

GRACE STOKER

FSPA Sports Journalist of the Year Portfolio

People often ask me why I like to take my own pictures instead of relying on other photographers on staff. I usually answer that taking my own pictures betters my writing, as I know the context of the game. While that is a valid reason for getting my own content, the real reason I do it is because I love it. Seeing athletes recognize me game after game, cheering along with the student section, hugging my friends after their games. All of these things and more make my work in journalism beyond worth my time. I like getting my own content because there is nothing that I would rather be doing than standing on the sideline in the middle of the action.



**Editor-in-chief of
Lake Brantley High School
Patriots' Pride Yearbook**

2x FSPA Best of the Best Winner

2021 Yearbook People Section Spread

2020 Yearbook Sports Spread

3x FSPA All-Florida Winner

Editor-in-chief for 2 years

Adobe InDesign Certified

August Sports

HOME COURT ADVANTAGE

On Tuesday, Aug. 31, the girls' volleyball teams played Oviedo High School at home.



ALL ABOUT THAT ACE
Reaching to bump the ball, freshman Maggie Crowover goes to make a play. Bumping the ball allows other players to hit the ball over the net. The freshman girls' volleyball team ended the game with a final score of 0-2.
Photo by: DSP



ORDER IN THE COURT
Juniors Delaney Taylor and Mayson Cooney and sophomore Mackenzie Quinn wait for the ball in order to hit it over the net. "Mackenzie passed the ball and I was trying to set our outside hitter Heather Sapiro to hopefully get a kill," Taylor said. The JV team finished with a score of 0-2.
Photo by: DSP



REACHING FOR THE BALL
During the JV girls volleyball team, junior Heather Sapiro jumps off the court to spike the ball to their opponent's side. Spiking the ball can make it harder for the other team's defense to counter the hit and can lead to a point.
Photo by: DSP

SERVING A WIN

The varsity girls volleyball team had a successful August, winning two out of three games.

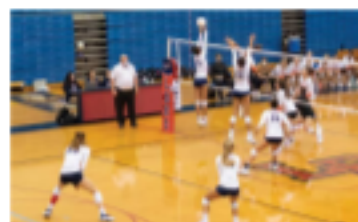


Photo by: DSP

"I love playing volleyball because I'm able to play with the people that I consider my family. Being part of this team is extremely fun and I enjoy being with them everyday."
Mya Mendosa, 12



THE CROWD GOES WILD
Senior Laila N'Diaye, sophomore Jordan Sigobes and junior Avery Demetree celebrate after a successful play against Oviedo High School. The varsity team won with a score of 3-1 on Tuesday, Aug. 31. "When we make a good play it brings on a swell of pride and excitement for everyone on the team," N'Diaye said. "It is a moment of pure joy and adrenaline that brings everyone together and pushes up towards winning."
Photo by: DSP



JUMP AROUND
Jumping to spike the ball, freshman Amina N'Diaye plays defensively by blocking and hitting the ball to the other side of the net. Senior Laila N'Diaye helped in the attempt to block the play from reaching their own side. The rest of the team prepared to take action and are ready in their positions during the win over Oviedo High School on Tuesday, Aug. 31.
Photo by: DSP

in the MOMENT

What is your favorite memory of your first game?



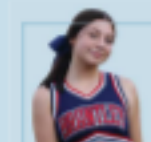
Kelsey Helm, 9

"The football players running through the banner and the adrenaline rush they had. Interacting with the crowd during the cheer "Gigolo" and how excited everyone seemed for the start of [football] season."



Joley Morton, 9

"My best memory from our first game would definitely be how hands-on and supportive everyone was. A big moment that I won't forget is when Lyman's cheer team came and did a little chant with us. Plus, we won the game."



Tristan Price, 9

"My favorite memory was winning our first game. Starting off the season good. Having everyone in the stands cheering."



Malory Bamford, 9

"My favorite memory of my first game would probably be sprinting back after breaking the banner and looking up and seeing everyone in the stands so ready for the game."



Madelyn Pella, 9

"My favorite memory of the first game was when everyone's starts lit during the fourth quarter then hearing everyone in the stands cheer for us! It was so fun to be able to cheer with all of my friends and the best part was that it was our first win!"

first game WON and done

The freshman football team beat Lyman High School 24-14 in their first game of the season on Wednesday, Aug. 25.

DOWN SET FIGHT

1. The freshman football team has their defense out on the field late in the second half of the game. They made a tackle at their own 15 yard line to stop the Greyhounds from scoring. The defense played a pivotal role in the freshman football team's win during their first game of the season.

2. Senior athletic trainer Alicia Kent prepares water bottles to keep the players hydrated throughout the game. The athletic trainers are responsible for injury prevention and treatment of an athlete. "I love the energy that surrounds the [athletic training] department," Kent said. "I also love that all learning is hands-on."

3. Members of the freshman football team celebrate on the sideline after a touchdown. The team has a great bond, always supporting each other after every score.

4. Sprinting past two defenders to catch a touchdown pass, freshman Matthew Krause seals the victory over the Greyhounds. The freshman football team had multiple passing touchdowns during the game. The offense was able to successfully stump Lyman High School's defenders with their passing game.

5. Freshman Andrew Bollhofer and Kaden Kourpanidis high five after leaving the field. They both rested up in between plays in order to play their best when they got back out onto the field. Both players were on the offensive side of the ball and made an impact in this game.
Photos by: Grace Stoker



This spread was one of the first spreads I completed this year. Typically, for the first deadline experienced staff members are paired up with new members to help them ease into journalism. I was paired with my wonderful staff member and now friend, Riley Dello Russo. We worked very well together and I am very proud of what we accomplished together. We made freshman football the main topic on our spread. I thought that was an especially good coverage decision since freshman sports can be overlooked. I decided to take that mentality with me throughout the rest of the book, making sure each sport was given the spotlight it deserves.

Boys Water Polo

Unlike the previous page, this was not from the beginning of the school year. This photo was taken the week of the portfolio submission deadline. Sports journalism has helped me learn that I work best under pressure. I was looking for one more action shot to submit for this portfolio and I knew just where to get it: the pool. As for the photo itself, it shows the intense moment of trying to strip the ball away from an opponent before they can pass the ball. The amount of water splashing up when he takes his arm out of the pool shows the viewer the power that he is putting into his movements.

Senior Joshua Zeffren 2.23.22



ON A ROLL

The girls bowling team competed against Hagerty High School at Airport Lanes on Wednesday, Sept. 1. The girls bowling team had a close loss of 1295-1513.

Photo by: DSP



Peyton Scott, 10

Hayley Lounsberry, 11



Bowling was super fun because I had two of my best friends to play with." **Sian Carranza, 12**



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

"At first I was afraid that people weren't going to respect me because I am younger than some of them, but I never have that problem. [The best part of being a captain is] getting to lead stretch and be at the bottom of the stands for football games."

Lindsay Sheridan, 11

Dance Team Captain

Photo provided by: Patriot Band

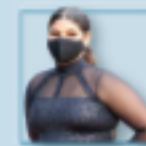
in the MOMENT

What is your favorite part about performing on Friday nights?



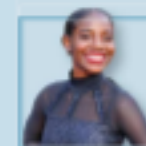
Alexys Rivera, 9

I look forward to the stand dances. Like for performing in [the halftime show], we have three specific dances that we do, but stand dances there's like multiple songs that the band plays and we do like different mini dances to it."



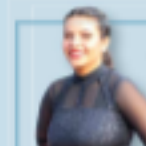
Zaynah Alnuzhat, 9

When we walk off the field and everyone is cheering for us it makes me proud of myself because it shows that all of my hard work has truly paid off."



Kazia Tyndale, 11

I love everything about our halftime performances, especially seeing the other schools cheering us on when we perform our kick, hoop, and flag routine because even though we perform it every time, it's still [exciting] for us and the other team who is seeing it for the first time."



Maria Vergel Pulido, 11

Definitely when we do Cantina [Band], our kick dance. [It] is really fun and there's a lot of movement. I also feel that we, the dancers, and the band have a lot of [fun] performing Cantina [Band]."



Veronica Espinosa, 12

I love being able to get into the uniform and do my hair and makeup. Once we get on the field the feeling is priceless. I love performing and seeing an entire crowd cheer it between each part of the show, [that] makes halftime unforgettable."



SPIRITED SQUAD

"I love being with my friends and the drum circle. We have a great bond with each other."

Katalyn Williams, 12
Varsity football game against Mywood Evans High School on Friday, Sept. 17



HERE FOR HYPE

Surrounded by other cheerleaders during the drum circle on Friday, Sept. 24, sophomore Allison Baker jumps up and down to the drum cadences. The drum circle traditionally occurs during the third quarter, after the band's halftime performance. "I felt really happy and excited," Baker said. "The drum circle is one of my favorite parts of the game because everybody is really hyped up and the energy is great. Being in the middle, with everyone around me, and everyone so in the moment, it was so exciting and the energy is the best part of the game."

Photo by: Grace Stoker

driving the MATCH

The boys' golf team beat Winter Springs High School 156-202 on Monday, Sept. 13. The match was played at the Wekiva Golf Club, giving the boys golf team the home advantage.



A GREEN THUMB

Starting at the green, senior Luke Heyman plans his next putt. The boys' golf team has been successful, winning five out of their six matches in the month of September.

Photo by: Carlo Higgins

ON A ROLL

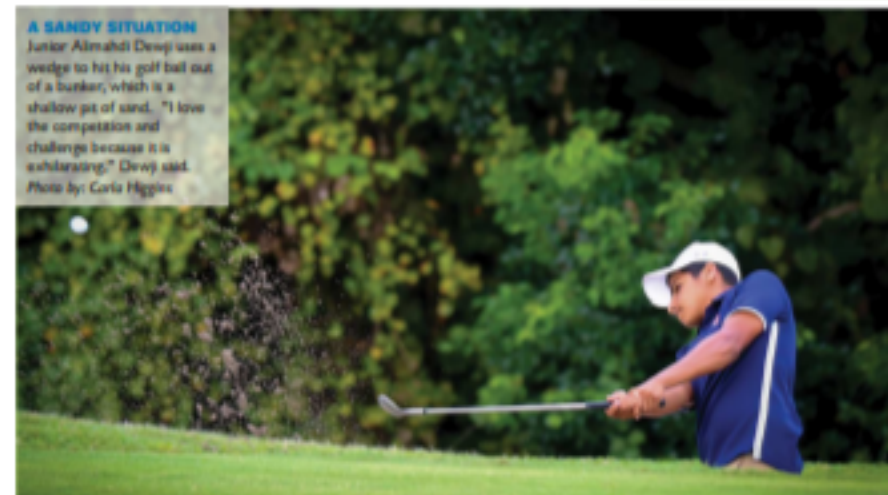
Senior Justin Tompkins watches his golf ball roll on the green after a putt. Putting requires precision and patience.

Photo by: Carlo Higgins

PAR FOR THE COURSE

Looking at the ball, freshman Kalib Leudenburg finishes his swing. He uses a small club to get his ball off of the fairway and onto the green close to the hole.

Photo by: Carlo Higgins



A SANDY SITUATION

Junior Almahdi Dewj uses a wedge to hit his golf ball out of a bunker, which is a shallow pit of sand. "I love the competition and challenge because it is exhilarating," Dewj said.

Photo by: Carlo Higgins



September Sports

For my September sports spread I wanted to continue my idea of unique coverage. I used Adobe Photoshop to make girls bowling photos pop off of the spread. I used boys golf pictures as my main element to shine a light on these athletes that are often underappreciated. I especially love the detail that I put into my golf coverage, it reflects the detail that those athletes put into their game. This was also the first spread where I included a corner showcasing an athlete, usually a captain. This allows me to give an athlete a place to discuss their sport without being interrupted by the information in a traditional caption.

Girls Varsity Soccer

Senior Madison Jones 1.14.22

I remember this moment well. The wind chill made this game feel practically freezing. Still, there was nowhere else I wanted to be. I love the way the players from both teams almost mirror each other. While not intentional, there is a level of symmetry here that I feel honored to have captured. The girls varsity soccer team came into an intimidating game as an away team and left like they owned the field. The level of focus is clearly seen on the faces of the players, showing their passion for the game. Being able to show that raw emotion is one of the most rewarding parts of working on the yearbook.



December Sports

PINNING THE COMPETITION

The varsity boys wrestling team hosted multiple schools during the Lake Brantley Battle tournament on Wednesday, Dec. 15.



READY, SET, WRESTLE

Senior Jonathan Stgaard prepares to take down his opponent. "I like wrestling because of the character it builds," Stgaard said. "The toughness to practice everyday along with tournaments. It can be challenging but it shows with the work because you can't really have support from anyone but yourself." Photo by DSP



ENDLESS SUPPORT

The varsity boys wrestling team supports their teammates from the side while their teammates are on the mat. The supportive atmosphere in the gym helps athletes become energized for their events. Photo by DSP



HEAD TO HEAD BATTLE

Wrestling his opponent, senior Kyle Schehr tries to bring the opposition to the mat. Wrestlers are usually matched up based on weight class. If he can successfully pin his opponent to the mat, Schehr will win the match. Photo by DSP



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

"I really enjoy being captain of the wrestling team and being able to lead and teach the newer wrestlers. I really enjoy how competitive it is. It's solely up to you to control how well you do in the sport."

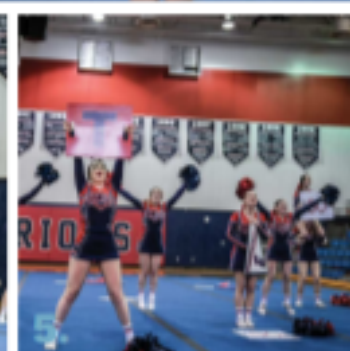
Kai Higgins, 12
Varsity Boys Wrestling Captain
Photo by: Carl Higgins

pulling a STUNT

The competition cheer team and the game day cheer teams were both successful at their meet on Wednesday, Dec. 8 at the Patriot Pride Championship.

BRING IT ON

1. The competition cheer team performs a stunt as a part of their routine. This team usually focuses on technical ability and stunts.
2. Posing with their championship banner, the game day cheer team celebrates after winning their category. The team won first place in the game day medium varsity non-tumbling group.
3. Junior Maria Riggs and the rest of the game day cheer team pose during their performance. "To prepare for a competition, before warm-ups, my whole team eats a Ploy Six for good luck and we say a prayer before we go on," Riggs said. "I like competition cheer because of the rush of adrenaline before running onto the mat."
4. Members of the competition cheer team leap in the air as a part of their routine. "I've been doing competitive cheer since I was really young, so being able to compete with my friends as my teammates is a dream," senior Sarah Perkins said. "Sideline cheer, you're used to cheering on other sports, so taking the floor and hearing other schools cheer you on is a really cool experience."
5. The game day cheer team holds signs and megaphones to use as a part of their performance. This team usually focuses on spirited cheers and traditional props. Photo by: DSP



THROWING INTO ACTION



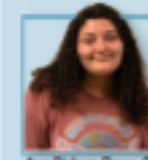
"It's just fun and I've been playing since I was a kid. I just really love the sport. It gives me passion. [Being friends with my teammates] helps us bring each other up if we're doing bad." Diego Teran, 10
Photo by: DSP



Justor Andres Villegas drops to the ground to prevent a goal on Friday, Dec. 3. The varsity boys soccer team lost to Boone High School with a final score 0-5.
Photo by: DSP

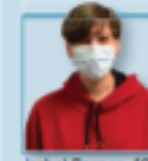
in the MOMENT

What is your favorite soccer position?



Ava Bishop-Pica, 9

"My favorite position would have to be midfield because I can exert major energy, but still be fired up for the rest of the game. I really like hyping my team up."



Isabel Berner, 10

"I'm goalkeeper and I like it because I like that my team can trust in me like when they need to tell them where to go and tell them what to do, and that I can trust in them to get the ball when I can't."



Natalie Gutierrez, 11

"I play defender. It's my favorite because I get to push people around and it's easy to run into people and take the ball from them."



Kendal Smith, 11

"My position is defense. I'm not having to focus on scoring goals and I'm just worrying about defending the goal and the amount of teamwork [we have] when it comes to defense is good."



Sophia Bellini, 12

"I played as a striker because I was fast. I like playing as a striker because I was given the opportunity to score. I like running and scoring goals."

I love the way the color red pops in this spread. It brings out the intensity of a cheer competition and the aggression needed in a wrestling match, in addition to sporting school colors. I chose to accentuate competition cheer, as that team receives less attention than sideline cheer does. It was really exciting to see the cheerleaders' faces light up when I told them they would be featured. Additionally, the wrestling part of this spread is one of my favorites. Their passion is clear in the photos, especially the sports reaction photo in the middle. Intense photos make my work on the yearbook easier than ever.

Freshman Football

The way the sideline erupted after this picture was taken was incredible. The camaraderie was amazing. Freshman sports are seen as a gateway to the junior varsity and varsity level. While that is most often true, freshman sports should be valued for what they are: a chance to see an athlete at their beginning. I remember the feeling of taking that picture; realizing I got “the” touchdown shot. Seeing that player score what was probably the first touchdown of his high school career was something I feel grateful to have experienced. I hope that someday in the future I can capture more of his touchdowns at a professional level.

Football Players 9.22.21



season of SUCCESS

The girls soccer team had a dominant end to their season, winning all five of their regular season games in the month of January.

PERFECT ON THE PITCH

1. Sophomore Jayla Espinosa keeps her distance from a defender during a game against Edgewater High School on Tuesday, Jan. 18. Being a midfielder, Espinosa plays a role in getting the ball to the offensive side of the pitch. The varsity soccer game won the match with a final score of 2-0.
2. Leaving her opponent on the ground, senior Katharine Sands steals the ball away from the forward during the game against Olympia High School on Friday, Jan. 21. "I love the adrenaline rush of going [one on one] with a forward, knowing that if I don't get the ball from them, they might score, then the feeling of pride when I manage to shut their attack down and steal the ball," Sands said. "The best feeling is when I can get it back to our offense and they can counterattack, maybe get a goal off of it."
3. Bringing her foot back, senior Abigail Ferris takes a shot on goal late in the second half of the match on Friday, Jan. 21. The girls varsity team beat Olympia High School 4-1 on Senior Night.
4. Running down the field, senior Madison Jones prepares to score a goal during the game against Apopka High School on Thursday, Jan. 13. Jones had three goals in the 4-0 shutout win.
5. Senior Sierra Higgins battles a defender during the game against Olympia High School on Friday, Jan. 21. "Most of the time, it's really tough," Higgins said. "Especially for me, just because of my height, because most girls are taller than me and have longer legs, and can easily beat me in a foot race when trying to get the ball. But when I have the chance to fight that battle, I will always try my best."

Photos by Grace Stoker and Carlo Higgins



ORDER IN THE COURT



1. Junior Harrison Hyscithre moves past a defender during a game against Apopka High School on Tuesday, Jan. 11. The JV boys basketball team fell to the Blue Darters with a final score of 54-63.
2. Pushing past his opponent, sophomore Anthony Desantis heads towards the basket with the ball on Tuesday, Jan. 18. "It relieves a lot of my stress and everything like that. It helps with all of my problems. [My teammates] definitely will be a part of my life after high school." The JV boys basketball team lost to Winter Springs High School 41-53.
3. Sophomore Bryon Williams dribbles the ball down the court. The JV boys basketball team lost to Lake Mary High School 36-58 on Friday, Jan. 14.

Photos by Three Point Photography

PUSHING THE LIMITS

The varsity girls weightlifters participated in their district meet on Friday, Jan. 21. The athletes prepared all season for this final meet.

Photo by Veronica Fiorat



"Being on the weightlifting team is so exciting. I love how supportive and encouraging everyone is for each other. It really makes a difference. Lifting daily has definitely transformed my body in making me physically stronger, but mentally I've grown to appreciate my strength comes from working hard and trusting my abilities."

Taylor Howard-Scott, 11



BENCH BUDDIES

With help from her coach, junior Ava Brooks prepares for a bench press. Weightlifting meets usually include both the bench press and the clean and jerk.

Photo by Veronica Fiorat



AN UPLIFTING TEAM

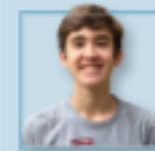
Junior Riley Fisher is in the middle of a clean and jerk during her event. "The team is very connected and very energized all the time, so they're always encouraging you for literally anything," Fisher said. "They're very supportive."

Photo by Veronica Fiorat

January Sports

in the MOMENT

How have you grown this season?



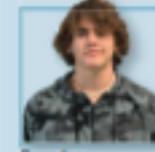
Jacob Mue, 9

"I feel like this season I have grown a lot in the mental aspect of the game. The way I read what is happening has definitely improved and with that a lot of things come more naturally."



Benjamin Starfy, 9

"I started out a bit timid, but after playing a couple games and kind of messing up a couple times and not doing my best, I finally got my place with the team and finally started enjoying it."



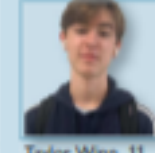
Brendan Niebrugge, 10

"I definitely saw an increase in my skill and ability, like my passes, positioning. The coaches, the drills we do, people that I'm surrounded by [helped with that]."



Cade Ottati, 10

"I have worked together with the team to get better as a team, because I think it's not individual; I think that you grow together with your teammates."



Taylor Winn, 11

"I've improved a lot, just overall playmaking and stuff. We had a lot of fun throughout the season."

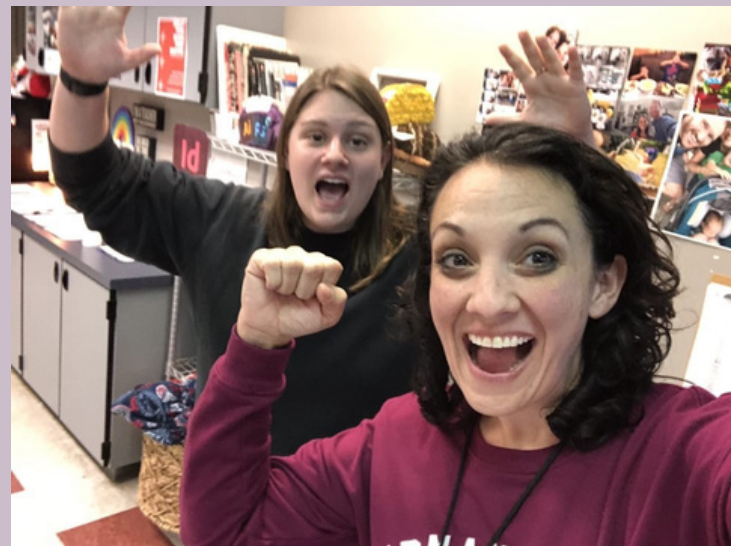
This spread has to be my favorite one of the year. Not because of the design or even the photos I took, but the people I got to spend time with. While I know many people in different sports from my years on the yearbook staff, I still meet new people every game. This happened most with girls varsity soccer. Players would take the time to talk to me and help me gather whatever content I needed. I have made a couple new friends as a result. This created a special bond between me and the team and I would attend their games even when I did not need coverage.

Varsity Cheer

Every third quarter, the drumline surrounds the varsity cheerleaders for a drum circle. This was taken from inside the mania of the circle. Almost every cheerleader I have ever interviewed cited these drum circles as their favorite part of the football games. So, I knew I needed to capture that moment. Standing in the middle of all of that action, I could see why it was a sideline favorite. This moment shaped the cheerleading team and increased the bond between cheerleaders and the drumline. These are the kind of moments that unite the student body. These are the kind of moments I search for when I am taking pictures.

Varsity Cheerleaders 9.24.21





Closing Statement

No other class or set of experiences has shaped me quite like my journalism class has. My journalism class is a place where I am free to cover sports in a way that interests me. The creative freedom has been really beneficial for me, as I am able to attend games, get photos, and make new connections all at the same time. Furthermore, I love my fellow staff members and yearbook advisor. I know that I have their support when I say something crazy like, "what if we made golf the focus point." My love for writing and photography is what led me to join the yearbook staff, but what I have been able to accomplish and the people I have met along the way are what made me love being on the yearbook staff.