

BANDING TOGETHER. “The atmosphere in a tough game is really tense. The team can feel it all together, knowing we still have to function as a unit to win the game. In a strange way, it is somewhat calming in these situations because you know you are ready for whatever happens,” Kyle Kramer (’16) said.

NO PAIN NO GAIN

Soccer team dedicates spring break to intensive preseason conditioning

As the Monday of spring break approached, the dragging of the feet and the dreading began to intensify for members of the men’s soccer team. When the alarm started blaring before 6 a.m., they knew they were in for a week from hell.

“Monday morning is usually the hardest workout,” defender Caleb Schreiber (’16) said. “It’s always tough, and it’s the first of the week.”

With grueling four-mile runs with a 30-minute time limit as well as back to back miles under seven and half minutes, players were pushed to their breaking points in their fitness over the course of the week.

“My intentions for spring break are to really push the players,” head coach Spencer Steffy said. “It was a week focused on gaining our fitness back and doing a lot of basic training stuff on the ball to get back into the swing of things.” My favorite part of playing soccer is the team aspect of it. It’s amazing when you are able to string some passes together and slice right through a defense.

Steffy said he was proud of what the team accomplished over their break from school. “All in all, I was very happy with the group of players who completed everything we did over spring break and pushed through everything we did,” Steffy said.

Although the week caused physical

stress and fatigue for the players, they did find the bright side of things during the week. “It’s always exciting for the season to start,” Schreiber said. “Even if the practices are tough, it’s always fun to get back into the swing of things,” Eric Sesterhenn (’16) said. “My favorite part about practice is getting to play with my teammates once again and seeing the improvement over the offseason.”

Truthfully, Sesterhenn had already been in the zone before spring break rolled in. “I trained very hard over the offseason this year. With a senior heavy team this year, we decided to organize some lifting and conditioning excercises. I usually would run four times a week, some of those days being distance and some sprints, and then lifting the other three days. Also, over the off season, [Steffy] hosts open gym in the high school gym where we can get a touch on the ball and really go after each other to get ready for the season,” Sesterman said.

Though tough, the players were agreed that the spring break practices were very beneficial in getting the team back into playing shape and skill. “It sets the tone for the season,” goalkeeper Aaron lehl (’16) said. “We could be relaxing and enjoying spring break on a beach, but we don’t want to be outworked, so we use that time to get better.”

by Jason Rathjen

GAME FACE. In a Cedar Valley showdown against metro foe Waterloo West, **Harrison Hall (’19)** makes a break. Though the Tigers lost this April 28 contest, Hall was focused on competing. “It is invigorating when people go all out, and it’s awesome to share the success of my teammates,” he said. “When I’m playing, I definitely get in the zone. I don’t hear the parents or audience, just my coaches and teammates. I always stay on my toes to be ready to react to the game, so that keeps my adrenaline going whenever I’m on the field.” *Photo by Logan Cole*



KICKIN’ AND SCREAMIN’. In one of his 18 starts this year, **Steven Skidmore (’16)** worked the ball away from a Waterloo Wahawk. “During big games the atmosphere is electric, all the fans are shouting at the players, and our players on the sidelines are screaming and shouting as well. In these games, the players are giving it their all so they will do anything that it takes to win,” Skidmore said. *Photo by Logan Cole*

CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES. Celebrating a goal, **Zuhayr Alam (’16)** hugs a fellow teammate **Dejvid Husidic (’17)** in celebration. “My favorite part of playing in a soccer game is how I forget about everything. I forget all about school and stress and everything else and just focus on the game. The feeling of scoring goals and winning games is crazy, and I’ll never get enough of it,” Alam said. *Photo by Emily Barth*



REACH FOR THE SKY. With six goals and four assists racked up over the season, **Christopher Keys (’16)** knows how to find the net. “My favorite part of playing soccer is the team aspect of it. It’s amazing when you are able to string some passes together and slice right through a defense,” Keys said. Unfortunately, the Tigers had a tough time on the scoreboard of this game, where Cedar Falls lost against Cedar Rapids Xavier, 0-3. *Photo by Shaelynn Stotser*



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TEAMWORK MAKES DREAMS WORK. After Luke Loughren's ('18) overtime goal — his first ever on varsity — the team piled on to celebrate the 4-3 victory over Cedar Rapids Kennedy. Zuhayr Alam ('16), Adrian Diaz ('16) and Chris Keys ('16) also contributed goals for the win. "I didn't really think," Loughren said. "I was just really excited and reacted to it going in. I turned to the crowd and did the Michael Jordan shrug, and I was in awe. Really I was just glad it went in. I'll never forget that moment." *Photo by Madison Wright*

SPEED DEMON. Stealing the ball from a West High rival, **Adrian Diaz ('16)** soars down the field. "When I first step on the field and the referee is about to blow the whistle, my heart is beating super fast and my breathing gets quicker, but right when I hear the whistle go off, I feel right at home. What gets me most excited is when my teammates do well. Nothing gets me more pumped than that," he said. Diaz scored four goals and had four assists on the season. *Photo by Logan Cole*



READY TO ROCK. Driving it down, **Kyle VanRoosendaal ('18)** races past Waterloo West, who Cedar Falls ended up losing to, 1-3, but win or lose, VanRoosendaal is hooked on soccer. "I love the atmosphere of the game, and the thrill of winning and the sadness of losing. I normally feel calm, but moments in a game can change emotions fast." *Photo by Logan Cole*

Men's Soccer 155
Designed by Emily Barth and Shea Stotser



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