

# crowning moment

*'When they gave me my crown, I felt like a king.'*  
-Jonny Versteegh

Both hands thrown up in the air, wearing a paper gold crown, and a smile stretched from one side of his face to the other, senior Jonny Versteegh was all over Twitter with the caption "Vote Jonny for Homecoming King."

On homecoming night on the 50-yard line, he exchanged his paper crown for a real one. The whole student section burst out in cheers.

"When they gave me my crown, I felt like a king," Jonny said. "Everybody was supporting and cheering for me. My friends Tyler, Austin and TJ were there cheering me on."

Jonny's dad, Bruce Versteegh, never thought this would happen.

"I was very much in shock," Mr. Versteegh said. "I was very proud of the high school. It shows a lot of character from the kids in the school to support him and vote a special needs child for homecoming king. People with disabilities can overcome some of their limitations and build that relationship with the student body."

Special education teacher Shelly Kramer said the same thing.

"When Jonny was announced winner, I dropped my phone," Mrs. Kramer said. "I was so excited. Kids with special needs don't get a whole lot of recognition, especially school-wide recognition."

I was really proud of the student body."

Students ran the whole campaign.

"Last year, when Jonny was selected to be a Golden Ambassador, it came to our attention that a lot of people knew him," Kramer said. "So, then we put a bug in PALS ears that we were going to campaign for Jonny to be homecoming king. I don't know if he fully understood what it meant, but he loved getting his picture taken for the posters."

PALS senior Sage Crawford started the social media campaign to nominate Jonny for king.

"I'm in the PALS program, and two out of the four days we're in Structured Teaching Classes (STC)," Sage said. "Mrs. Kramer brought to my attention that Jonny wanted to run for homecoming king, but people didn't really know about him. So I decided to get it out there."

Sage was in the stands, supporting Jonny.

"As soon as they announced his name, we all literally jumped for joy," Sage said. "Johnny gets overwhelmed very easily, so in the moment, when everyone was excited he didn't really understand what had just happened. But, as time passed and everyone congratulated him back in the stands, it dawned on him that he was 'the king.'"

As 'the king,' Jonny assumed the role and began high-fiving all of his supporters.

"In the student body, a lot of people don't get to see the STC kiddos in their own element," Sage said. "We don't get to explore their personalities. A lot of people don't really understand what it meant to Jonny to have the whole student body behind him, but now they finally had the chance to."

by Udani Satarasinghe; background photo by Ulises Velez



## the Court



special olympics  
Corry Hale  
Caroline Kooker



clubs  
Kaleb Gorman  
Sophia Salbador



fine arts  
David Funes  
Brenna Whitten



athletics  
Baylee Trice  
Rickey Fantroy



beau & sweetheart  
Robbie Davila  
Lauren Cram

photos by Ulises Velez

### royal flush

After being announced as the homecoming king and queen, seniors Johnny Versteegh and Raeshelle Segovia pose on the football field. Raeshelle was escorted by her mom and accompanied by her entire family who brought her flowers when she won. "At first I didn't realize they called my name but once I realized they did I started cheering with my mom who freaked out," Raeshelle said. "I was happy to win with Johnny because he's a really sweet guy and he talks a lot -- just like me." background photo by Ulises Velez



David Funes



Aleyam Velazquez

### on the move

(top) At the beginning of the game, juniors Noah Metzger and Dylan Atkins play with streamers thrown down from the crowd while the rest of the Headhunters run the flags. "It was my favorite game of the year because the school spirit was the best out of any of the other games," Noah said. "All the homecoming events that week like the spirit days led up to the game."

### happy hug

After being announced as sweetheart, senior Lauren Cram hugs senior Gracie Morrison. Gracie was also nominated for sweetheart but was supportive and happy for Lauren when she won. "I was really shocked because Gracie is one of the sweetest people I know, and I thought she would win for sure," Lauren said. "That was one of the best nights because as a senior everything goes by so fast, especially football season."

# come rain or shine

## Severe weather causes two-day football game

Ready for the district match-up that Thursday night, the varsity football team jogged onto the field. Greeted with the usual -- the band, Marquettes, and a roaring student section -- the team prepared to play under the lights. Well, at least, until the rain began to pour and lightning flashed, delaying the game.

"It looked like the weather was going to be there all night," varsity football coach Jeff Smith said. "So we pushed it to Friday during the day and Friday was a weird atmosphere. You could even hear someone on the Wylie side easily. It was just kind of an eerie feeling."

Barely 50 people lined the stands on the second day, and the team faced Wylie East with less energy and spirit than the night before.

"I've been in a few different games like this," Smith said, "and it's hard on both teams to have a wet uniform and play really late, and then get up the next day and pick up right where you left off. You know, on Thursday night, there's a lot of people there. When you come back on Friday, it's daytime, which is real different. The stands are real empty and it's real quiet. The band's not there, the cheerleaders aren't there, so it's just different. Wylie East didn't want to come back on Friday and neither did we. So, we waited as long as we could to try and get the game in, but we just couldn't do it."

However, Coach Smith didn't see delaying the game as a complete disadvantage. "We wanted to win the game and by Friday, we wanted to use that as an advantage," he said. "When you start talking about changes and in sports in general, we talk a lot about the process. We talk a lot about routine and doing things a certain way. We have the same meetings and same routines pre-game, post-game. Whenever that gets thrown off, it's usually the team that handles that the best."

Sophomore running back Matt Gadek was uncomfortable with the situation but tried to make the best of it.

"It changed the game because there was no intensity in the crowd," Gadek said, "so no momentum really shifted between the teams. Everyone was just drained of energy since the game was two days long, and no one really wanted to play. We just wanted to get it over with. I felt less motivated. The first night felt like a real varsity football game. The second part felt like a pee-wee game, where no one was watching."

by Neelam Bohra

### ready to drop

Side by side with their teammates, seniors Rickey Fantroy, Caleb Stricklin, Aidan Mulligan, and Mark Quillan meet up in the coin toss at midfield. The rain didn't surprise the team since they knew about the possibility beforehand. "It was pretty exhausting," Rickey said. "Having to play a portion until midnight, coming to school the next day, then playing the remainder of the game."

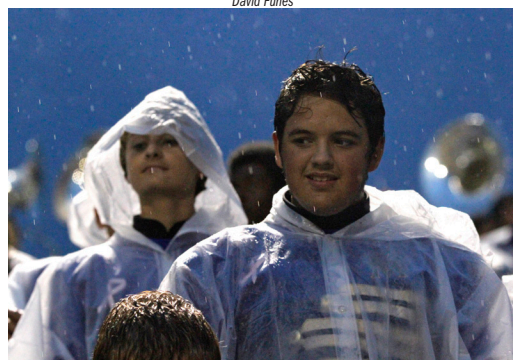
### show time

Backward in the air, senior Joseph Robinson misses a catch and slams to the ground. The two-day, crowdless game didn't reach his expectations. "It just took our focus away," Joseph said. "Our fans push us to do better, we put on a show for them."



### early releases

As the pouring rain hit the instruments, senior Jordon Justus enjoys the moment with his band family. The band left before the first half was over to protect their instruments. "I was very surprised," Jordon said. "We had never left so early during a game."



### two on one

Ready on the snap, sophomore Troydell Griffin covers his side of the field on a play not intended for him. Focusing on a two-day game with no support was complicated for the sophomore wide receiver. "The rain beat us basically," Troydell said. "It affected us because we were not ready for a second day of game."



### momentum run

In action through the field, sophomore Matt Gadek slips off defending players for a gain in yards. Without a student section present, Matt did his best to keep his energy going. "Usually when we get a good play the fans start cheering," Matt said. "Most of the time we get momentum from the support."

### game time

Running through the inflatable lion, senior Kristian Maya carries the team flag at the original start time for the game. On the second day, the game started without the traditional run-through. "It did not feel the same," Kristian said. "It felt more like a practice or a scrimmage."

# triple threat

Personality, passion, performance make for fan favorite with students

The gym held its breath as the basketball flew off sophomore Jacob Shaw's fingertips. The ball sailed to the net in slow motion before gracefully falling through. And at that moment, the whole gym erupted into cheers. Some people jumped up, some people whistled, but every single person had a smile on their face. He had sunk a 3-point shot.

"I felt really good after hitting those threes," Jacob said. "because I didn't know if they were going to go in. I was happy that the whole school was cheering me."

Being the MVP of the game meant a lot to him, but he liked coaching the student team the most.

"I gave the whole team advice, while I was coaching, to play hard," Jacob said. "Getting to call the time outs and getting to tell them to keep playing hard was my favorite part."

Coach Jennifer Hodnett, Jacob's teacher and coach of Partners PE, initially thought he would only be coaching.

"The special ed. teachers discussed it and thought it'd be a good spot for Jacob because he loves sports," Coach said. "We thought he could be the coach of the student team. That's all I thought he was going to do. But the players, the boys and girls on the student team, actually asked him to see if he wanted to play. And so, that's when one of them switched a jersey with him, and he got out there."

*"I felt really good after hitting those threes, because I didn't know if they were going to go in. I was happy that the whole school was cheering me."*

When he hit the three, she could not have been more proud.

"I was thrilled, I had my phone out, I was videoing and taking pictures," Hodnett said. "I was thrilled more so because the kids asked him if he wanted to play. That was probably the highlight of the game for me. But then, on top of that, to have him shoot and hit a three? I didn't know it was in him. So, it

was pretty awesome to see."

Varsity basketball player Alex Villarino just wanted Jacob to hit a three, and passed him the ball as much as possible. After a couple of missed shots, his passes turned into assists that resulted in four 3-pointers.

"It was really cool for him," Alex said. "I really wanted him to get an opportunity to play because he doesn't usually get an opportunity to play in front of so many people. So, I thought it was pretty good he got to get out there and take some shots. We really just wanted to see him score. That was our main goal."

Players on the student team weren't his only supporters. On the sidelines, senior Morgan Inglis, his partner in Partners PE cheered.

"When I got to see him in front of the whole school, I was really happy for him," Morgan said. "I couldn't stop smiling. I was just so proud of him, that he was having fun, and just to see the reaction of the whole school actually cheering him on was really cool."

She loves his determination in sports because she believes he is a great person in general.

"I just encourage him to always do his best, and, say he didn't make a shot, I'd have to tell him, 'It's okay. It's not always about winning—it's about having fun,'" Morgan said. "So, he went out there and tried to make the best of it, no matter if he made shots or not. And he's so sweet, he's so funny, he's always trying to make jokes."

His sweet personality and enthusiasm were evident to everyone that day, and Coach Hodnett felt beyond happy that the student body appreciated it. "It was another thing to make me proud of being at McKinney High—the whole student body was cheering," she said. "I mean, the gym was packed. There were no available seats. And the entire student body was one, paying attention and noticing someone different was on the floor, and two, was cheering for him to score. And then when he scored, the place just went nuts. I think that says a lot about the student body here at McKinney High School, and how we are very different from other high schools."

by Neelam Bohra



## beat the half

During half time, senior Dominic Daniels dances to "Rainy Day" by Tincup. He thought it would be nice to put up a show in front of so many people. "I was nervous at first, but then I just did my thing," Dominic said. "The game was pretty good, and I think my performance was OK"

## raw game

After scoring against the teachers, senior Shawn Pitts and junior Tony Lyons jump in excitement. Shawn thought his \$2 ticket was worth it. "Some of the teachers weren't as good as they thought," Shawn said. "They showed me something I've never seen before."



Aleyam Velazquez

Aleyam Velazquez



Ulises Velez



Aleyam Velazquez

## team home

Sitting among her friends, seniors Demi Davenport, Katy Kidd, Lauren Cram, and Haley Price cheer on the student team. "I think the purpose was to create a more friendly-competitive environment," Demi said. "It kind of just brought the students together in the gym supporting each other."

## ready for show

At the basketball game against the faculty, senior Tanner Bouk lays up to score. Students paid \$2 to watch the game sixth and seventh periods. "It was exciting to bring the school together," Tanner said. "I thought it was a good warm up game."



Ulises Velez

## still winning

Huddled around coach Jacob Shaw, seniors Alex Villarino, Isaias Sanchez and sophomore JaMiya Braxton talk strategy. As expected, the students won the game. "They were good, but, of course, we were better," JaMiya said. "If our coaches had played, it would have been much more intense."



Ulises Velez

## the other side

On the sideline, Mr. Michael Bennett, Ms. Bridget Dunsmore, Coach Phillip Meaker, and Officer Curtis Logan, cheer on their team. The faculty wanted to show the students they were more than just educated. "We can have fun, not just be serious in class," Coach Meaker said. "We can be humble by showing our talents and joke around about it."

# beat the odds

## Freshman wins talent show

As the spotlights soaked the stage in an aura of yellow and gold, a glare of white blinded freshman Jason Addington from the audience. His heart raced to the roar of his friends' and family's cheering. He almost lost it. But then, a groove shook his body, and he remembered all the practice and effort that had gone into this moment.

Jason began beat boxing when he was eight, and has practiced every day since then. "I first discovered it on YouTube," Jason said. "There was one guy giving tutorials, and I started copying him. I would annoy my parents all the time with it. I would beat box in the shower. I would beat box everywhere and anywhere. After a year or so, I became a little more advanced. People thought it was cool, and they thought I was cool."

Beat boxing to an old classic, 'Elmo', and Michael Jackson's Billy Jean, junior Jason Addington won first place in this year's "McKinney High's Got Talent."

"My bit was called the 'Evolution of Music,'" Jason said. "I chose those songs because they are the ones that really stick out. Most of the audience has probably heard the songs before, and they got to compare my version to the original."

As first place winner, Jason received \$300.

"I was really nervous," Jason said. "It wasn't my first time beatboxing in front of a crowd, but it was the first time I performed for a cash prize. I spent some of the money on shoes and games, and I gave a little more than 10 percent of it to St. Jude's hospital because I didn't want to spend all the money myself."

However, he did not expect to win.

"There was a lot of amazing talent," Jason said. "I did not expect me to come in first place. There was one dancer named Dom, who I thought would beat me by a long shot. He was pretty amazing. I honestly thought he should've won."

TJ Thornton, who won second place as part of the Pride Pack, was also a fan of Dominic Daniels' performance.

"The other performances were really good," TJ said. "I liked all of them, but my favorite one was the dude dancing. He did flips and stuff. It was awesome."

Composed of nine students, boys and girls, the Pride Pack's performance was led by Terrence Sumter, who played the violin and sang.

"I was too happy to be nervous," Terrence said. "I like to sing, but I love to play the violin. I like the violin because it can be in rock and roll; it can be in any genre of music. The ending of our performance was my favorite part, because everyone started cheering."

The Pride Pack sang a rendition of 'I Believe I Can Fly.'

"We chose the song because it gave other kids the courage to not give up on their dreams," TJ said. "Plus, everyone likes it. It's not my favorite song, but it's a close second."

Jason shares a similar message.

"I've wanted to be a musician for a very long time, and now I'm actually doing it with my mouth. It's pretty cool," Jason said. "If people ever think of doing something extraordinary, whether it be being an actor, actress- anything that's really up there, just go for it."

by Udani Satarasinghe; background photo by Abigail Anderson

## the acts

Lucifer's Sunday Slacks - "Take On Me"

Loren Pendergrass and Treasure Treanor - "Honeybee"

Alyssa Wisdom - "Hanging Tree"

Christian Rushing - "Life of a Teenage Weirdo"

Jason Addington - "Evolution of Music"

Eva Grace - "House of Gold"

Alan Martinez and Briana Ginorio - "I'll follow you into the dark"

Kameron Oliver - "Little More"

Jordan Yonas - "Stay"

Gage Henning - "Smooth Criminal"

Zach Olila - "Heart Breaker"

Isabella Meier - "What's Up"

Dominic Daniels - "The Gangster Dom"

Kayleigh Doyle - "Space Oddity"

Pride Pack - "I Believe I can Fly"

Kate Pepper - "Kate Kicked Cancer's Butt"

Thalia Salazar - "Like I'm Gonna Lose You"

## the hosts:

Audrey Evans - President

Megan Lafferty - Vice President

## out of the shadows

As the eighth act of the talent show, sophomore Kameron Oliver dances to "Little More" by Chris Brown because he related to the lyrics and felt moved by it. "I felt famous because so many people clapped and screamed my name," Kameron said. "I couldn't believe that they loved what I did."



Chelsea Salinas

## in the moment

To honor David Bowie after his death, sophomore Kayleigh Doyle sings "Space Odyssey" while playing the ukulele. "I love showing people the things I can do," Kayleigh said. "Playing the ukulele and presenting myself to a crowd is just one of my many outlets."



Abigail Anderson

## move to the beat

(Background photo) Dominic Daniels performs to a mix he created of "Gangster" by Blvck Hvnd, the dub step version of "Beat It" by Michael Jackson and "Hotline Bling" by Kehlani and Cha. "I practiced the song in my mind to learn the process of how each rhythm and hits go," Dominic said. "But dancing with the song was all freestyle based on musicality."



Abigail Anderson

## solo star

Freshman Alyssa Wisdom performed a contemporary dance to "The Hanging Tree" from "The Hunger Games." "It's nerve wrecking at first, but once I'm in it I don't even remember that the audience is there," Alyssa said. "I actually only made up half of the dance and the rest was improv."



### career high

In the game against Lovejoy, seniors Zanee Logan, Isaias Sanchez and Shawn Pitts celebrate Isaias's dunk on his opponent. The Lions came out victorious against the Lovejoy Leopards, winning 82-53. "I was so excited," Isaias said. "It was probably my most achieved moment in my basketball career."



### pushing through

During a timeout against McKinney North, Coach Wes Watson tells his team the game plan. The Lions lost after a three point buzzer beater that would've tied the game was ruled a two pointer. "He gave us some hope even though we were down coming out of that timeout," junior Camryn Givens said. "His game plan made me think we could really win."

### side shot

At the game against Frisco, junior E.J. Clark jumps and shoots the ball over a defender. This was first game of their season and the Lions beat Frisco with seven new varsity members on the team. "It was just a great feeling playing with new people for the first time," E.J. said. "My goal is to get better every time I touch a ball."



In the air, senior Alex Vilarino shoots the ball while three opponents guard him. The boy's basketball team beat Frisco 84-71. "I love playing and being around a great group of guys on and off the court," Alex said. "Also being able to play with your best friends gives you a feeling you can't get anywhere else."

# on the line

## Lions lose Crosstown Showdown after buzzer beater ruled two pointer

As the 3-point shot swished through the net at the end of regulation time of the Crosstown Showdown and the crowd burst into cheers, senior Alex Vilarino thought he had just sent the game into overtime. But his foot was on the line. The shot was ruled a 2-pointer and the Lions lost to North 67-68.

"When I shot it and it left my hand, it felt like it was going in," Alex said. "Whenever it went through the basket it seemed like it was a tie game. It was pretty crazy, hearing everyone celebrating in the background and all your teammates getting hype and stuff."

Senior Shawn Pitts had no doubts that Alex would make the shot.

"I knew it was going to go in because that's his jumper," senior Shawn Pitts said. "I immediately looked down and I saw that his foot was on the line. Everybody was debating, but I was telling everyone around me it was a 2-pointer because I was looking right at his feet."

Shawn believed the shot could have changed the outcome of the game.

"If he would've made that and sent the game in to overtime, I think we would have won that," Shawn said. "His jumper is usually a 3."

During a timeout, Coach Watson drew up a play that wasn't intended for Alex to shoot it.

"It started off as a set play but it kind of broke down so he just shot it," senior CJ Givens said. "It seemed like a 3 but obviously when you go back and look at all the videos that people had, it was obviously a 2."

After the shot was ruled a 2-pointer, fans from both schools took the controversy to Twitter.

"There was a lot of videos and stuff," CJ Givens said. "People were arguing from our school in their school

talking about if it was a 3 and people thought we got cheated and stuff. There was a lot of drama going on."

Junior Camryn Givens thought the ref made the right call on the shot.

"I was pretty mad at first because I thought it was a 3," Camryn said. "It looked like a 3, but when you go back and look at it, the shot was obviously a 2 so you can't be mad at it, just disappointed."

Because it was the Crosstown Showdown, it was a high intensity game.

"Pretty much everybody is friends with all the McKinney North players so it's friendly competition," Camryn said. "But we still talked trash. Everyone from both sides is so competitive and everyone wants to win, so you know it gets intense."

The team took this as a learning experience for the next time they played them.

"From that game we took what we needed to do better and tried to put it into the second game but shots weren't falling," Camryn said. "There's really nothing you can do about that."

In the end, the boys agreed that it wasn't the shot that lost them the game.

"We missed a lot of free throws and had some defensive breakdowns and stuff like that," CJ said. "If we could've cleaned that up it wouldn't have had to come down to a last shot. But at the end of the day, it is what it is."

by Nicole Stuessy and Zanee Logan

VARSITY BASKETBALL	EJ CLARK	CAMRYN GIVENS	CJ GIVENS	TONY LYONS	ALEX VILARINO
	18.5	179	2.8	3.2	18.8
	POINTS PER GAME	POINTS THIS SEASON	REBOUNDS PER GAME	REBOUNDS PER GAME	POINTS PER GAME