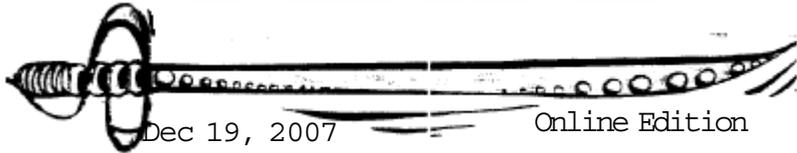


# THE BLADE



Dec 19, 2007

Online Edition

## In this issue:

News.....	p1
Features.....	p4
Editorials.....	p6
Sports.....	p11

Volume XII

Issue II

## *International Participation Increase at Brussels American School*

by Assistant Editor

Brussels American School is unique in the fact that international students from 14 various nations make up of 12% of the student population. Of these students, nearly half of them have taken part in sports so far this year.

There were a significant number of international students that participated in sports last year; however, this year international participation has nearly doubled. American sports, like football for example, usually receive little attention from Europeans. This year however, nearly a third of its participants were international students.

The basketball team also is experiencing new heights in regard to the amount of international players. Six of the fourteen students on the boys' team are international. Wrestling also has increased in international participation. In fact, last year no international students were on the wrestling team.

"This is a sign of the international students feeling more comfortable around Americans and that more American sports are becoming more popular around the world," believes the coach of the Cross-Country and Basketball teams.

This feeling of comfort is likely the result of the small, family-like atmosphere that Brussels American School's size creates. Having only one hundred high school students, international students do not feel as threatened and are more likely to break the language barrier that is present in many larger schools.

The cultural diversity also creates a friendlier atmosphere at BAS. It helps by making people more accepting of those who come from different cultural backgrounds and speak different languages. Sports have often been seen as a bridge across language barriers, bringing cultures closer together. This is especially true

here at BAS.

"It's fun to do sports here because European schools don't have sports organized by the school," said a three-sport athlete from Slovenia, who played football this year for the first time. "I enjoy the diversity of the school's cultures and backgrounds."

The simple fact that the school is small creates more opportunities for all students to try new things. The demand for athletes is high and the likelihood of being cut from a team is significantly lower than at other, larger schools. This welcomes international students who wish to try new things, such as American sports, that otherwise they may never have had the opportunity to try.

"I think it's good because then there are more people involved in sports, and they're pretty good [athletes] too," said an American three sport athlete of the increasing number of international student-athletes.

The increasing participation of international students in sports has proven to be just another benefit of the unique environment here at BAS.





## *Dracula Impresses All*

by News Editor

High School Drama presented “Dracula” based on a horror novel by an Irish writer Bram Stoker, on November 16 at the BAS MPR. There were no tickets required; however, a dinner organized by the Friends of the Arts was served before the show with a cost of \$6 per serving.

The play began with the arrival of Jonathan Harker, a lawyer representing a London real estate agency, at the Transylvanian castle of Count Dracula to clinch the deal by which the count would move to a British estate. There, Harker revealed a mysterious background of the count and a sense of dread regarding the outcome of his journey.

By the time that Harker had recovered from a long and unknown illness and returned home, Dracula, already in London, had almost turned Miss Lucy, Harker’s fiancée, into a vampire. She had fallen ill and seemed to be experiencing a mysterious disease that caused her to loose blood. Dr. Van Helsing, a German expert, took the lead as she tried to convince her skeptical friend, Mrs. Steward and the others that they must take action against a certain person who is responsible for Lucy’s condition.

The director said that at first he read a lot of scripts based on Dracula during summer. Then, he came across the original play, which was first brought up to the stage in 1921. It captured his attention for it had both an internal value, and a message.

“I could perfectly picture it as a school play,” he added. “And therefore immediately I started to research, reading the book by Bram Stoker, as well as many essays on Dracula.”

The story centers around a young couple struggling alongside their friends with evil in the image of Count Dracula. The director wanted to portray that this fiendish alien could only be stopped through courage, unity and faith.

Many people attended the show - both a preview for Middle School students during the school day on November 16, and the real performance. In fact, there were not enough chairs for everybody.

“I thought the play was very thrilling and the actors too, were incredible,” commented an eighth grader.

The actors themselves were also excited.

“That has been an unforgettable experience for me because it was my first play and it eventually turned out to

be a good one,” said Dracula’s daughter.

“There were a lot of lines to memorize, which could have been quite a challenging task,” said the director. “I think that all of the actors interpreted their parts very well.”

To add more feeling of mystery around Count Dracula, a fog machine was loaned by the Magic Land Theatre for the play. The director shared his unforgettable experience with it:

“After it was brought to the MPR, I observed it very carefully first. Then, I pushed the manual button which caused the release of such an amount of fog, great enough to fill the whole MPR!”

Another thrilling moment happened on the night of the dress rehearsal. Dracula could not open his blood capsule, hence, when he went to bite Miss Lucy all the blood poured out of his mouth and ran down her neck. This event created laughing, suspense and a bit of nausea among the actors.

A great contribution to the overall success of Dracula was also made by the six stage hands, who decorated and painted the backstage.

The costume designs helped create a sense of that time. The play was filmed and DVD’s were sold for \$10 each.



*Photo courtesy of a Parent*

*The Dracula cast at curtain call*



## NHS & NJHS Plan Projects

by Photography Editor

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) and the National Honor Society (NHS) began the year productively. With a new sponsor, changes have been made to both strong-minded and ambitious groups.

The NJHS/NHS is based on five criteria: citizenship, service, leadership, scholarship and character. Members are expected to maintain a high grade point average of at least a 3.4 and are expected to participate in service projects. Membership not only recognizes students for their accomplishments, but also challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and to provide community service.

The new NJHS/NHS sponsor this year said that “a commitment to service and the values of the honor society are very important to me, and I wanted the opportunity to sponsor middle and high school students.”

At the beginning of the year, both groups elected officers, a President, Vice president, Secretary and Treasurer.

“My officers have demonstrated some excellent leadership abilities, and I am excited that the students are willing to make decisions regarding service projects and fundraisers,” said the sponsor, stressing the results of the election.

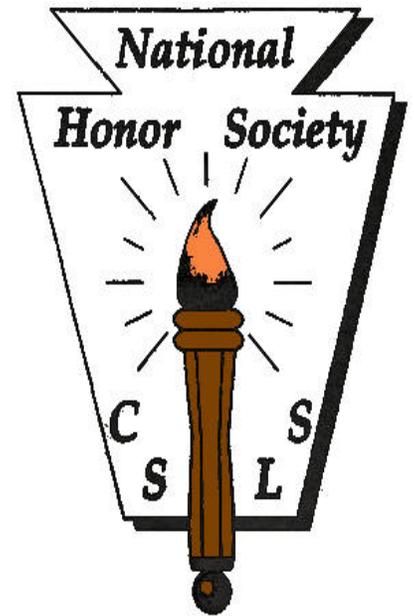
A large and beneficial profit was made when the NJHS, a large and determined group of 23 members, organized a “Popcorn Day” on October 23, where each small zip-lock bag of popcorn was sold for 50 cents to raise funds for the service projects to come. Dues of \$5 per member were also collected to help pay the fees towards the certificates and pins that will be given at the induction ceremony at the end of the year. The NJHS has not yet taken part in any service projects; however, it has provided free tutorials for students in all academic areas from 8:00-8:20 a.m. from December 4-20 and the NHS will continue the effort through the end of January.



The National Honor Society, a smaller yet driven group of 11 members, hosted the November Parent-Teacher Conference coffee/bake sale. The proceeds of this sale were added to the income of the NJHS and NHS fund as well as the dues of \$5 collected from each NHS participant. Concerning service projects, the NHS, in conjunction with the NJHS, is taking part in the Andrews Federal Credit Union-sponsored “Hands and Hearts Winter (clothing) Drive.” The items collected: coats, hats, scarves, and gloves were turned over to L’Olivier, a specialized center in Brussels whose goal is to facilitate needy foreign nationals in our area. Items were collected in a large box in the foyer from December 3-13 and were taken to Andrews Federal Credit Union by the National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society members on December 14.

Later in the year, in cooperation, the NJHS and the NHS hope to assist the Little Sisters of the Poor, who provide a home for the elderly who are financially unable to care for themselves. The home is situated in downtown Brussels near the Porte de Hal metro station. Both the NJHS and the NHS will help prepare the meals and serve meals (help with individual feeding), launder the clothes (folding), help with craft projects (cutting, measuring), and will partake in light gardening assignments (planting flowers, watering, etc.).

Looking at what the organizations have already done, as well as their future plans, the sponsor said, “I think that both groups are very committed to making a difference on a variety of levels, not just here at Brussels American School but locally, as well as globally.”





## Winter Concert Kicks Off Christmas

by Sports Editor

On December 13, 2007 the BAS Band performed for the annual Winter Concert.

"I always look forward to the Winter Concert," said the band director. "By far it's the most special because it's before the Christmas season."

There were three bands: Beginning, Community, and Advanced. The Beginning Band performed the songs *Jingle Bells*, *My Dreydll*, *When the Saints Go Marching In*, *Old McDonald Had a Band*, *Ode to Joy*, *Hard Rock Blues*, *Up On The Husetop*, *Jolly Old St. Nicholas*, *O Come All Ye Faithful*, and *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*.

"I am always impressed by the Beginning Band," said the band director. "It's there first big experience and it's a lot of pressure on them."

The Beginning Band consisted of the Flutes, Alto Saxophones, Trumpets, Baritones, and Percussion.

The Community and Advanced Bands were combined and played the songs *Saturday Morning Fever*, *Carol of the Night*, *Rock Away*, *Chanukah Celebration*, *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, *Serenata*, and *With Boughs of Holly*.

"The Community Band is made of members in the Community who played an instrument at some point in

their lives," said the director. "It's good for us because they help us and they get to have fun by playing."

The Community Band consisted of Flutes, Clarinets, Alto Saxophones, Trumpets, Horns, Trombones, Tubas, and Percussion.

The Advanced Band consisted of Flutes, Oboes, Alto, Tenor and Baritone Saxophones, Trumpets, and Baritones.

There were only two solos performed, *Vega* and *Ariette* from "*Panurge*".

"Overall I think the bands did great and I'm a bit disappointed with the number of audience members we had," said the director. "But they were appreciative."




---

## BAS's Santa Wish List

*The time of Christmas has come around and everyone wants something. Here are what some of the students at BAS want for Christmas:*

- \_\_\_\_\_: A new cell phone because mine is held together with rubber bands.
- \_\_\_\_\_: To get into college.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Helium filled balloons so I can sing "Christmas, Christmas Don't Be Late" by Alvin and the Chipmunks.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Food because I'm hungry and it tastes good.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A puppy so I can snuggle with it.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A Side Kick Three because phones here are very bad.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A TV because I don't have one, and a phone.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Unlimited free plane tickets to and from Wiesbaden to see my girlfriend.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Go Macedonia party time! Very nice!
- \_\_\_\_\_: A green card so I'm legal.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Chopsticks so I can be closer to my people.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A new computer chip to grade my papers for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Some Jordan's.



## *BAS Favorite Christmas Songs*

by Features Editor

(Ordered in decreasing originality)

- *Christmas Don't Be Late, Alvin and The Chipmunks*
- *The Redneck Twelve Days of Christmas, Jeff Foxworthy*
- *Last Christmas, Wham*
- *Christmas Time, The Darkness*
- *Come All Ye Faithful, Twisted Sister*
- *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa*
- *The First Noel, Nat King Cole*
- *Rudolf the Red-nose Reindeer*
- *Frosty the Snowman*
- *12 Days of Christmas*
- *Jingle Bells*
- *Jingle Bell Rock*



---

## *BAS by the Numbers*



Out of 20 Selected BAS High School Students:

- 7 like eggnog (35%)
- 11 enjoy Christmas music (55%)
- 7 have kissed someone under mistletoe (35%)
- 5 still sit on Santa's lap (20%)
- 15 have seen Tim Allen's The Santa Clause (75%)
- 13 know the names of all 9 reindeer (65%)
- 16 have written Santa a letter (80%)
- 10 are going somewhere for Christmas break (50%)
- 12 have a Fake Christmas tree (60%)
- 11 can actually ice skate (55%)
- 13 enjoy receiving gifts rather than giving gifts (65%)
- 11 write thank-you cards (55%)
- 12 put out cookies and milk for "Santa" (60%)
- 16 believe Christmas is their favorite holiday (80%)
- 9 put out shoes on December 6-St. Nicholas Day (45%)





## Are We Purchasing The North Pole?

by Senior Reporter

Picture the perfect Christmas setting: chestnuts roasting on an open fire, children gathered around an elder telling them some tale of Christmas spirit or of a heartwarming family trial in which they all pull through together for a happily-ever-after. Then, as the camera zooms in on the scene you notice larger-than-life-labels on everything – Mattel, Microsoft, Coca-Cola, and others far too numerous to name.

These companies are capitalizing on a good thing, not tearing the very spirit of Christmas asunder for their own gains. Many groups would have you believe that corporations are ruining the holiday by imposing the ravaging need of consumerism upon us, but in fact they are not. A commercial doesn't make you get up and buy a Honda. It simply allows you to know that you have the option to buy a Honda if you want one.

The outcry against the commercialization of Christmas has grown slowly louder over the years with groups like The Buy Nothing Christmas Carolers, who go from door to door preaching the message from which their name was chosen.

Is it correct to assume that Christmas is commercialized too much and through this aspect loses the true spirit of the holiday in the mix of buying and selling? I do not believe so. I believe the commercialization, to a certain extent, actually helps the holiday bring forth what good it can in the average consumer. It's the one time of the year that people feel so inclined to give to charities, many of which make most of their money during this time in the year. Christmas is also the time of year that people most often participate in volunteer programs in their community.

Christmas and the knowledge of it, has resulted in a unification that spans many countries and some systems of belief. Minor differences occur in tradition, but for the most part, Christmas or some event similar is celebrated by

almost everyone worldwide.

Who does not enjoy the occasional Christmas Special on television or a Christmas carol sang in slightly off key but still enjoyable voices by neighbors? Christmas being commercialized does not harm the holiday at all, but may in fact bring more to it. Although occasionally one does receive the ever-redundant commercial about how this product truly represents the love one shares for a family member or person of interest, for the most part the commercial industry and its corporations attempt to keep it rather low key.

The commercialization of Christmas even helps the economy. During Christmas many companies, like Ikea or Sears for example, enjoy a spike in profits and thus the government gets a spike on their indirect income taxes.

Even in BAS the commercial bug has been found to further the BAS economy. We can be seen hustling Poinsettias from house to house and even to our own parents. While these Poinsettias are rather pretty, it is still an example of the commercialization of Christmas. Another example for BAS is celebrations related to a holiday in which we charge admission to in order to raise money for our programs. All of this is not bad; it is simply providing goods and services at a time when goods and services are required. The work done during the Christmas season bolsters any economy and any program. The fact of the matter is, that during the holiday season people are more inclined to give to charities, programs, and fundraisers shamelessly.

The commercialization of Christmas in fact does no harm to the holiday or the holiday spirit. It perhaps even amplifies said spirit so it may echo throughout the world. The commercialization of Christmas is not only good for the holiday but good for humanity's celebration of the holiday as well.

\$\$\$  
*TARGET*  
*WALMART*  
*JCPENNIES*  
\$\$\$





## *Wicked: Changing Our Perception Of Good and Evil*

by Senior Reporter

While growing up, I remember watching *The Wizard of Oz* several times, and reading the books by Frank E. Baum. I remember admiring Dorothy and her companions, especially the little dog, and how frightening the cackling witch with her green skin is.

But what many of us fail to consider is the Wicked Witch of the West's side of the story. Nobody bothered to tell us as children why she's evil, or even why her skin is green.

Gregory Maguire's *Wicked* is able to finally tell us the witch's side of the story. While it is a story parallel to that of Dorothy's adventure through Oz, the witch's story is more tragic, partly because Maguire humanizes the witch, making one sympathize with the character that had previously been terrifying. This humanization begins with one simple gesture. Maguire gives the witch a name: Elphaba.

Elphaba's life has never been easy. She is a huge disappointment to her parents, who were hoping for a normal child, not one with green skin and a fatal allergic reaction to water. Not only is she a failure in her parent's eyes, she is soon followed by a sister born with no arms, a disfiguration Elphaba blames herself for.

Her life does not really begin until she attends Shiz University and befriends Glinda the "Good." While attending Shiz University, Elphaba finds her passion: Animal rights. She is ashamed of the way the "Animals," creatures with human and animal qualities, are treated in Oz, and vows to do something to stop it.

Throughout her journey defending Animal rights,

Elphaba meets new friends and enemies, finds and loses the love of her life, and even has a son.

Sadly, even though the reader now understands the factors behind the decisions made by Elphaba, and even grows to like her, it does not change how her story must end.

Even after Maguire's story of the life of Elphaba, whether she is wicked or indeed good is still up to debate.

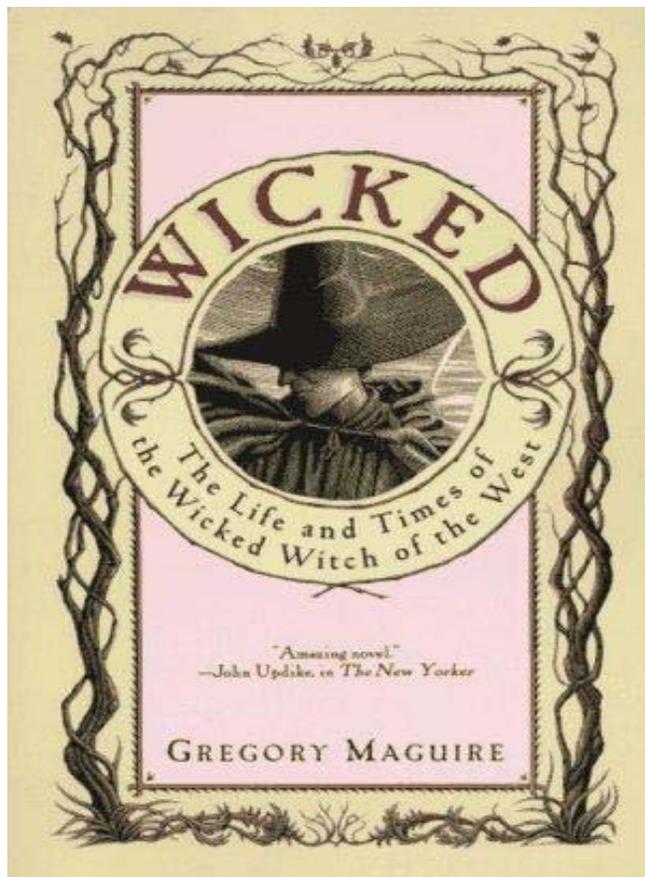
Throughout her life, she did many good things to help change Oz, but she also committed many crimes and endangered many lives to prove her point that Animals should not be discriminated against.

Maguire does a good job of humanizing Elphaba without making her a victim. By the end of the novel, the reader knows that Elphaba did what she did for a reason, but the reader also knows that she made many wrong decisions, and was not

always a good person.

Maguire's novel is an interesting reinvention of the world of Oz, capturing our attention once more after our childhood, to show us that maybe there is more behind the Wicked Witch of the West than her olive complexion.

Because of the popularity of Maguire's novel, *Wicked* was adapted into a Broadway musical in 2003 and is still running today.





## *Brussels' Delights Feed The City*

by Layout Editor

Brussels, the capital of Belgium and the unofficial capital of Europe, is a cultural city that offers fine cuisine and exquisite dining experiences with a grand assortment of delicious beers. What many do not know however is that in the city of Brussels there are many restaurants/food stands that offer many scrumptious meals that are more than satisfying for a very cheap price.

While tourists walk on the streets during the day and people wander around during the night, these shops are always happy to provide convenient treats to their customers. Scattered around the city of Brussels, these restaurants must be sampled before one leaves the city.

The most popular of these restaurants in the BAS high school community is Mykonos. Mykonos lies on Pita Row, a street filled with several pita shops and one big club. The most common item to order here is Gyros. This treat contains pork and white cabbage in pita bread and comes with a garlic sauce. One gyro costs three euros and fills up the average person. The atmosphere in which you feast is a warm Greek setting with the walls painted like places from Greece itself, making the customer very comfortable. The service at Mykonos is very quick and the waiters are very nice. In addition to this, Mykonos is right next to the Gran Plaz of Brussels, making it very convenient for tourists to eat at this location.

Another convenient restaurant is Sultan's, which

is located right next to the metro stop-De Brouckere. The most common food item bought here is the chicken wrap, which is made by mixing chicken and an assortment of vegetables in a tortilla that comes with garlic or picante sauce. This meal costs four euros and satisfies the average person. Unfortunately though, the atmosphere of Sultan's is a bit uncomfortable. The inside is compact and the smell is horrible. The service is quick, but the workers are rude and quiet.

Also, a newly discovered meal that has attained a high reputation is the mitraillete, which you can get right next to the taxi stops and near popular nightlife attractions. A mitraillete contains hamburger meat, onions, salad, and fries. You have a large selection of sauces to choose from such as samurai, garlic, ketchup, and mayonnaise. It costs 3 euros and it is enough to satisfy two people. The service is quick and the fast order cooks are friendly.

All of these mouth-watering foods are the most popular and are always being compared to find out which is the best to eat while downtown. Although some prefer one more than the others, I believe there is a time for everything. If you do not think these places are appealing for your appetite, there are many frite stands and waffle stands that provide the same level of satisfaction.



*Sultan's Durum*



*Mykonos Gyros*





## *Is Our Admin Friend or Foe?*

by Editorials Editor

Have you ever been told you cannot do something, but could not understand why? Many BAS students have. If the administration of Brussels American School is guilty of anything, it is not justifying seemingly questionable disciplinary actions or policies. Indeed, calling the administration's actions misguided tends to be the first and sole reaction. Still, many hold out hope that they have fantastic reasons for their apparent misguided disciplinary ambitions. This reporter will explore the world of crime and punishment in Brussels American School to decide once and for all if the administration is: a) a power abusing cult whose soul purpose is to punish innocent students; b) beautiful angels in disguise who want nothing more than to see the ignorant children be all that they can be in every aspect; or c) something in between. The following includes six relatively recent examples which I investigated.

- A controversial situation occurred during the senior class elections this year. The seniors wanted to run their elections the same way that the SCA runs their's; that is, all executive candidates would run for President, and the second place person would become vice president. After the whole class agreed and the action was carried out, the winner of the vice presidency was recalled.

For those not knowledgeable about our student government, we actually have our own Constitution, which happens to describe in detail how class elections should be held. Seniors had to re-vote for the vice president, which they found an incredible annoyance.

"If the whole class agrees, and it's not hurting anybody, what difference does it make how the vice president gets elected?" asks the current senior class vice president.

A tenured teacher believes it is important for the student government to uphold the Constitution as it is basically the backbone of our student government. This constitution—about 20 years old—took roughly 1.5 years to form. It was formed by the SCA in the early 90's. A representative took it to each class. Each class discussed it for about 2 weeks, then they all voted on it. While there is a process to change the constitution, is this specific topic really worth it?

"There have been many years where this kind of thing could've happened," said the teacher. "It is important that every class runs their elections the same way."

- Certain students were asked to be quiet during lunchtime while eating outside in the Lincoln plaza. "It's

lunch! Why can't we be loud?" complained a student.

The logic behind the apparent madness was that the art teacher was having a class in the nearby art room, and the administration felt it necessary to respect the student's right to learn without distraction.

- Students are not allowed to bring food back into the high/middle school building after lunch. One student pointed out how "we have food in the buildings before lunch, why not after lunch?"

"There's a lot of history on this," said the tenured teacher. "For years students would take their trays and lunches and eat in the hallways. The bell would ring, and they'd just leave food on the ground."

This annoyed a lot of people, and was a special burden on the janitors and cleaners who had to deal with more than just food stains.

"Eventually, the overall decision was to just not let them do it," said the teacher, and so it is.

The principal believes that the pursuit of cleanliness in the school buildings has been greatly relaxed as of late, however she is "sometimes tempted to take the privilege away."

- Why can't a home-schooled student who attends Brussels American School for certain classes graduate from BAS?

"It's my guess that any decision involving home-schooling is way above the principal," said the tenured teacher. He pointed out how in most situations, not limited to home-schooling or athletics, "all we do is follow what all of DoDDs does."

The principal explained clearly that a home-schooled student is not officially a student at BAS as the schooling programs are completely separate. It is possible for a home-schooled student to graduate with BAS, assuming they have earned enough credits, as long as they enroll and turn in transcripts of credits they have earned.

- During a stay in Alconbury's housing before an away game, a male student athlete was caught in a girl's room - specifically, in her door way. This particular student was banned from playing the first half of the homecoming game.

"There are strict rules concerning guys and girls being in each other's rooms," said the tenured teacher. In this certain case, it was reported that the male student was told to leave the girl's room on more than one occasion. "The issue was not crossing the imaginary threshold," said the teacher, but instead the fact that the student refused to cooperate with the authority of the individuals in charge.

*-continued on page 10-*



## For An Old-Fashioned Gym Prom

by Features Editor

Every year the junior class struggles to find new and creative ideas for squeezing, haggling, and cheating money out of the poor innocent bystanders of this school: the parents, of course. I have watched this very unnecessary struggle for several years, and have started to wonder: why can't we just have prom in the gym? I know I am not the only person to think of such a "pre-posterous" idea, since Hollywood has embedded the concept of a high school prom in the gym in every moviegoers mind.

Consider the idea: the class would not have to dump thousands of dollars onto some luxurious chateau that no one can even find. Instead, they could use the money on decorations that could be re-used in the future for *free*. The ever-present MPs would be sufficient protection, so that excess security would not have to be provided for an off-campus location.

Most students I have talked to are under the impression that it would look like the gym they see everyday: unglamorous and ugly.

No one even considered how much a small amount of money could transform our ghastly gym-which seems to be bestowing nightmares in the thoughts of every student-into something far better than merely presentable.

In the time it usually takes the junior class to find the prom location, they could have the decorations bought, a catering service hired, and music selected. If only they would take an optimistic outlook and go with the gym. There would be less of a dire need for fund

raising and the gym would allow for more creativity.

Every year, all the junior class has money for is the location and a (usually) bad catering service. There are never any stunning, fun, or innovative decorations to put up because the money has been "blown," so to speak. What if this year they had a chance to do something new? It is always scary to try something new, but it is not, in fact, a new idea at all.

Once upon a time, your parents went to high school. Probably about seventy-five percent of those parents had their high school prom in their school gymnasium. Both of my parents had their prom in a gym and so did my grandparents. In many popular and trend-setting movies about high school the prom was held in the gym. Look closely and I am sure you will find I am right.

The surprising part, to me at least, is that more boys than girls agree with my idea. Some say that it would be more convenient for transportation and it would be more fun because we would not have to worry about security, as we have in the past. People would have the choice to do something after the prom, seeing as there is a bus stop located at the bottom of the hill leading up to the school.

Many people are actually offended that I think so little of prom, and I do not think of it instead as "the most important night of my life," as it is commonly expressed through Hollywood. Does it really have to be so magical? Why cant prom just be fun?

This is just logic speaking as well as the desire for a traditional *high school* prom, not something equivalent to a wedding.

---

### -Admin continued from page 9-

The particular male denies that he had any previous warnings, but can the administration trust the claims of the accused?

- Have you noticed all of the unnecessary fences throughout the campus, specifically the fences around the fences of the tennis courts? It seems to be a giant waste of money considering there are plans to just tear them down to make room for a new gym anyway. However, this was not our administration's original idea or decision. A safety and security team came through the campus and felt that the fences were necessary to keep students safe. Especially since, at the time, the funding

for the new gym was not approved yet.

Not all students feel the administration is ridiculously strict. One senior says, "They don't mess with me."

However, many students like one sophomore, a "freedom-of-hats" activist, feels that the BAS administration does not "ignore anything."

At any rate, the tenured teacher believes that there is not any problem or topic that does not have room for discussion: "The SCA *can* step in and work with the administration."

This reporter agrees and celebrates that statement, but also hopes that the administration will attempt to make their reasons behind their discipline more transparent.

## *Is Soccer Eclipsing Baseball?*

By Editorials Editor

Did anybody really pay attention to the Major League Baseball (MLB) playoffs? Why doesn't BAS have a baseball or softball team? Baseball seems to be on the decline while soccer, Europe's "heart and soul" sport, has been on the rise in American culture, particularly in youth programs. Is soccer on its way to eclipsing one of the few true American past-times?

The decline of baseball is visible in the faltering television ratings. According to the Baseball Almanac, the past three World Series were the three least watched in baseball television history. A competing women's basketball game drew more viewers than the All-Star game. The New York Times used to plaster Opening Day coverage all over its Sunday sports section, but since 1998, the top half of the page has been devoted to the women's college basketball finals.

As a testament to the lack of enthusiasm in today's sport-fan population: the Mets, in the 1997 regular season, were down by six runs with two outs, and two strikes in the bottom of the ninth while playing

Montreal, then came back to win. Despite this being the biggest comeback in recent years until the Red Sox's comeback against the Yankees in the 2004 playoffs, practically nobody besides local newspapers carried the story.

Furthermore, the decline is visible in the faltering participation of African American athletes in baseball. According to the studies and research of Howard J. Barrow III from *Florida State University*, the number of African Americans participating in the MLB has diminished from 27% to less than 10% since 1975. More than 50% of the decline occurred since 1991. NCAA baseball scholarships are being blamed because college sports, like football, offer full-ride scholarships to more students than baseball has total players on a division 1A team. If a good overall athlete has the opportunity to receive a full-ride scholarship in football or basketball or a partial scholarship for baseball, the choice does not seem that difficult.

Without a doubt, baseball has diminished greatly; but will soccer, which appears to be growing in

the U.S., ever replace the American baseball fan-base?

"I prefer soccer because it's a game of constant motion," says a junior. Indeed, the lack of constant action is a common reason why many people do not watch baseball. This is, of course, not everyone's view.

"Baseball's a sort of family thing for me," says one senior. "My dad gets up at 4 a.m. sometimes just to watch a game." There seems to be a shortage of such dedication to baseball; however, there also appears to be even less people who pay attention to professional soccer.

"I keep up with the Women's World Cup, but I don't keep up with soccer now that it's over," said a junior.

"I follow baseball, not soccer," said a sophomore.

"I don't really follow either, I just like playing soccer better," said a junior.

So is soccer really replacing or out-shining baseball? It appears so in BAS sports, but not everywhere. In the past ten years there have been a number of movements to get a baseball or softball team in BAS, but an overall lack of interest has

doomed each effort.

Of course everyone watches the World Cup, but during regular seasons, the American population of BAS tends to lean more towards baseball.

"I think only Europeans should like soccer, because you guys (Americans) have baseball and softball," says a European senior. "Soccer is European."

"[Baseball's] just... more American," said a sophomore.

Despite baseball's decline, I personally do not see soccer ever eclipsing baseball. Americans tend to lean more towards the sports that require more strategy and thinking, like baseball or football, over a sport with non-stop action like soccer or rugby. The strategic sport popularity allows sports critics to really dig deep into particular topics and make predictions that would not be possible in soccer or rugby. Therefore, despite the fact that interest in baseball is diminishing fantastically, the European fetish that is soccer will never replace America's past-time.





## *Brigands Work Toward D-IV Tournament*

by Sophomore Reporter

The Brigands are 0-6 so far this season, but continue to show improvement with every game.

Last night the Brigands lost a hard fought game against the AFNORTH Lions, 34-60. The leading scorers for the game were the freshmen center and the junior point guard each with 8. The senior center had 10 rebounds and the shooting guard had 6, with the freshman guard adding 4 steals for the Brigands.

The fifth game of the season was against Hanau on Saturday December 15. The Brigands lost with a score of 42-21.

The top scorer was the junior point guard with 10. The shooting guard had six rebounds that game.

That Friday the Brigands played their fourth game of the season also against Hanau. The score was 50-21. The top scorer was the shooting guard with 15. Brussels top rebounder and their assist leader were both out all weekend due to injuries.

In the third game of the season against ISB the score was 47-19. The junior point guard had 2 assists, 3 rebounds, 1 block, and 3 steals. The shooting guard had 5 rebounds and the freshmen center had 6. The senior center had 3 steals.

This season's team has 14 players, an increase in size from last year's 10 players. This year's team also holds seven freshman and six international students, the most for a long time.

"While we have some returning

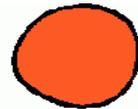
players, it's still a very young team," said The Coach.

The Brigands first games of the season were at Lakenheath, against the much larger Division 1 School. On Friday night, the score was 25-65. The shooting guard grabbed 8 rebounds, the freshmen center had 6, and the junior point guard 6. The junior point guard also had 5 assists and 2 steals, and the freshmen center had 1 block.

The second game on December 8 was also against Lakenheath, with a score of 52-70. The senior center had 16 points and 13 rebounds and the junior point guard had 4 rebounds and 7 assists. The freshmen center had 13 points and the shooting guard had 9 points and 6 rebounds.

The team has six returning players, featuring three seniors: the shooting guard, the senior guard, and the senior center.

"We made a lot of improvements from the first game to the second game against Lakenheath, and come Europeans time we will win," said the sophomore point guard.





## *Lady Brigands End 2007 With Three-Win Streak*

by Sports Editor

As of December 19, 2007 the Lady Brigands are 3-3 overall, and 2-0 in division four games.

Last night against the AFNORTH Lions, the lady Brigands came out on top, winning 37-12. The leading scorer for the Brigands was the shooting guard with 12, followed by the point guard with 11 points and 6 assists, and a center with 9 points. The point guard led the team in rebounds with 11, followed by the forward with 7, and the shooting guard with 5 rebounds. The point guard and the junior guard both had 4 steals.

Last Friday December 15, the Lady Brigands hosted the Hanau Panthers and won their first game of the season with score a of 37-18.

The standout player for the Brigands was the point guard with 13 points, 5 assists and 7 rebounds. The leaders in scoring were the shooting guard with 12 and the starting center with 8. The junior guard, a first year player, had 9 rebounds and the starting center had 6.

"I'm so proud of myself," said the guard, who scored her first points of the season against Hanau.

The Brigands also won their second game against Hanau with a score of 30-20. The point guard had 8 assists, 7 rebounds, 5 steals, and 6 points. The shooting guard led the Brigands in scoring with 20 points. The starting center had 4 rebounds and the shooting guard added 4 steals.

The Brigands faced ISB on December 12, but lost 35-22. The leaders in scoring for the Brigands were a center



Photo by Photography Editor

*The starting center goes up for the jump ball against AFNORTH*

with 13 points and 5 rebounds and the shooting guard with 9 points and 3 assists. The Brigands played without the point guard, 4-year veteran, due



to illness.

On Friday and Saturday December 7/8, the Lady Brigands faced Lakenheath for their first and second games of the season, losing 31-30 and 35-33 respectively.

The leaders in scoring for the Brigands on December 7 were the shooting guard with 13 points and 3 assists and the point guard with 12 points. The point guard also had 6 rebounds, 5 assists, and 2 steals. On December 8 the top scorers were the point guard with 21 points and the shooting guard with 8. A center and the starting center grabbed 6 rebounds each and the Lady Brigands had 6 steals from the shooting guard and 4 assists from the point guard.

"I am very pleased with the girls performance," said the coach. "We lost to D-I Lakenheath by 1 and 2 points, and we could easily have been 3-0."

The Lady Brigands have seven players this year, one more than they did last year. The team consists of two seniors: the point guard and the shooting guard, four juniors, and one freshmen. Only three players are returning from last year, the two seniors and the starting center.

This season the Lady Brigands still have to play Alconbury, Rota, AFNORTH, Menwith Hill, SHAPE, ISB, and St. John's.



## *Wrestlers Begin The Season 2nd At Alconbury, 4th At Ramstein*

by Editor-in-Chief

The first two matches of the 2007-wrestling season have shown success for individuals in many weight classes, and a second place finish at Alconbury and fourth place finish at Ramstein for the team.

Last weekend the Brigands Wrestling team faced five competitors at Ramstein and came out fourth with 121 points, defeating Alconbury with only 102. The Brigands were facing much larger schools, with Heidelberg, Lakenheath, and Ramstein all as D-I schools.

Individually, the Brigands did well during the day. They were able to take first in the 145lb, 130lb and the 152lb weight classes. The Brigands also had a second place finish in the 160lb weight class, and a third place finish in the 119. The 103lb, 135lb, and 285lb wrestlers all placed fourth for the Brigands.

“We had a promising end to 2007,” said the 130lb wrestler.

Before the December 15 meet, the Brigands traveled to Alconbury on December 8. This was the first meet of the year, and the Brigands faced Alconbury, Menwith Hill, Lakenheath, and SHAPE, and were able to



come in second under Lakenheath with 128 points.

The Brigands won the 103lb weight class, the 135lb weight class, the 140lb weight class, the 145lb weight class, and the 152lb weight class. In 160 and 130 the Brigands placed second, and in 119 and 275, the Brigands took third.

“If we get into shape and practice our form, then we should have a good chance at bringing home the D-IV title again,” said the 140lb wrestler.

The wrestling team this year consists of 15 members, 9 of which are returning.

The first meet after Christmas break will be a home meet on January 12. The Brigands will again see Lakenheath, Menwith Hill and Alconbury, but will also be joined by St. John’s, who has a wrestling team for the first time ever. St. John’s main threats so far this year have been in the 135 and 145 weight classes.

The Brigands have four more meets before the qualifying tournament for Europeans.

“A lot can happen between now and then, so I never want to predict anything,” said The Head Coach. “There are a lot of IF’s, but if we continue to improve and if there are no injuries, then we should have a chance of winning this year.”