat</td>
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**Winner: Benedict Cumberbatch**

**Daiko Japanese Restaurant and Jerry San’s Sushi Bar** serves authentic Japanese cuisine. On the highway at 400 Derby Avenue, Daiko is a classy and fancy place, particularly fit for dinners. The chefs in the counter freshly craft the sushi and sashimi, and all of the chefs there enjoy conversing with their customers. Olivia Heidel ’15 praised the food at Daiko: “I even had dinner with a friend!”

For a fancier setting for pizza and other Italian entrees, Stone Hearth at 838 Whalley Ave, brings pizza straight out of a brick oven. Stone Hearth pizzas are prepared with fresh ingredients, including Parmesan, baby arugula, caramelized onions, Gorgonzola cheese and crispy pancetta. The entree menu includes Italian and American dishes, ranging from Pappardelle Fresca to NY Roasted Heirloom Potato. Along with its main menu dishes, Stone Hearth also serves low-calorie, vegetarian, paleo and gluten-free selections.

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For team dinners, the Athenian Diner is a popular place to go. Emily Koleske ’15, a member of the cross-country and track teams, stated: “I’ve been to the Athenian Diner numerous times for team dinners. There are large, long tables where many people can sit around and talk so it’s a great place for team dinners. The milkshakes served in long, silver thermoses are delicious, and the grilled cheese, curly fries, and burgers are also quite good.” Along with the diner’s casual atmosphere, students enjoy the option of simple appetizers and snacks, in addition to a large, long menu. Passarelli said, “The milkshakes served in long, silver thermoses are delicious, and the grilled cheese, curly fries, and burgers are also quite good.”

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The One-Page Razor

Brought to you by The Razor Staff

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Why Hopkins?

When I visited colleges, many of the interviewers asked me why I had chosen Hopkins for my high school education. This seemed a strange question to me because, when I came to Hopkins as a seventh grader, I’m not sure how much thought I had actually put into that choice. Now that I’ve been here for six years, I realize that I couldn’t possibly have answered the “Why Hopkins?” question in any meaningful way then. Only now can I do so.

Every high school experience is marked by ups and downs. Sometimes we believe that this is the best time of our lives, and on other days we start counting down the days to graduation. As many things at this school have come to an end for me—my term on The Razor or my time on sports teams—I find myself at a loss for words. It’s so hard to articulate all that has happened in the last six years, in part because so much of what has defined my time at Hopkins are indescribable, unpredictable, and unrepeatable moments.

A few years ago it was big news that Forbes magazine ranked Hopkins the 19th best prep school in the country. This listing was based on an “Ivy/MIT/Stanford pipeline,” the number of faculty holding advanced degrees, the Student/Faculty ratio, and the school’s endowment. What this list didn’t, and probably couldn’t, base its evaluation on are the intangible things that Hopkins allows students to experience.

Our classes are rigorous, our in-class discussions intense, but that is not what makes Hopkins unique; it’s those “only at Hopkins” moments that make this place special. One such example is Barbara Riley’s letter about the changes for the extended school days. As she said, “In one of those ‘only at Hopkins’ moments, your real concern was with lost review days at the end of the school year.” On a more day-to-day basis, though, you could walk into the Café and find kids whispering (or sometimes just shouting) about what does, in fact, make an experience “the best.” At eight o’clock in the morning during an advisor group, half-asleep kids will wake up to refuse a point made by a peer because somehow getting to the truth is more important than sleeping.

Some people will roll their eyes at this notion, saying that Hopkins isn’t all that special, but I’m inclined to believe that it is. Sure this is a generalization, and not all students are remarkable. And yes, students at Hopkins endlessly say how little homework they do and how they are Hopkins “failing,” but that is not the reality of the school. Most students at Hopkins own a genuine love of learning. Perhaps we can’t appreciate that now, but we hopefully will grow to recognize the role that Hopkins has played in our lives.

In part, the teachers at Hopkins are the ones who instill our love of learning. More often than not when a student stays to talk to a teacher after class, the conversation may stem from the topics of the course, but often becomes a discussion about life. My advice to those of you who still have years left here is to build those teacher-student relationships. Send your teachers articles when you find something they might find of interest. Ask them questions about their field that they might not get to cover in class. Strike up a conversation with them in the Café about life. It might seem like a daunting task at first, but doing so will make your journey through Hopkins that much more worthwhile.

In twenty years, none of us will probably remember most of what we learned in any specific class. What we will remember are those little anecdotal moments that extended far beyond the curriculum. So talk to your peers and your teachers, really get to know them, and you will truly be able to answer the question, “Why Hopkins?”

-Sara Seymour ‘14
Editor-in-Chief

The Aftershave: The Farewell Address

Harkening back to my not so recent past, I recall how there was once a time when I felt if Hopkins was possibly the singular worst place for me to go through my secondary education. I recently dug up my Grades & Comments from my first tumultuous ten months as a seventh grader, and I am still confounded that my name is listed at the top of these academic records. Those grades—uneven and dispiriting—certainly left much to be desired, but I was far more troubled by the feedback I received from my teachers. I told that I was digging myself into a hole, that I lack both the maturity and work ethic necessary for me to succeed here at Hopkins. I added nothing to the classes in which I was enrolled, I lacked respect for both my teachers and my classmates, and I took any form of critique as unwelcome criticism rather than constructive feedback. In addition, I was too careless, misguided, and socially inept to have been able to make many friends, and I failed to acknowledge that other people could truly be of help to me.

As challenging as this time was, these trials were indeed necessary and I extremely grateful for them, for they enabled me to tackle any other obstacles I have encountered during my Hopkins career with ferocious determination and an incurable sense of optimism. Now I recognize where the true value of Hopkins lies.

One need not analyze our performance on standardized testing, scroll through the list of colleges into which we are admitted every year, or even read the back corner of an Advanced Placement class to know that Hopkins students are brilliant. We are not only amazingly intelligent, but we are also gifted in essentially every other domain, whether it be in producing, the performing arts, or even maintaining a beautiful copy of Per Annum every year, destroying long-held track & field school records, maintaining just above Knollwood, or managing those volleyball score sheets with incomparable finesse (Volleyball Girl’s Volleyball will always hold a special place in my heart). The whole point of a student’s tenure at Hopkins, however, is not for one to rack up as many As, victories at New England’s, HDA starring roles, or Razor front-page articles as possible to satisfy one’s sense of individual accomplishment.

Rather, the goal that both John Davenport and Edward Hopkins prescribed and that this institution maintains to this day is that you will learn throughout your time on The Hill how you can best marshal the resources of Hopkins School not only to succeed, but also to grow into a person of whom you can be proud. We certainly do not offer everything at this School; when I return as an alum and find a frozen yogurt machine and track field on The Hill, I will reevaluate this claim. Still, there are boundless opportunities for one to further his or her personal development. In order to maximize these opportunities, a student need only make the most of the assistance by which he is already surrounded—teachers, advisors, coaches, mentors, and, most importantly, friends. The best people in the world truly reside in individuals. I am often asked how I can possibly just get my morning coffee in the Café or stroll down from Malone to Baldwin and end up conversing with dozens of friendly faces. This is not the product of sheer affinity, but rather resulted in my acknowledging many years ago that the greatest asset of Hopkins is its people. I have had forty-one teachers, eleven coaches, twelve club advisors, eight seventh grade mentees, three Head Advisors, two advisers, one Pete in the Cage, and an innumerable number of friends who have made the past six years so rewarding.

With my final words of my final Aftershave, I would like to note a line that has stuck with me since I first heard it during freshman year, as originally written by Steve Backley: “There are three types of people in this world. Firstly, there are people who make things happen. Then there are people who watch things happen. Lastly, there are people who ask, ‘What happened?’” The truthful beauty of Hopkins students is that there is no question about their ability to make things happen; rather, we wonder what they will make happen both today and in the years to come.

On that note, there really are only two ways in which I can end the best six years of my life: Thank you, and Quod felix facutum sit.
Scrutinizing the Schedule Changes

Yes To Changes!

Michael Bass ’16
Assistant Op-Ed Editor

It’s no secret that many students are opposed to the schedule changes made by the Administration, particularly the extended Wednesdays. Despite what seems to be a consensus popular opinion, I do believe that there is a silver lining to the recently announced extensions.

The buzz of frustration around campus was palpable after students first discovered that they would have five extended Wednesdays and one extra school day. Even I, the author of a pro-schedule change piece, had a similar visceral reaction of antipathy to the decision. However, while reflecting upon the situation at hand, I realized that my “ vexation” was both unwarranted and utterly disproportional.

It took me a moment to realize just how illogical and impetuous my aggravation was. My first thought was that all of the extra time at school from the extended Wednesdays and the added day comprises just 25 hours, only a fraction compared to all of the extra “free” time we have garnered from eight snow days. In addition, the 15 hours added to the half-day review days will prepare us even more for exams. In the long run, students will benefit much more from this valuable time.

I also realized that all of those days at home left me with an almost instinctual desire to go back to school. I was restless at home partly because I love the people and campus here at Hopkins, but mostly due to the fact that I couldn’t go sledding and build snowmen all the time, and I certainly couldn’t do homework for an entire day. On reflection, I concluded that I don’t want to suffer through excruciatingly compressed academic challenges, enduring papers and tests due every day. Personally, I’d much rather be able to get through the curriculum at the intended course pace with substantially less crammed and difficult weeks; and that is exactly the luxury that we can enjoy with the extended schedule changes. Whether or not this luxury is one that the Administration intended, it certainly is one I greatly appreciate and value.

As much as I am supportive of the schedule changes, I do recognize that there exist some sensible disadvantages. Indeed, the problems of rescheduling activities and cancelled sports will arise with extended Wednesdays, and I have no direct rebuttal or solution to that argument. However, I will say that the ultimate effects these schedule changes will have on our academic success far outweigh the extra effort it will take to reschedule an event, game or match.

Another grievance I gathered from conversations with friends is: “Why didn’t they do this last year when we had so many more snow days?” That certainly is a reasonable assertion but one that is irrelevant to the circumstances this year. Last year following winter storm Nemo, my workload dramatically increased and the pace at which the curriculum ran was much quicker. Evidently, the Administration has learned from last year’s experience and has tailored the schedule changes to avoid such a difficult stretch of work. Instead of scoring school administrators for these changes, perhaps we should thank them.

The fact of the matter is that Hopkins students have truly overreacted to the schedule changes. We have all been seduced by our desire for more snow days and less school; consequently, we don’t really know what is best for our academic health. In fact, extending Wednesdays and acting in our best interest is exactly the purpose of a school administration. As for the extended review days, they will undoubtedly help us when it comes time to take exams. These schedule changes yet again reflect on how our Administration looks out for our academic success. At the end of the day, despite all of the controversy that these schedule changes engendered, there are clearly some noteworthy benefits to them. So Hopkins, I encourage you set your initial reactions aside and reflect on what is really a very reasonable response to the continuing polar vortex!

No To Changes!

Kaitlin Hickey ’14
Editor-at-Large

Snow. Yes, Hopkins has certainly accrued quite a bit over the past three months. As of this writing, eight snow days and one early dismissal have consequently forced the Administration to alter the schedule to include five extended Wednesdays and school on the Monday after Easter weekend. Snow days have always been a reality for New England prep schools like Hopkins, but I cannot say that I find these changes the most appropriate responses to the inclement weather because of what they will cost students.

One of the great things about Hopkins is its academic rigor, which I, personally, have found to be nothing short of persistent in the face of the recent polar vortex. Many Hopkins teachers have seized the opportunity to send our constant streams of emails updating students on the academic trajectories of their courses and some have even given take-home quizzes and tests so as not to have students fall behind.

I understand the frustration over losing irreplaceable class time, but the fact is that work has not stopped for students over snow days—if anything, it has increased. Despite valuable face-to-face instruction having been lost, students have, nonetheless, been expected to keep up with their assignment sheets. This makes sense. Isn’t the purpose of Blackboard to keep assignments going and to ensure that material is readily available? Snow days offer students a break from the constant hustle and bustle of our busy lives on The Hill and time to recoup. More importantly, these snow days lend themselves as an opportunity to foster our independent learning skills—skills which will benefit us all later in college.

But as students have diligently continued to labor over their studies and even use the snow days as a chance to catch up on term papers, I find it hard to see eye-to-eye with onslaught of schedule changes, which many Hilltoppers deem to be unfair.

Extended Wednesdays will unreasonably compromise students’ sports practices, games and other athletic commitments. The original intention of having Wednesday classes ending at twelve o’clock meant that Hopkins athletes could travel to far away boarding schools for athletic events while still returning to The Hill at a relatively acceptable time. Now, in order to make up for lost games, the only alternative to having athletic competitions scheduled back-to-back on Saturdays and Sundays would be to host these events on other weekdays. This is a less-than-ideal option because of the time constraints that would force athletic teams to leave later and, thus, return later to campus and home. Some players may be rendered exhausted after an away game on top of a full day of school. Is compromising an important segment of our extracurricular program fair to dedicated students?

In addition to the extension of five Wednesday, another downside to the schedule changes is the reinstatement of school on Monday April 21, which may require students and their families to alter or cancel previously planned commitments for the Passover and Easter holidays. I agree with the majority of Hopkins students who feel that this extra day and other schedule changes are inconvenient. Rather than lessening the academic pressure on students caused by snow days, these changes seem to have just caused more headaches and confusion.

The schedule changes have, without a doubt, received a widely negative reaction from the Hopkins student body, but the truth is, we have lost eight-and-a-half days of our learning time. Even if we might not want or agree with which changes have been enacted, we recognize that, we can only learn so much independently. But, we regret what we see as a weak set of schedule changes.


Carmen Ciardiello '16
Assistant Sports Editor

Justin Lee '14, co-captain of the Boys Varsity Squash Team, and number two on the team ladder, led Hopkins to a season record of 7-5, and a seventh-place finish at the New England tournament.

Lee only began playing competitive squash in his junior year. “I started playing squash as a summer before tenth grade,” Lee said. “My best friend’s dad took me to play at the Yale courts one day, and that led me to try the sport out. I then met Lynn Leong, squash coach at the New Haven Lawn Club, who taught me the entire summer, and was luck enough to make the Hopkins team that year.”

Lee discussed his role as captain of the team: “Being captain wasn’t as hard as I thought it would be. It didn’t feel that different because I felt like I was just another member of the team. I tried my best to lead by example rather than tell people what to do. The squash team was a hard-working group of guys, so we all tried our best.” Lee continued, that “the accessibility of such a group of guys, so we all tried our best.” Lee said that “it’s never too late to join and you can always take away from squash at Hopkins.”

Williams ended her season as co-captain. Williams started her season with an 8-1 record, but finished in a tough loss. Justin is cool, calm, and collected on the court. It is great having him as a teammate. Coach Bill Ewen analyzed Justin’s performance this year: “Justin has outstanding speed and anticipation on the squash court. Over the past two seasons, he has worked hard to improve his technique and he is very patient on the court, willing to wait and wear his opponent down.” Even concluded, “Justin has been a quiet but effective captain of our squash team this winter.”

Lee concluded that, “What I take away from squash at Hopkins is that no matter what level of squash player you are, it’s never too late to join and you can always find someone to play with.”

Williams’ work ethic contributed to her success as captain: “Taegan has the work ethic of an athlete needs to succeed in any sport. Whether is it in swimming or in water polo, she will do whatever it takes to achieve the goal set in front of her,” said Coach Chuck Elrick. Teammate Stephanie Gidicsin ‘15 added, “She does exactly what the rest of team does, if not more. She’s not a hypocritical captain who demands more from her swimmers than she gives back.”

Williams said: “One of my favorite inspirational quotes from our coach, Chuck, is ‘you can’t spell tri-umph without a little oomph’.” Williams recalled that “At the season’s start, our coach had to force her to sit out a practice because she was sick, she really wanted to be in the water doing the workout with us, despite her illness.” Teammate Ria Generoso ’16 continued these sentiments: “She never complains about swimming: she just gets it done.”

Williams combines hard work with enthusiasm: “Taegan is a good leader because of her laid-back personality. She will drop whatever she is doing in order to help someone else, people really trust her. Plus, she always seems to be in a good mood.” Gidicsin said. Coach Elrick agreed: “As a leader, Taegan understands the differences in athletes and tailors her approach to help them earn their respect, which is vital for a good leader.”

Williams reciprocated this respect: “The swim team at Hopkins is a family. I love watching the reactions of my teammates when they see a best time on the scoreboard, and I love going home from a swim meet with no voice left because I wore it out cheering on my swimming family.”

“Swimming at Hopkins introduced me to water polo, a sport I fell in love with. Water polo is a very rough sport, but I enjoy everything about it. I plan on placing for my college’s club team.”

Meanwhile, Williams continues to lead by example. Co-captain Claire Bartoos ‘14 said: “Her presence and endless stream of positivity make her a great role model. At meets, she is always at the end of the lane cheering on her teammates to help them do their best.”

Gidicsin concluded, “She never lets her cap- tainship go to her head. She always has the attitude of a student athlete, and she will always treat everyone with respect. She has always understood the difference between being a leader and being a hypocritical captain. Justin is cool, calm, and collected on the court. It is great having him as a teammate. Coach Bill Ewen analyzed Justin’s performance this year: “Justin has outstanding speed and anticipation on the squash court. Over the past two seasons, he has worked hard to improve his technique and he is very patient on the court, willing to wait and wear his opponent down.”

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Noah Gelles ’15

During one of the stormiest and snowiest winters in the past few years, it seems perfectly fitting that 2013-2014 has been the inaugural season for Hopkins’ very own Ski Club. The idea originally stemmed from Zach Bitker ’16 and Colby Gardner ’16, who sent out an email sometime last year trying to seek interest for this club. The two ski fans got what they wanted, and with nine members in its first year, Ski Club has become a great opportunity to spend time with friends, face treacherous moguls, and participate in some competitive yet friendly racing.

The Ski Club meets almost every Wednesday during the winter months, and students participate in the Connecticut Interscholastic Ski League (CISL) with more than twenty other schools. The races take place up at Mount Southington in Southington, CT, which is only about a 45 minute ride from Hopkins. A typical day at the mountain is as follows, according to Zach Bitker ’16: A typical day involves taking a few free runs to warm up and then doing drills suggested by the coaches. Then at around 4 o’clock the race starts. We inspect the race course and, at the end of two runs for each person, the total time of the top six skiers from each school is added up to who won.

The club is not just for the experts, but students need some prior skiing experience. Coach John Isaacs said, “This club is a learning environment, but not for true beginners. Club members need to have enough experience to ski any intermediate trail with confidence.” From a skiers standpoint, Micah Wolin ’16 commented that, “The best part is that anyone can join no matter their level of experience. No one is ever judged for their times, it’s all about improving.” All members on the team have been able to race this season, even though only four had prior racing experience. With help from the GISL, emphasis is put on learning the proper form and techniques for racing on any course. Coach Isaacs said, “The skill of curving good turns is useful to any skier from competitive freestyle to back-country to mogul skiers.”

Many of the students have found success this season, from qualification to just pure enjoyment. Colby Gardner ’15 has qualified for Team Connecticut, is currently ranked tenth in the league, and will participate in the North East Regionals this March. Jacob Pierce ’15 said, “Ski racing is an awesome sport and the Hopkins Ski Club gives students the ability to participate. It’s a low-stress and fun activity.” Michael Kravitz ’14 said, “My favorite part of Ski Club is hanging out with the team and just having a good time on snow, no matter how big the mountain (or hill! ).” Jen Zarrilli ’16 said, “Skiing under the lights with hundreds of other skiers and spectators watching you is an incredible experience, especially when your teammates are cheering you on.”
Pick a Winner: 2014 NCAA National Championship

Creighton Bluejays Will soar through Tournament

Griffin Smith ’15
Sports Editor

In a tumultuous college basketball season that has seen number one ranked teams losing to unranked opponents, a veteran laden team, with the best college player playing in their front-court, will win the NCAA Tournament: this team is the Creighton Bluejays. Most people have probably not heard of this Jesuit school in Nebraska, but their men’s basketball team looks poised this season.

Thus far Creighton has amassed a record of 23-4 overall and 13-2 in the Big East. Doug McDermott, Creighton’s best player, and the rest of the Bluejays squad have waited for their turn and are ready to take the next step by winning a National Championship.

When people think of Creighton, McDermott is usually the only name that comes to mind, but the Bluejays are much deeper than just McDermott. Creighton plays nine players over eleven minutes per game which allows everyone to stay fresh. McDermott can’t be stopped. Try putting a quicker, bigger guy on him and he will post up and score. If a team tries a bigger defender on him, McDermott will go right by him. McDermott is also one of the best players in college basketball at moving without the ball. Teams can try to double team him, but he can still score or pass to a teammate who will knock down a three, again and again. The issue with trying to deny McDermott is that Creighton often has him run off multiple screens, so eventually his defender will get stuck. When that happens a player who can not stop McDermott will be switched onto him.

Many top teams nowadays are led by freshmen and sophomores whose primary thought is entering the NBA Draft. This is not the case for Creighton. The nine players that receive significant minutes for Creighton are all either juniors or seniors and none of them have made it to the Sweet Sixteen. In previous years they could use youth as an excuse for their early tournament exits, but they now realize that this is the year that Creighton has been possessed all year, only worried about winning.

If you have any questions about Creighton’s ability to shoot, all you need to do is watch their two games against top-ranked Villanova.

In the first game against the Wildcats, Creighton big man Ethan Wragge shot six for six from three for twenty-seven points. Creighton as a team hit 96-68. Going into the rematch, many thought Villanova’s defense would be able to clamp down, but they were wrong. The Bluejays shot a smooth nine for fifteen from deep and McDermott poured in thirty-nine points en-rout to another win for Creighton.

Florida Gators Will Chomp Down on Competition

Rob Schaefer ’15
Sports Editor

Inside and out, the Florida Gators are the best team in the country, and they’re on a mission to prove it this March. They are currently 27-2, 16-0 in the SEC, and have already won a share of first place in their conference. When it’s all said and done, the Gators will validate their number-one overall rank by winning the National Championship.

Over the years, the method for winning a national championship has become formulaic. If you look at the previous six national champions, you’ll see a common theme: excellent backcourt play, an enforced low down low, and an elite-level coach. One thing that will separate a great team from the rest is their tradition of offense. The Gators are not only the nation’s best shooting team but also have the number-one rated defense. Because of the dominance of perimeter scoring in the NCAA, stopping productive wings is essential. The Gators, as a team, combat this, by allowing teams to shoot only 34.4% from the three point range and 40% overall, while giving up 0.7 points per game, good for eighth in the country. Another key element to a great defensive team is rebounding. In this respect, the Gators excel, as their rebound margin of 5.7 per game has them ranked in the top 10 in the country. In order to balance out a team reliant on production from their wings, a productive big man is needed. Patric Young fits this bill, as the Gators center has averaged 10.8 points per game, 6.5 rebounds per game, and 0.9 blocks per game over 45 starts. At 6’10”, 250 pounds, the senior brings to the squad a physical presence and an exceptional team defense. While the strength of this Gators team is on the perimeter, Young’s versatility and a quick rotational style provide an invaluable aspect to their defense. He can also play above the rim, as his height and athleticism allow him to routinely make momentum-changing plays throughout the course of a game.

While the Gators have a wealth of raw talent, their team’s most formidable trait is their experience, at the playing and coaching levels. They have three seniors, Young, Wilbekken, and Will Yeguete, who play significant minutes, and also an elite coach at the college level in Billy Donovan. Because of college, players aren’t as developed, strategizing and breaking down your opponent mentally is a crucial part of the game. Donovan has the experience and impressive resume over his eighteen years coaching Florida. He has reached three Final Fours, won two National Championships, and has posted an overall record of 475-188 (.716 winning percentage). He also won SEC Coach of the Year in the years 2011, and 2013.

On April 7, 2014, the Austin American-Statesman predicted that the Florida Gators will reign victorious. If April 7 is a valid forecast, then Saturday night that the Florida Gators will reign victorious and cut down the nets as your 2014 NCAA Tournament Champions.

Selection Sunday will air on Sunday, March 16 at 6:00 PM EST on CBS.
Boys Squash
Captains: Justin Lee ’14 and Nader Rastegar ’14
Record: 7-5

Boys Swimming and Diving
Captains: Tyler Moore ’14 and Sandy Goss ’14
Record: 8-5

Boys Basketball
Captains: Alexander “Sasha” Posick ’14 and Alec Gewirtz ’14
Record: 11-11

Wrestling
Captains: Kamsi Nwangwu ’15 and Zach Kaplan ’15
Record: 3-10

Girls Fencing
Captains: Nicole Kogan ’14 and Sarah Srivichitrnanond ’15
Record: 6-6

Girls Squash
Captains: Sara Seymour ’14 and Natasha Sinha ’14
Record: 6-3

Boys Fencing
Captains: Jarett Poliner ’15 and Junyu Huo ’14
Record: 7-5

Girls Swimming and Diving
Captains: Taegan Williams ’14 and Claire Bartosic ’14
Record: 10-1

Indoor Track
Captains: Titilayo Ajisefami ’14, Kayla Paraiso ’14, Noah Lifset ’14 and Chris Cahill ’14

All photos by Peter Mahakian