



STAB AND RAISE Fencers take part in the first tournament of the year Sept. 27 at the Hockaday School.

# FOILED again

As St. Mark's and Hockaday's only dual athletic program, the fencing team is different from other teams on campus. Practicing in Spencer Gym, the team runs, stretches, does conditioning, and works on footwork together before splitting into their groups for the rest of practice. With tournaments scheduled almost every weekend, the team continuously strives for improvement and to some team members, improvement is one of the best parts of the sport.

**SENIOR KUNAL DIXIT** "The best part of the program is watching the younger guys improving over the season. It's really amazing to see how the young fencers develop."

**JUNIOR BILL DANNENMAIER** "Actually, fencing can be difficult. It's a lot of endurance because you are wearing three layers of clothing, so it gets really hot really quickly. It's also a lot of quick movements. You have to be quick and have a lot of endurance."

**HOCKADAY SENIOR CATHERINE KIRBY** "I like the dual program because it gives girls the opportunity to fence, and I have always wanted to fence. It's also really beneficial for St. Mark's and Hockaday to fence each other because then we get to fence against different people."

**HOCKADAY SENIOR MARY ZHONG** "It's a lot more technical than most sports. There's a lot of different stuff like footwork, but there's also specifics about your weapon. The knowledge of how scoring and points work makes fencing special."

**SOPHOMORE EDDIE YANG** "The competitive atmosphere at tournaments is really special. The atmosphere is completely different, and it's a really cool experience. Tournaments help teach how to fence against different styles, something we don't get too much of in practice."

**SOPHOMORE RENÉ REEDER** "Seeing how much I improve from last year, and even my tournament results from the beginning of the trimester all the way to the end of the trimester, is really cool. It's a really good feeling to know you've improved."

**SENIOR BRODY LADD** "My favorite part of the program is team dinners. It's something we're looking to start doing this year to help increase team camaradery."

**HEAD COACH HASSAM MAHMOUD** "The hardest part about fencing is you have to give them everything. We have to teach them everything. You can watch other sports and get a feel for them, but you can't really watch fencing."

## WHAT BEING A buddy MEANS

**1** First grade teacher Kay Carrio They start to become more involved with the school. If their senior buddy is a football player, they want to go to the game. You start seeing the first graders at the [water] polo tournaments and at the swim meets or coming to the orchestra performance if their senior buddy's involved in that.

Senior Forest Cummings-Taylor Well, I'm a twelve-year guy, so I'm getting a chance to interact with a first grader in the way my twelfth grade buddy interacted with me when I was in first grade. So I'm continuing the St. Mark's tradition.

**3** First grader William Taylor We get to interact with the older buddies and we get to know what we would be doing as seniors. We get to know what we have in common. We can also invite them places like over for dinner or a birthday party.

Senior Richard Jiang Being a senior buddy is really important to me because it gives me the chance to be a role model for the lower schoolers, and they look up to me.

**5** First grade teacher Teri Broom I think it benefits the seniors because it helps them remember what's important. They get so busy and they are thinking about college and classes and all the things that they have on their schedules. Having a little guy to look up to them reminds them 'this is what's really important. And it may remind them what kind of role model they want to be to the little guys.



NEW FRIENDS Senior Jack Gordon meets his first grade buddy, Cooper Guiler, son of basketball coach Greg Guiler, for the first time.



GIVING BACK Fathers treat the students to a lunchtime monotony breaker, giving them anything from root beer floats to ice cream.

## taking A BREAK

"What's a monotony breaker?" Freshman Sam Schroeder repeated the two words, monotony breaker, in his head several times after asking his classmate what it was while they were on their way to the amphitheater.

"It's just when the parents of our grade give us food every few months," replied his classmate.

After experiencing the first monotony breaker of his St. Mark's career, Schroeder realized monotony breakers aren't just for good food, nor an end to a streak of repetition; but he knew there was more to them than that.

"The parents brought great food," the first-year Marksmen said, "It was also a great way for our classmates to come together."

This was Schroeder's first time experiencing an event like this at any school.

"I didn't have anything like this at my old school," Schroeder said, "but I think there should've been. Things like this force the grade to come together and socialize."

Sophomore Liam Sohn felt the same way about monotony breakers bringing the grade together. He anxiously awaited the next one.

"It unites the whole grade together with delicious food," Sohn said. "During normal 10:30 periods, everyone is doing different activities, but the monotony breaker brings all the class members together, and I can't wait for the next one!"

## turning OFF THE SCREEN

EVERY YEAR in Lower School, students are challenged to go a week without any electronics.

This event, dubbed "TV Turnoff Week," is put on to get the students to put down the electronics that have become so important to the youth of today.

The goal of the week is to not only get the lower schoolers to stop using electronics, even if only for a short period of time, but to also encourage kids to spend more time being active. The prize if you complete the challenge: a free dress day.



GAME CHANGER By turning off the electronics for a week, the mentality of the lower schoolers changes from one focused on the screen to a more active and studious mindset.



REAL TALK Discussing the benefits of having the TV turned off, lower schoolers experience a more active week.

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