

# putting the **I** in **TEAM**

Students venture outside traditional team practices to enhance training

By Erin Kaled & Sonny Mulpuri  
STAFF REPORTERS

On season and off, athletes often follow their own training regimens to improve on aspects of their game that weren't as polished as others. Students choose to pay for private lessons from a private coach in order to personally grow. Even though the concept of teamwork diminishes using individual lessons, the players themselves are improving so their teams can become better as well.

Private lessons have varying drills that are practiced depending on the coach and how long the lesson usually is. Many times during the off-season in baseball, teammates may get together to hit around, play catch or work on their mechanics, especially if they are a part of a team outside of school. Sophomore Jack Flynn takes private lessons to improve his game so when the baseball season comes around, he is ready to go.

"You're able to work better with your teammates and get to know them more," Flynn said. "Lately, I've

been taking them for outfield and hitting. Every so often, I'll be working on pitching."

Every sport has different training. In tennis, the student usually practices how to serve, forehand, and backhand. Athletes get to choose the parts of their games that they want to improve, and the coach spends the amount of time available in the lesson to correct it.

Sophomore Blake Danna has taken private tennis lessons since middle school and has seen a direct correlation between taking extra lessons and performance.

"The people who take private lessons will learn strategy and how to play better," Danna said. "The people who don't take privates (lessons) just continue to play the same."

Many believe lessons' effects on teamwork depend on the sport at hand. Not all varsity coaches teach lessons, but students are not required to select their normal coach for their private lessons. Since not all teammates have the same coaches for individual lessons, athletes learn different techniques.

"Everybody has the opportunity to take private lessons," varsity tennis coach John Van Alst said. "It's however people choose to use their spare time. I don't necessarily think that if we (both) took private lessons, and you did better than me, that wouldn't be that you tried harder or you worked harder."

Different coaches can also mean students develop at different levels, which can pose a problem when the regular season commences. However, some athletes believe that the chance to play with a coach separately can actually improve their game and they could share their knowledge with their teammates.

"As long as everyone has the equal opportunity to practice with their coach alone, I think spending extra time with the coach is fair," junior Ashley Carroll said.

Some athletes may think that if a varsity coach gives private lessons, there will be some bias towards that athlete during the season. A coach could develop favoritism towards that specific player, and that player might also receive more attention at

practices during the season. This can negatively affect teamwork because one individual is being focused rather than the whole team together.

However, sophomore Ruth McCuen doesn't believe that the varsity coach giving lessons is an unfair advantage or reduces teamwork.

"I think it's fair because even if you're on JV, you can still take lessons with the varsity coach to get more skill or figure out what you need to improve on to get on varsity," McCuen said.

Private lessons could be taken as an advantage and disadvantage depending on the personality and possible favoritism from the coach. Nonetheless, many athletes believe they will do no harm and will actually help the team in many ways.

"They're good because they help you with the things you need to work on individually to get better," Flynn said. "Everybody still needs to work on something. Everybody's not the best at everything."



JACK FLYNN

ABOVE: Sophomore Jack Flynn steps up to the plate.  
RIGHT: Sophomore Ruth McCuen tosses the ball up as she prepares to serve.



RUTH MCCUEN

## "Staying Strong" gala to raise funds for Aulph scholarship

By Olivia Robinson  
STAFF REPORTER

With orange classroom walls, jazz-singing fish and annual red-velvet Christmas suits, Parcels Spanish teacher and North JV football coach Brian Aulph had a lasting effect on his students. Aulph died in 2013.

On Friday, Apr. 29, the Brian M. Aulph Memorial Committee is hosting the "Staying Strong" gala to help preserve his legacy as well as raise funds for the Brian Aulph Attitude and Effort Award. The gala will be from 7 p.m.-1 a.m. at Barrister Gardens in St. Clair Shores.

The award is for student athletes that demonstrate the virtues Aulph valued.

"An ideal candidate for the award would be an athlete who has displayed outstanding attitude and effort during their participation in Grosse Pointe North Athletics," Aulph's wife, Holly Aulph said. "Nominations can be submitted by head coaches, counselors or teammates."

Class of 2015 alumna Nikki Haggerty remembers the impact Brian had as a teacher.

"This scholarship compared me to a man that has such a huge impact on so many people and on myself as well," Haggerty said. "Mr. Aulph had a way of conveying his wisdom to everyone with every word he spoke."

Haggerty was honored with the award and scholarship as a senior in 2015 and said that receiving it inspired her to continue using Brian as an inspiration.

Another Class of 2015 Alum Joe Ciaravino said he uses Brian's words to fuel his inspiration to endure grueling races and other aspects of his life.

"Mr. Aulph always emphasized that there were two things you

could control in a situation—your attitude and your effort," Ciaravino said. "You are the only one that determines what your attitude is going to be like and only you can give your best effort."

Ciaravino remembers the patience Brian showed him while on an ice-fishing trip, assisting him rather than catching his own fish.

"He always made sure everyone was having a good time and taken care of," Ciaravino said.

Being a student in Brian's class meant learning life lessons and Spanish at the same time.

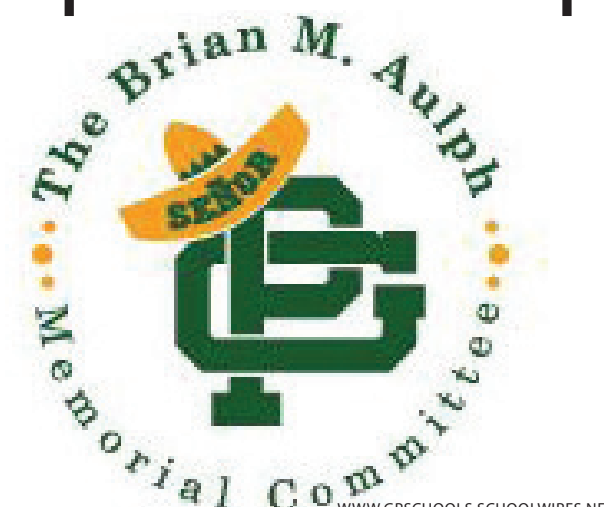
"The day he told our class that his son was diagnosed with cancer, he broke down into tears in front of our classroom. The next day he came in with a smile on his face," Haggerty said. "He continued to be strong throughout his son's cancer treatment, but through his actions he allowed us all to learn that vulnerability does not always mean weakness, but rather showed it can lead to strength as well."

The gala will include a variety of activities including dinner, dancing, a silent auction and 50/50 raffle.

Proceeds from the raffle and auction will go to the Sand Castles Camp Erin-Detroit Area, a local organization dedicated to support children who have experienced the loss of a loved one. The organization is close to the Aulph family.

"Our two children, Addy and Nicholas, have attended this camp several times, and it has aided greatly to their healing since Mr. Aulph's passing," Holly said. "We are very excited for the gala as we continue to honor Mr. Aulph's love for his students and his children. Everyone in the community is welcomed to attend."

To attend the event call (586) 792-1500 and reference the gala. More information can be found at [www.gpschools.schoolwires.net/aulphgala](http://www.gpschools.schoolwires.net/aulphgala).



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ABOVE: The late Brian Aulph poses in his classroom at Parcels Middle School.