

With the fall season underway and the winter season approaching, there are many things the Saugus High School Athletic Department can be proud of and can also look forward to. This fall, our athletes at Saugus High School and Belmonte Middle School came out in big numbers and achieved great accomplishments. With the season not over yet, I am proud to write that the varsity field hockey team and girls' varsity soccer team have once again made the State Tournament. Both programs are headed by knowledgeable, dedicated coaches who are extremely eager and optimistic for the Tournament. Barbara Guerante is the head coach for the varsity field hockey team and Chris Coviello is the leader for the girls' varsity soccer team. Time will tell how they will do in the State Tournament, but watching them throughout the season I feel confident they will both do very well!

The varsity football team is working hard and the coaches and kids are working diligently to improve each week. The bright side for the program is the freshman football team. As of today the freshman team is undefeated and has over 20 players on the team. There are many freshmen playing in the varsity games and gaining valuable experience. More importantly, though, the freshman football players are positive and full of confidence. They work hard in practice and work together in the games. They listen to their coaches and they are playing the game the way it should be played- tough!

Jeff Mitchell did a great job with the golf program. The golf program had over 25 players and success was found at both the varsity and JV level. Saugus High School teacher Frank Woods headed the JV team and was an integral part in helping the students learn the fundamentals. Each year the program continues to grow and this year was no different. With high interest in the middle school and at the elementary level, this program has a bright future.

One of the greatest and most instrumental accomplishments this fall was by town officials and Superintendent Langlois. Together they were able to reduce user fees at Saugus High School and help the many families and student-athletes. With the reduction in the user fees, I anticipate there will be higher participation in sports and it will be more likely that athletes will play two to three sports a year. With many communities significantly raising their user fees, Saugus is going in the opposite direction. The user fee has been reduced by \$100.00 and families can receive a rebate check or they can use the credit towards their next sport. Most sports at Saugus High School are now \$250.00 and \$150.00 at the Belmonte Middle School. Saugus offers more sports than most local schools in the area and now a student can try something new without the financial burden. When user fees increase, athletic involvement decreases. Saugus witnessed this years' ago and now neighboring communities are seeing it first hand. I have personally spoken to many students who now plan on playing an additional sport this year. As an Athletic Department we highly encourage all our student-athletes to participate in three sports, and I truly believe this reduction in the user fee will help in reaching our goal.

There is always something happening within the Athletic Department at Saugus High School and Belmonte Middle School. During the fall season we had over 250 high school athletes and 100 middle school athletes playing six different sports. With games often being rescheduled, people wanting to know results of specific games, people wanting necessary paperwork for their son/daughter to play a sport, and people wanting to know about future events, we now have a place for them to be informed. If there is anything you would like to know regarding Saugus High School Athletics, please continue to visit our website: www.saugus.k12.ma.us/District/athletics.htm. Our website will continue to have updated game schedules, all the necessary forms for a child to play a sport, game results, team rosters, 'Student-Athletes of the Month' recipients, future events, and much, much more.

Although we are in early November, it is not too early to bring up the winter season. The Athletic Department will be hosting the 'Winter Sports Registration-Informational Night' on November 12th at 6:00 p.m. at Saugus High School. Any child who plans on playing a winter sport at Saugus High School or at the Belmonte Middle School must attend with a parent/guardian. All parents are encouraged to visit the website and print out the forms to register their child for a sport on this night.

This winter Saugus High School and the Belmonte Middle School will offer six sports, which will be comprised of nineteen teams. We will offer wrestling for the second year, girls' ice hockey, swim, and middle school hockey for the first time. These sports often are not provided by schools, but we strive to give all our students the possibility to play a sport they will love. Other sports, such as basketball, cheerleading, track and hockey are expecting a large number of players and success this winter.

Though I am eager about the upcoming winter season I am not looking past the fall season. The State Tournament will begin shortly and I expect the teams to have a lot of success. I can't stress enough how hardworking and dedicated my coaches are at Saugus High School and at the Belmonte Middle School. I encourage everybody to attend some games this fall to see for yourself. Don't forget that rival Peabody is back in town this Thanksgiving....Go Sachems!