Former Poet Laureate Billy Collins Visits The Hill

Michael Bass '16 and Chloé Glass '17
Assistant News Editors

With his poems springing up bright blue among the yellow daffodils, on April 10, 2014, former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins came to speak at Hopkins. As Assembly, and later at multiple smaller group sessions, Collins read from his plethora of published works and shared his wisdom and vast experience in the field of poetry.

The New York-bred Collins said his ease with words was cultivated early in his childhood; his mother would recite verses on almost any subject on command. Consequently, Collins studied English throughout school and, in 1963, received a B.A. in English from the College of the Holy Cross and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of California, Riverside.

Commenting on the poet’s career and previous work, history teacher Thom Peters said, “I find his work accessible and familiar, and whenever I pick up one of his books and pick a poem or two at random, I find myself smiling or pondering something new.”

Indeed, Collins’ work focuses on the mundane events of everyday life, such as eating breakfast or celebrating a birthday, but he writes about these daily occurrences in a straightforward yet thought provoking manner. This immediacy allows readers to connect easily with his poems, all while reflecting on deeper universal issues.

Collins’ poetry also realistically captures emotions, and Jason Hagan ‘15 said that he easily related to the feelings conveyed in Collins’ poetry: “The poem that really stood out to me was ‘On Turning Ten’ [because] it talked about a lot of the emotions I had experienced as a ten year old. But even as a seventeen year old I can relate. The idea of growing up and leaving childhood or adolescence behind is something we all will feel in our lifetime.”

Collins’ poems do not need to be confined to the English subject; indeed, some faculty have compared listening and reading his poetry to music and other disciplines.

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Billy Collins’ Visit

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Collins broke the ice in the Q&A sessions by saying: “Writers are readers who were moved by their reading to write.” To students seeking advice regarding how to write poems, Collins presented a new perspective of poetry, now based on focusing on the reader. But how does one entrust a stranger to read their poetry? In Collins’ eyes, a poet must “give readers pleasure.” Among the many ways to write effective and pleasurable poetry, the first and foremost piece of advice Collins gave was to write in “good form.” Every line should be conscious of the lines around it, he said, so as to make the poetry “some animated and organic thing, rather than something dead on the page to be dissected.”

Collins’ words of wisdom provided poetry-minded students with the inspiration and guidance to write great original poetry. As Zach Bloom ‘16 described it: “It seems like [Collins] never runs out of ideas for poems, because he takes something that you would never think to write about and he looks at it in a new light.”

Collins’ wisdom also hit home with students who considered themselves analytical writers. When comparing poetry and prose, Collins emphasized that, in poetry, one does not need to pay attention to as many things as you need for fiction, and that a poet can forget “social realism” thus a poem “can suspend the laws of the universe.” He referred to this concept as “imaginative liberty,” a privilege he believed to be unique to poetry.

In Collins’ comparison of prose and poetry, he said “The silence of the green fields is prose, but “The green silence of the fields” is poetry. Collins pointed out that the distinction between the two clauses shows how poetry is unique: it is even more imaginative and playful with words than analytical writing.

Student Samita Bandura ‘16 “enjoyed Collins’ humorously candid nature as he spoke about the thoughts of a poet, poetry versus prose. [and] his own life.” Collins’ visit also impacted the students who do not consider themselves any type of writer at all. As English teacher Brad Capriel noted about the visit: “I really liked hearing, students who see themselves as non-English students say, “That was really fun!” One of these supposed “non-English students,” Hugan, even admitted the considerable effect of Collins’ visit on their interest in poetry: “I personally have no intention of becoming a writer, but what I got from his speech was that I could be one—all I needed to do was read, imagine, and write.” This accessibility of poetry was a major theme of Collins’ speech, essentially, anyone can be a poet if they are exposed to enough poetry.

Asked about his overall impression of Hopkins, Collins replied: “I am enjoying my experience at Hopkins, the students are bright-eyed and full of questions and the most impressive thing is that the teachers have prepared [them] for this visit.”

Ayres-Brown Battles Gender Discrimination

Junior Anna Ayres-Brown’s investigation of what seemed to be McDonald’s “gender-discrimination-by-toy” came to a head in early April when Slate Magazine published online Ayres-Brown’s investigation of the fast food giant’s Happy Meal toy distribution practices. Ayres-Brown’s article was subsequently picked up by The Huffington Post, Cosmo’s online blog, The New York Times, and a myriad of other media outlets. Her work also has earned comments on radio and television, including kudos from the co-hosts of “Better Connecticut.”

Ayres-Brown’s interest in how McDonald’s began to characterize “boy’s toys” and “girls’ toys” goes back to her middle school years, when she became aware of a gender-based pattern specific to the manner in which workers gave out these gifts to children. As a result of her research, McDonald’s has modified the company’s toy policy.

Follow this link to read Ayres-Brown’s original posting: http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2014/04/21/mcdonald_s_and_me_my_fight_to_end_gendered_happy_meal_toys.html

If Every Stuco Promise Came True...
S.U.R.E Making Progress

Brian Kitano '15
Assistant Features Editor

S.U.R.E is surely doing good at Hopkins this year. Students United for Racial Equality “aims to raise awareness of racial inequality in our community,” according to club co-heads Matthew Iannone ’14, Emeric Kossou ’14, and Chris Cahill ’14. The club’s celebration of Black History Month, support of Tae Kwon Do exposition, and the S.U.R.E Rave, among other notable campus events has fostered this resolve. Today, S.U.R.E. aims to grow members and outreach within the Hopkins community.

S.U.R.E is a weekly discussion group that meets to discuss racial inequality, the incorporation of diversity issues and individual backgrounds within the Hopkins community. They also organize community events to inform Hopkins students about diversity within the student body. Though their crowds have dwindled since the beginning of the year, the heads vie to boost the group’s numbers through debate and, of course, entertaining worldly events.

Though this is the first time the trio has led the club, all three heads have had an active role in the S.U.R.E community since freshman year. “When we joined the club as freshmen, none of us had a set friend group yet,” said Iannone, a S.U.R.E leader since junior year. “Once we saw the group of students ranging from freshmen to seniors that were contributing to a conversation regarding topics that make sense in our twenty-first century lives, we were hooked.”

One enduring shindig, S.U.R.E hosts to peak interest is the S.U.R.E Rave, which was held last Friday night in the Athletic Center. “It’s always tricky hosting a Hopkins dance, especially one in the Athletic Center. Overall, we think everyone had a good time and it was a success.”

S.U.R.E also recognizes national and local forms of racial equality. S.U.R.E gave a series of informative assembly presentations to celebrate Black History Month, which were offered by members to teach the community about an African-American they admire. S.U.R.E also organized a memorable African drum performance, where volunteer students received the opportunity to play and dance with African drum masters. Earlier in the year, the group hosted Master Kim and his martial arts students to perform Tae Kwon Do for the Hopkins community, where Hopkins students demonstrated their talents in the ancient Korean combat and self defense form.

Recently, Hopkins hosted the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, an annual meeting at which students convene from dozens of local schools to discuss modern racial issues. This year, the conference honored the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. “Through events like these, we hope to spread awareness to students, faculty, friends and family from Hopkins and our surrounding community,” said Cahill.

Despite their hard work, some students feel that only so much change can occur, here at Hopkins. According to Brett Stapen ’15, a lack of clear publicity and time to participate mainly contribute to his participation in S.U.R.E. “I think it’s hard to have that much of an impact in general,” said the junior. “If I wanted to know what they really did, I would have to go to their meetings, and I haven’t.” Meera Dhodapkar ’15 concurred, saying, “I really have no idea what they are.”

S.U.R.E has had a shrinking number of students attend meetings in recent months, a problem which club heads are passionate to challenge, “Earlier in the year we had attendance close to forty members per meeting,” reported Iannone. “For some reason, commitment and passion for the club has really decreased.”

However, he does not solely attribute this atmosphere to a lack of interest, but instead the quality of the community. “Hopkins does a great job of breaking down boundaries and stereotypes, while also providing a safe place for students to learn, think, and speak, so it’s hard to make any changes to the community,” Cahill observed.

Some students attribute this to an utter lack of significant racial tension on campus, and therefore have no comment on the matter of racial stigmas within the Hopkins community.

The heads today are motivated to raise awareness, encourage the spread of tolerance in and out of Hopkins, and to “spark something in each member.” The heads encourage anyone who can make it to their meetings to involve themselves in the S.U.R.E goal of racial equality. Iannone remarked, “We believe that when people are coming to our meetings and taking part in discussion, we are making a positive influence on the school community.”

Bill Mack Comes Home to Hopkins

William J. Mack ’92, Spring 2014 Alumni Fellow and a respected neurosurgeon, retraces his journey from Hopkins.

The Meh List
1) Funky spring weather
2) 2048
3) Crowded Wednesday lunches
4) Slow walkers on stairs
5) A.P. exams
6) Pot holes on Knollwood drive
7) Mal-usage of “myself” at Assembly
8) Allergy season
9) Nubby erasers

The Spring Slide
With warming weather, chirping birds and burnt-out brains, many students suffer from the Spring Slide, a frightening drop in one’s academic effort. A long winter’s struggle against maddening midterms, terrifying term papers, and calamitous college applications catalyze this reaction. Stay strong, students of Hopkins! The finish line is only a few weeks away.

The Big Profile: Mark Davenport
Four years ago, the Davs arrived on the Hill to teach the masses about everything from the Enlightenment to Otto von Bismarck. Universally loved by XC runners and History students alike, Davenport has brightened the lives of Hopkins youths with a vivacity equaled only by John Davenport himself. An avid hiker and frisbee connoisseur, Davenport enjoys breathing in the glorious aromas of the outdoors. The Davs has influenced many Hopkins students throughout his four years, and our community is going to miss this lively spirit.

The One-Page Razor
Brought to you by The Razor staff

Word of the Issue
Pneumonoultramicroscopicillicovolcanocooniosis: “a long word said to mean a lung disease caused by inhaling very fine ash and sand dust.”—Oxford Dictionaries (Use: only to show people you sound smart)

Compare and Contrast: Apple vs. Apples
Pockets, China Stomachs, trees
Found in:
Stems, leaves

Chips
What’s Inside?
Discovering Gravity
Proving Gravity*
Use:
Fruit

"...when your phone screen shatters upon impact with the ground.

Winner: Apples
Imagine a pit full of thousands of colorful, sweaty bodies, writhing and convulsing. Now overlay that with a series of entwined, multicolored lasers scanning the crowd. Now, the scene is pandemonious, a pandemonium and a simple, seductive, electronic melody. As the synth-heavy audio slowly falls, then builds, then crashes with a wrenching drop, the movement of the crowd dally falls, then rises, then erupts in a perfect synchronization.

Welcome to the stereotypical, modern rave, where throngs of so-called “ravers” gather to experience the reportedly transcendental effects of the group experience of EDM, an acronym short for the genre of Electronic Dance Music.

Though massive festival stages like this one have come to define the modern scene surrounding EDM, they are a far cry from the roots of a genre that has been slow to scratch the surface of the public conscience.

As we know it today, was born in the clubs and warehouses of Chicago through a genre known as “acid house” in the late 1980s. While clubs in large cities, particularly Chicago and New York City, remained the main home of dance music, the 1990s also saw the birth of indoor and outdoor events devoted entirely to EDM and known as “raves.”

It has been the 21st century that has truly ushered in a new wave of EDM, as we know it today, is born in the spotlight in the United States. The country, which had been seen as the “final frontier” for DJs for years, was said by Spin Magazine in 2011 to boast a “new rave generation” of mainstream consumers.

Exclusively-EDM music festivals in the U.S., such as the Ultra Music Festival in Miami and the Electric Daisy Carnivals, in both New York and Las Vegas, draw crowds upwards of 200,000. Artists such as Calvin Harris, David Guetta, and Avicii have graced the Top 40 charts with singles. Dubstep producers Skrillex and Deadmau5 are now household names.

So what exactly has awoken this frenzy for a genre that has laid dormant in this country for nearly three decades?

A large part of the popularity can be attributed to the music itself. “EDM is popular because the new generation can’t play instruments,” Brian Kitanos '15 joked, “But, for real, it’s popular because it is impossible to generate those sounds organically. It comes off as original, otherworldly, and exciting.”

Andrés González '14 describes the culture that surrounds EDM as communal: “The scene is very unique in that it builds a strong sense of community.”

Some say that this rave culture is largely connected to the drug MDMA, otherwise known as Ecstasy, which has defined much of the EDM genre since the 90s.

However, recent drug-related deaths at EDM festivals such as Electric Zoo and EDC New York, and a general reputation for debauchery have created opposition towards the genre from others.

Just last month, the Mayor of Miami threatened to ban the Ultra Music Festival from its venue in the city for years to come after a security guard was trampled by non-ticket holders attempting to break into the event.

Many critics write off the quality of the music, with frequent claims including “every song sounds the same” or “it sounds like a robot.”

Critics aside, it is undeniable that EDM has been a major hit. “I didn’t like [it] because while when you answered a ton of random questions, it left yet another cliffhanger.”

However, Allison Chun ’17 had a different opinion: “I like PLL because it has just the right amount of scary that I can take and it always surprises me. It’s just interesting to watch.”

Three slightly less-known shows popular on campus are The Mindy Project, Scandal, and Elementary. The Mindy Project, centering on the romantic life of a young OB-GYN named Mindy, recently had a mid-season finale. Chase Ames ’17 said: “I thought the finale was okay. They built up a lot of tension between the main two characters. And, in the season finale, they satisfied that tension.”

Scandal, on the other hand, is a political show that revolves around Olivia Pope, played by Kerry Washington, and her crisis management firm. If you are looking for a nerve-wracking show, this is the one for you.

TiFFany Bius’17 described it as absolutely riveting: “Every time I watch it, I get so excited for this show, because after every episode, the writer of the season presents a cliffhanger. She throws curveballs in the plot at you that you never would have expected!”

Jack Greenberg ’14 added, “Genuine ingenious creators of the program attempted to pile too much plot development into a rather constricted amount of time. The experience was more like attempting to drink water out of a fire hose, than sipping a nice iced coffee on the coastline.”

Finally, How I Met Your Mother aired its season finale on March 31.

This highly anticipated finale was generally greeted with approval on campus. Jeffrey Gu ’17 said, “After nine years, it was finally time to meet the mother.”

Featureing the popular Neil Patrick Harris, How I Met Your Mother was a show that first premiered seven years ago, in September of 2005. Since then, it has aired nine seasons, surrounding a man named Ted Mosby who describes to his children how he met their mother.

Eli Barrett ’17 admitted, “I like a lot of people, I thought the finale was kind of disappointing, but at the same time, I’m glad it ended how it did. No one saw the ending coming, and that’s what made it interesting.”

During this busy time of year, TV provides a relaxing break for all Hopkins students. And no matter what, season finales will always seek to satisfy the hype created around their respective shows.
Sanjay Dureseti ’15

The Beat Editor

Spring has officially arrived on The Hill and, along with flowers, showers, and occasionally warm weather, the new season has brought a wave of exciting and long-awaited musical selections. Some of the most successful and influential artists in the industry, young, old, and even deceased, are dropping fresh singles and albums, which satisfy a wide range of musical tastes. Be it pop, rap, or alternative, Hopkins students and faculty alike will certainly not be disappointed by this spring’s melodic offerings.

Michael Jackson is back. No, the “King of Pop” has not returned from the grave after his death in 2009. Instead, his estate and Epic Records have joined forces to produce Xscape, Jackson’s third posthumous album, which will feature eight previously unreleased tracks. Recorded during the creation of Jackson’s 2001 album Invincible, these eight tracks failed to make the final cut. Perennial hit-maker Timbaland is producing, bringing his personal touch to Jackson’s songs, and is infusing the singer’s iconic falsetto with the thumping beats and booming bass of electronic and dance music. The album, Jackson’s first since 2012’s Bad 25, one of the best-seller albums of all time, will also feature big names in the R&B and soul genre, such as Mary J. Blige and Al Green, lead man for The Roots. Critics, however, fear that Xscape might disappoint. Drew Mariana ’15 commented, “It’s not really my cup of tea in terms of most of the production and his beat selection. His vocal abilities have been un-neglected by the less interested.” But many are still skeptical about Lil Wayne’s ability. Nick Steven ’15 noted, “I got in him as a rapper. Now, I’m not too excited, but I believe most of the hype lies in the fact that Wayne said this will be his last album and, because of such, will be pure fire. I’m not sure how big of an impact Wayne will have.” The Carter V drops sometime in May.

Spring has also been marked by the softer side of the music spectrum, as two highly popular alternative bands, The Black Keys and Coldplay, are set to release albums in May. The Black Keys, a Grammy-winning duo from Akron, Ohio, are dropping their eighth studio album, Turn Blue, after a three-year hiatus, during which the duo worked as producers for the likes of Lana Del Rey and The Sheepdogs. After an album announcement featuring Mike Tyson, cryptic Bu-tterfly videos, and a professional hypno-tist, the band and its label, Nonesuch Records, released “Fe-ver” and “Turn Blue,” the album’s singles. Featuring a psychedellic sound and the signature tremolo of lead singer and guitarist Dan Au-erbach, the Keys’ album explores themes of love and loneliness, while hearkening back to the blues roots that made them so successful. Rob Schafer ’15, expressing his excitement, said, “This album will be unbelievable. I have greatly enjoyed hearing the sound of the Black Keys evolve throughout the years, and based on what I heard from the singles, they have continued with their unique musical style. They remind me of the White Stripes, who were special in their own way.” The Keys’ contemporaries, Coldplay, will also be releasing an album after a three-year hiatus. The British group and charismatic front man Chris Martin are looking to recapture the sound of songs like “Fix You” and “Viva la Vida” that seemed to be missing in their latest album, Mylo Xyloto. The band stated that they wanted to return to a “striped down, more acoustic collection,” and, in the words of drummer Will Champion, to “Reset, Recalibrate.”

Their new record, Ghost Stories, contains singles “Midnight” and “Magic,” which have generated significant hype among their millions of fans. Rachel Kaufman ’15 remarked, “I have always loved Coldplay; I have an embarrassing number of songs by them on my phone. I am so excited for their album.” “Ghost Stories” will be released by Parlophone Records on May 16.

Despite a wide range of selection and talent on display, those on The Hill will not be starved for music this spring. Look for all these albums and much more as the weather warms up, the days get longer, and the flowers bloom on the Hopkins campus.
What’s NOT Taught at Hopkins

We cannot say how many students went to Discom this year, or for what reasons. And unless you are a Senior on Disciplinary Committee or a select member of Hopkins Administration, neither can you. Such a widespread deficit in our community’s awareness is rare; however, some issues demand confidentiality.

Discom is one of the best examples of Hopkins’ focus on balancing protection of individual privacy and community progress. Hopkins has the ethical duty to maintain the dignity and privacy of its students, even those who break school rules. From this perspective, keeping disciplinary proceedings private is a broad circle of incrimination should or could merit a public response. However, a response in the form of punishing every bystander would likely be unwieldy, ineffectual and unjust.

Hopkins must find a different way to teach bystanders not to be bystanders. Absence of societal media should motivate us to react to issues of "collective apathy" collectively. Emerging crises, however unfortunate, can be constructively revealing. At a recent Assembly, in an announcement explaining a Facebook incident, Head of School Barbara Riley described the inappropriate emotional and intellectual conduct that many students engage in online. She presented a "poster vs. posting" dichotomy: what we would never allow on physical posters appears omnipresently online. With Riley’s speech came a promise that the school would further address the attitudinal and intellectual issues that desensitize behavior on social media.

The aftershave of the medical and scholarship policies of Universities, the use of the term ‘employee’ and the livelihood of the college student has rarely been considered. Until recently.

We feel safe. From this sprouts anti-bullying campaigns, campus security, and social etiquette initiatives, of which the opinion of 4/5 of the editorial board and will not be signed. The Razo’s Edge is published in a side. It would be extreme to suggest that every student athlete is a hurtful and inappropriate comment on Facebook, becomes visible to the entire student body?

In January, a group of Northwestern football players, spearheaded by quarterback Kain Colter, petitioned to the National Labor Relations Board, who eventually deemed these student athletes to be employees of their university. While the case presented by the players was one that revolved on reforming the medical and scholarship policies of Universities, the use of the term ‘employee’ has opened the perpetual discussion regarding the compensating of college athletes. The aforementioned ruling will apply only to football and basketball for the foreseeable future, as these are the two biggest revenue producing college sports. Others provide minimal to no profit. Thus, it is pertinent to focus on these two sports for the time being when discussing this topic.

Although this ever-exhausting narrative regarding the compensation of college athletes will never go away, it is the ulterior intentions of the Northwestern players that make this story refreshing. Kain Colter, a senior, will be departing from Northwestern after this year. He is one of the 96% of college athletes who “go pro in something other than sports,” as the famous commercial says. He has lead this campaign for the unionizing of college athletes, one player who is driven to fight for his peers. This is why so much of their case revolves around regulations and measures to protect against assaults, and repairing the broken scholarship system, where-in scholarships can be yanked from under these student athletes due to injury or other extraneous circumstances.

As far as the payment of college athletes is concerned, their scholarships should be compensation enough. A study in 2011 showed, for example, that the value of the average Men’s Basketball player at UConn’s is $137,121. This total value is divided up into different categories ranging from Grant In-Aids (Tuition, fees, books, etc.), to medical assistance, to equipment and uniforms. And, this number amounts to nearly four times the average American’s annual salary ($39, $36).

While it is perhaps not justifiable to unnecessarily compensate college athletes with excessive salaries, they and their safety need to be protected. Although many student athletes are values that are and should be taught at home by one’s family. But is this education really happening?

It is not simply ironic that many Hopkins students are usually at home when they read social media, view inappropriate posts, and other lenient offenses unpunished. Though nested in their bedrooms or comfortable corners of their homes, some people detach in alarming ways when they enter the electronic world.

The future, a vast number of all of us will become more closely acquainted with situations similar to the one of the Northwestern football team. And, it would behoove each and every one of us to think not only about making a quick buck, as many tend to consider, but more how define the words ‘safety’ and ‘security.’ Because such a high percentage of these athletes will not have the opportunity to pursue a lucrative career in sports, we will eventually forget them. Their faces, jerseys, and highlights won’t enter our minds as often as they probably should. But their lives still go on, and need to be preserved and lived to the fullest. Kain Colter may never gain the notoriety and fame of a John Elway or Dan Marino by the end of his life, but that doesn’t make him any less important.

For the Love of the Game

We are told that, for the duration of our lives in school, we should always feel safe. From this sprouts anti-bullying campaigns, campus security, and social etiquette. However, while we, as high school students, are seen as needing such protections, the livelihood of the college student has rarely been considered. Until recently.

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Sasha Possick: Lacrosse Legend

The male Athlete of the Issue is Sasha Possick ’14 for his outstanding performance in lacrosse. The team has played six games so far. They have won two and lost four, but Possick has delivered outstanding play in all of them and leads the team in goals with 20.

Possick has played lacrosse for ten years. He practiced with the Varsity team since he was an eighth grader at Hopkins and has been in the starting lineup since his freshman year. Head Coach Sandy MacMullen regarded him as “one of the great goal scorers in Hopkins lacrosse history” who has been “a focus of our offense for three years.” From his freshman year through his junior year, Possick scored 137 goals and had 48 assists. Teammate Walker Schneider ’15 said, “Possick is the metaphoric bulldog of lacrosse. And, while that rings true, his play also has a softer, more agile side, which is not fully appreciated until he moves his big frame past you and puts the ball in the net.”

Possick’s exceptional athletic performance has earned him many awards. He has been elected to both the First Team All-Fairchester League and the First Team Western New England Secondary School Lacrosse Association. Additionally, the New Haven Register has awarded him “Athlete of the Day” numerous times and membership on the Men’s All-Area Lacrosse Team. Possick has also accumulated a collection of game balls throughout his time on the Hopkins team.

In addition to his athletic abilities, Possick has demonstrated admirable leadership. His teammates have voted him as captain of Varsity Lacrosse for his senior year. Schneider added, “As a captain, he takes a lot of pride in representing Hopkins, and himself. He plays with a “never quit” attitude that complements his vocal leadership.” Fellow teammates and senior Bennett Amador said, “Possick inspires the team by always saying ‘forget your fears,’ they’ll just hold you back.”

Possick’s team benefited from Possick’s presence, but he has grown as a result of his time as a Hilltopper. Possick reflected on his time playing lacrosse at Hopkins. “Like most sports teams at Hopkins, we have the ability to cobble together a team of scrappy, smart and hardworking guys, and ultimately become a formidable force in the league.”

While both the hard times and the good have contributed to his overall experience, Possick has been a natural leader. He played with a “never quit” attitude that complements his vocal leadership. Fellow teammates and senior Bennett Amador said, “Possick inspires the team by always saying ‘forget your fears,’ they’ll just hold you back.”

Sabrina Falcigno: Softball Sorceress

Jono Zarrilli ’16

Take a look on the Hopkins softball field: pitcher and captain Sabrina Falcigno ’14 will certainly be in the center of the action. She began to play at the age of five, influenced by her brother, Stephen Fal- cigno ’12. “I always admired watching Ste- phen playing baseball. So I decided to teach myself. I would watch college girls pitch on TV, and go on YouTube for hours looking up specific techniques and warm-up skills. I soon realized that this was a sport I loved.”

Falcigno pitched for the JV team as a seventh grader, then joined Varsity in eighth grade. She said, “We have truly formed a family connection throughout my five years on the team. I will never forget being an eighth grader on the team spring training trip to Disney World. We were all sitting around eating peanuts and one of the girls, Tara Gambardella ’11, asked me if I wanted one. I said ‘Okay, but I’ve never had a peanut.’ They all started laughing in astonishment. From then on my nickname has been ‘peanut,’ which was fitting for me because I was the smallest player on the team.”

Falcigno’s favorite moment on the field came last year during the Hopkins-Hamden Hall game. Falcigno, the starting pitcher, shut down Hamden Hall and had a no-hitter until the last inning of a 6-0 win.

Falcigno’s value to the program ex- tends beyond her play. Christie Lame ’16 re- marked, “She makes all new players feel wel- come from the very beginning of each season and has made us all feel part of the family. She’s supportive of everyone, and brings a positive energy to the team, whether she’s cheering us on or laughing at our antics.”

Precious Musa ’14 said, “Sabrina is a natural leader. She’s really great at making the team laugh and have fun even as we’re working hard. On the field, she makes sure to cheer people on, and makes us feel bet- ter if we’ve made a mistake. I think the kind of leadership that she has is that of a person that leads from the back - pushing people forward to help them become better players.”

Head Coach Cindy Chase has seen Falcigno grow from a talented eighth grader into a senior who leads by example: “Being on the mound is a position of leadership it- self as it is the focal point of the field. Sabrina has been a great leader, particularly with the younger players. Sabrina’s love of this game and her natural talent allow her to shine throughout victories as well as to maintain composure throughout tough times. For that she is admired and respected by all.”

Falcigno looks to fully embrace the future. “I plan on joining the varsity team next year and hope to make my mark on the team. I’m definitely looking forward to being one of the best will be too much for LA to handle.”

Despite being looked at by several scouts, Falcigno has decided not to pursue competitive softball in college. However, that certainly does not mean that she will abandon her dream. “I have the throwing arm and have made me feel very welcome as a seventh grader.”

NBA Playoffs Picks

Doing just that, James averaged 2.7 1PPG to eventually lead the Heat to a 54-28 record and first place in the Southeast Division. A team of accomplished veter- ans and skilled young players, with LeBron leading the charge, has the championship within their reach. Possick demonstrates steady leadership. His teammates have elected him as captain of Varsity Lacrosse for his senior year. Schneider added, “As a captain, he takes a lot of pride in representing Hopkins, and himself. He plays with a “never quit” attitude that complements his vocal leadership.” Fellow teammates and senior Bennett Amador said, “Possick inspires the team by always saying ‘forget your fears,’ they’ll just hold you back.”

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The Clippers also agreed to a deal with former Cavelers coach Mike Budenholzer to create a strong second squad along with Darren Collison. A Heat-Chargers NBA Finals are surely bring lots of close games and playoffs. LeBron James and Dwyane Wade going up against Chris Paul and Blake Griffin would definitely be exiting to watch. The Clippers do not have anyone to match up against LeBron, though, posing a large threat to their defense. LeBron’s desire to win a third ring to better strengthen his argument for being one of the best for much too long. If the series came down to experience, the Heat have the Clippers beat. However, LA does have an over- all more talented bench than Miami, which could be a big factor if starters get into foul trouble. The Clippers will surely be hard-fought, but the Heat’s future Hall- of-Famers will outlast the younger talent of the Clippers.
Mixed martial arts is a full-contact sport that allows a variety of fighting styles to be used, including martial and non-martial arts techniques. It is common for fighters to train in multiple styles to create a balanced skill set. Mixed martial arts is based off of Ju-Jitsu, and practiced with different variations. Ju-Jitsu is a Japanese martial art used in close combat. "Ju" can be translated to mean gentle and soft. "Ju-ju" translates to mean art or technique, and represents manipulating the opponent. English Teacher Ian Melchinger and his daughter Hannah Melchinger ‘17 have been practicing ju-ju together for the past five years. "I practice it with my entire family at the Connecticut School of Survival. My teachers, Professor McCall and Grandmaster Logan amaze me both with their martial arts skills and their personalities. They have become like family, and thus Ju-Jitsu has become a very important part of my life and who I am," said Hannah Melchinger.

Tae Kwon Do is the Korean art of self-defense, one of the oldest forms of martial arts, and the most widely practiced martial art in the world. Tae means to destroy with the feet; Kwon means to strike or smash with the hand; and Do means "path" or "way." Hence, Tae Kwon Do can be translated as "the way of the foot and fist." Training involves learning a system of blocks, kicks, punches, and open-handed strikes, as well as varying forms of take-downs, throws, and joint locks, all of which develop strength, speed, balance, flexibility, and stamina.

Tae Kwon Do is known for its emphasis on kicking techniques, as compared to other martial arts such as karate. In addition to self-defense training, students learn prearranged sequences of techniques known as forms or poomse.

Tae Kwon Do appears to be the most promi- nent form of martial arts on campus. Armaan Khwaja ‘17 has been practicing Tae Kwon Do for the past three years. She said, "I really like working on my weapon-ry skills, sword and nun-chucks, and I really like sparring also. They can get very intense at times."

Sydney Hirsch '19 has also been practicing Tae Kwon Do for around three years. She said, "I started Tae Kwon Do when I was nine years old. We had a little studio five minutes away from my house and my family and I thought it looked interesting. I love doing forms and self-defense. Neha Srivastava ‘16 has been doing Tae Kwon Do for six years, and is working towards her second degree black belt. She mostly enjoys breaking boards, but finds the forms a good way for her to lose stress. Morgan Zip- po ‘19 has been doing Tae Kwon Do for eight years and is working towards receiving her third-degree black belt.

"I compete in local competitions twice a year or more, mostly in CT, but we also travel to places like New York, New Jersey, Virginia, and Philadelphia. Tae Kwon Do is very important to me and has taught me so much." Both Zippo and Srivastava are training to compete in the National Tae Kwon Do competition this July in San Jose, California.

Martial artists often feel that they have to prove what they are doing is not just kicking boards and throwing punches. "When most people hear ‘martial arts,’ they immediately think of people fighting each other, and breaking boards with multiple spinning and flying kicks. However, what they do not realize is that there are many other sides to martial arts," said Verlaque. "Karate is not just kicking and punching either; there is a lot of routine and form involved." said Lee. Ian Melchinger said, "My real interest is in the "ju" of ju-ju and ju-do, the gentleness. You cannot fight power with power. So my interest is in what we call ‘solo’, when I can perform the fundamentals without thought, to be alert in the moment. In that sense, it is like chamber music, with no conductor. Your energy comes from the other person."

Whenver I tell people I do Tang Soo Do, the response is always something along the lines of ‘Oh, like Karate?’ I think this is bit like saying ‘you do hockey’, isn’t that like soccer on ice’?" said Verlaque. In compar-ison to Tae Kwon Do, Karate tends to focus more on hand strikes, whereas Tae Kwon Do emphasizes kicking tech- niques. The major traditional styles of karate are Shotokan, Shito-Ryu, and Goju-Ryu. Karate is the original martial art, with punching, kicking, knee and elbow strikes, and open-handed techniques. The movements are crisp and linear. Tae Kwon Do focuses more on different kicking styles and arranged movements in form and self-defense.

The students and faculty at Hopkins practice several different styles of martial arts; Tae Kwon Do, Karate, and Mixed martial arts are only the beginning. Even though these athletes are all learning different forms, they all agree that their respective practice has helped them develop perseverance, focus, self-respect, and respect for others.

The NBA Playoffs: Who Will Win?

Ethan Marchetti ’16 Assistant Sports Editor

The 2013-2014 NBA season was full of memorable moments. From Kevin Durant’s 41-game streak of 25-point games to the 76ers’ record-tying 26-game losing streak, the season did not disappoint. As the final games of the season wound out the play- off standings, the qualifying teams prepared for their match-ups. Whether a team is the first seed or the eighth seed, no one team will have an easy time advancing round to round. This season, the Eastern Conference was not nearly as strong as the West. Many teams were in the process of rebuilding and being to playoff contenders for next sea- son. Through the first half of the season, it seemed like the East would send multiple teams that were not even above .500 to the playoffs. However, teams like the Charlotte Bobcats and the Washington Wizards began to play much better, resulting in more wins. Other teams like the Heat, Pacers, Raptors, and even the Bulls finished with successful winning seasons. Rounding out the East’s eight-seed were the Hawks, who grabbed the last spot with a late-sea- son comeback but a final record of 38-44.

The Western Conference was much more competitive than the East. The Spurs, Thunder, and Clippers proved to be very tough opponents for every team. Portland, Memphis, and Phoenix experienced break-outs this season, and Houston missed their playoffs, their 48-34 record was still impressive. The other two playoff teams, Houston and Dallas, had solid sea- sons with their high profile acquisitions of Dwight Howard (Rockets) and Monta Ellis (Mavericks). For Houston, Howard’s 18.5 PPG combined with James Harden’s already stellar play created an All-Star tandem of elite scorers. The same goes for Dallas’ El- lis and future Hall-of-Famer Dirk Nowi- zki scoring a combined 40.7 PPG. The Western Conference is full of good playoff teams ready to battle it out in the postseason.

The East has many possible Finals contenders this season, but the Miami Heat should take the Eastern Conference title. Miami definitely wants to defend their Finals title and go for the "3-peat." Led by LeBron James, the Heat can achieve success with him alone. Add Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh (both top role players) and Miami becomes nearly unbeatable. With Wade miss- ing a total of 28 regular season games, Le- bon had to put the team on his back to win.