



# it takes a village

*After the deaths of three students at Hopkins West Junior High, students, staff, and the WJH community join together to support one another.*

**in-depth, page 6-7**

photo: Adam Segal

## Late snow affects turf fields, spring sports schedules

**Sam Segelbaum**  
Staff Reporter

**A**s the winter season comes to a close, the snow continues to stay. The spring season of sports is upon us and teams are struggling to get outside because of bad weather conditions.

doors,” said Seth Schricker, junior. “The weather will also affect upcoming matches and we may have to cancel a few because the courses won’t be open by then.”

The baseball and softball teams are also struggling to get outside and prepare for their

recently got a brand new field which is now covered in snow, but the new turf allows the team to get on the field much earlier because the material dries faster than grass.

“The weather has definitely been frustrating because we have this nice brand new field waiting for us, and we aren’t able

“*Every spring sport is scrambling for space to practice, and every school is in the same boat. Finding space outside of the HHS campus is very difficult and when we do find it, it comes with a price.*

**Jason Mihalakis, Head Coach, boys baseball**

Since the courses are currently buried in snow, the boys golf team has to continue to stay indoors by using golf simulators and indoor driving ranges. Both resources are scarce because they have to rent the facilities while others continue to use it.

“The weather has delayed tryouts so we have been forced to just continue to practice in-

respective seasons. Both teams have been working in the off-season to prepare for opening day.

The baseball team held multiple practices at the Braemar dome in Edina which allowed the team to throw long toss and hit fly balls. They now are forced into the Lindbergh Center because of bad weather. The team

to utilize it due to weather,” said Luke Polyak, junior. “We were out there a few times a couple weeks ago shoveling, but the snow has just kept coming and we are going to have to stick to indoor practices at Lindbergh.”

The boys baseball team, for example, is not only struggling to get outside, but they are also struggling to get time in the



photo: Adam Segal

*The newly renovated turf fields remain covered in snow in April, preventing their use by Royals sports teams including boys baseball and girls softball teams.*

Braemar Sports Complex. The Braemar Sports Complex rents out their facility to Edina sports teams first and then rent out the rest in a “first come, first serve” basis.

“Every spring sport is scrambling for space to practice, and every school is in the same boat,” said Jason Mihalakis, head coach of the Royals baseball team. “Finding space

outside of the Hopkins campus is very difficult and when we do find it, it comes with a price.”

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“ We have only been together for three weeks and I feel that we have already have been playing forever.”

Parker Stoddard, junior



## Late snow affects turf fields, spring sports schedules

Sam Segelbaum  
Sports Reporter

Teams adjust schedules, training in response to weather

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The boys baseball team also would have to spend roughly \$200 for half a field for an hour after school. This can create problems for the team because they are forced to raise extra money from the booster club to pay for these facilities.

“Fortunately we have a great activities office that manages everything really well, and provides financial support for outside options when all of the facilities at the school are booked. Erin Brown (assistant athletic director) has been helping the baseball program with scheduling practices and she’s been really great,” Mihalakis said.

The girls softball team is also having the same problem as the boys. They are also continuing to practice on the tough basketball court floor instead of their brand new turf field. The team has been forced to the Eden Prairie dome to have more space to hit and field fly balls.

“The weather is a real pain because I wish we could just be outside already,” said Parker Stoddard, junior. “Not being outside doesn’t allow us to practice right after school because we have to share gym space with other spring sports.”

Along with the softball and

baseball teams, the boys tennis team is having a tough time. Tryouts occurred in the North Junior High structure with only two courts available. There are roughly 35 players this year and with two courts, there wasn’t much match play to evaluate.

“Having only two nets has caused the courts to become crammed with large numbers of players,” said Felix Johnson, junior. “The weather also has the team practicing on a worse surface that people are not used to. This causes players to have trouble showcasing their full potential at tryouts.”

Girls lacrosse is continuing to struggle to get out on the field. They’ve been playing on turf, which can help get the team outside earlier. The team held tryouts in the Hopkins Pavilion

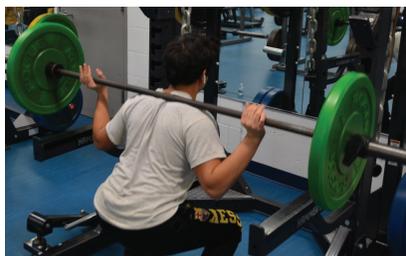
“Our lacrosse team is able to practice indoors at the Hopkins Pavilion. The weather isn’t really holding us back at all,” said Kristin Mandeville, junior. “We are just practicing on turf indoors instead of outdoors a little longer than anticipated.”

Although most teams are able to find alternatives to practice, the snow continues to fall setting back all teams in some way.



Luke Polyak, junior, goes through his warmup before the Royals start practice at the Braemar Sports Complex. Polyak is a captain for the 2018 season.

Photo: Luis Felemovicius



Atharv Kulkarni, senior, does a back squat in preparation for the upcoming season. Kulkarni played football in the fall.

Photo: Adam Segal



DJ Davis, Anthony Davis, Annika Patterson, seniors, and Joe Fahnbulleh, junior, train at HHS in preparation of the upcoming track and field season.

Photo: Adam Segal

## Softball looks to make another run at state

David Cambell  
Sports Reporter

For Evie Barczak, senior, this softball season is more than just winning some games. It represents all the hard work put into the offseason.

“Personally, I lifted and conditioned every day with one of the track coach’s programs from the end of summer to the beginning of my season in March,” Barczak said. “As a team, we played domeball every Monday night for a couple of weeks in the winter.”

With a 2017 record of 15-9 and a state tournament appearance, the Royals are looking to improve even more.

“Of course every year is different, but I’m really excited for this season. We have a lot of new girls and people moving positions but we’re all working hard and have gotten better,” Barczak said. “I’m really excited

to see what’s to come.”

The Royals are going to be relying on Barczak and Natalie DenHartog, senior, to be the stars of the team. Despite having these superstar seniors, the Royals will also need some underclassmen to play well.

“I wanna play as much as possible and have a good season,” said Annika Crouser, sophomore.

Barczak knows the importance of the younger players performing well.

“It’s hard to say with this being the first week of practice, but we have some open spots this year and there are definitely some younger girls that will have the opportunity and are talented enough to step up and fill those spots,” Barczak said.

Led by Head Coach Mark Peterson and Assistant Coaches John DenHartog, Jeanna Peterson, and Cary Yancy, the Royals are sure to be just as good if not better than last year.

Yancy believes this team will be solid with great veteran leadership.

“Our captains lead by example,” Yancy said. “Hopkins softball is a very prestigious program that all-around has a lot of talent, and leaders. Our young core buys into the prestige that the leaders show.”

Coming off a successful season, the Royals believe their coaches will lead the way.

“We all love the coaches, they are great people and great at their jobs,” Crouser said.

The Royals’ main focus for

the season is to not overlook any opponent and take it one game at a time.

“Our goal is to go 1-0 every game,” Yancy said. “If we take it one game at a time, it will translate into success late in the year.”

The Royals won crucial games against teams like Edina and Wayzata before losing to Anoka in the state quarterfinal.

The Royals will use their depth, star power, and coaches to hopefully repeat the same success and make it back to the state tournament.



The softball team brings it in after a hardfought game. The Royals lost to Anoka in the state quarterfinal game last year. File photo: Bea Frank

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