

The Chariot

Reflecting on the Pandemic

April 2021

Covid-19's Impact On The 2021 Sports Season At Wyomissing By Harry Weiss

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the sports world has been shellshocked. In the midst of the 2019-20 NBA season, right before tip off between the Utah Jazz and Oklahoma City Thunder, all play was halted. The NBA immediately suspended the season after Rudy Gobert's positive test. After a 142 day hiatus, the Orlando bubble opened and the NBA resumed play. Other pro-sports organizations such as MLB organized a 60-game season, much smaller than their usual 162 game marathon. The NCAA faced multiple cancellations and suspended games during the shortened football seasons. March Madness played in a bubble in Indiana this year. COVID-19's impact throughout the sports community has caused chaos, but sports found a way to survive the global pandemic.

At the high school level, during the summer of 2020, countless students were wondering if they would get to play football, soccer, and other fall sports. For high schoolers, sports are just as important as school. By playing sports, these young individuals are given a chance to learn and have fun while growing as an athlete. The

Coronavirus threatened to withhold these kids from playing. Connecticut canceled full contact football throughout the 2020-21 academic year while states such as California delayed their football season to December and January. Just up the road the Reading Red Knights are playing football in the spring sports season! Unlike football, the soccer season was successful and ran mostly on schedule.

As a high school athlete myself, last summer was certainly a questionable time. Everyday prior to practice we got our temperatures taken and trained with masks on. At the time it appeared unlikely that fall sports would be permitted in Pennsylvania, and honestly, I was skeptical as well.

Thankfully all fall sports were given the green light and while the soccer team had no problems with COVID-19, the football team did. Halfway through the season the Spartans were in a tough spot.



Sutton Daraneau and Katie Schadler share their thoughts on the pandemic on pages 2 and 4.

Need some time for self-care? Grace Diehl has got you covered on page 6!

Riley Dauber reflects on her time during quarantine by sharing everything her and her sister did on page 7.

First time writer Reese Dauber writes about her Animal Crossing experience on page 7.

Who is the mysterious writer on page 9?

After Twin Valley was forced to withdraw from a scheduled game, Wyomissing was worried they would fail to play enough games to qualify for playoffs. Luckily, the Spartans were able to play the required games and made a deep run to the State championship game.

Of the three seasons, the winter sports season was considered the least likely to survive COVID-19. Since sports like basketball and indoor track are all inside, the athletes were all forced to wear masks while playing. Some teams were able to get away using a “medical exemption,” but wearing masks while sprinting up and down the basketball court certainly will exhaust anyone. The Spartans fell victim to COVID-19 just halfway through the season and played their final game on January 23 prior to their 2-week break. Returning on February 16, the Spartans played five games in seven days, including a Saturday doubleheader. Wyomissing rebounded well from the break, going 5-3 and falling in the District 3 Semifinals.

For the girls’ basketball team, their season almost faced a closure as well. Starting point guard Abby Doyle was required to quarantine mid-season, “which had a tremendous impact on the season,” star forward Lily Seyfert says. Seyfert admitted there were many difficulties, but she found one more serious than others. “I think the one that affected all teams was the ability to team bond and get that family feeling.” With COVID-19 restrictions, the opportunity to have gatherings such as team



dinners or traveling to watch other games were put on hold. I agree because one of the most important parts of sports is having a strong relationship with your teammates which grows both on and off the court.

While spring sports are underway, the Spartans boys’ lacrosse team has already fallen victim to COVID-19 after their previous opponent York Catholic faced multiple positive tests. Senior middy Calvin Scott says the teams break has been “frustrating to say the least.” “When it felt like our team was gaining momentum, we got shut down despite not having any positive cases,” he says. The Lacrosse team is set to finish their quarantine and resume play on Wednesday, April 21. For the baseball team, the Spartans have also faced multiple postponements against Blue Mountain and now Schuylkill Valley due to COVID-19 closures as well. It is safe to say Wyomissing’s sports teams have gotten the best out a pandemic-filled sports year.

From my own perspective, I am very thankful that I was able to play sports my senior year. I knew coming into this year the pandemic could end my playing career at any time, and I made sure to soak in the experience for both soccer and now baseball. If I had one thing to suggest to other high school athletes, it would be to never take anything for granted. Most players see their seasons end from an unfortunate injury, but no one ever expected a pandemic to end their seasons. So, to all the kids out there, play your sports with passion because you never, ever know if it could be your last time.

What Quarantine Taught Me **By Katie Schadler**

For most of my fast-moving life, I had wished there was a pause button. Some sort of intermission where I could stretch my

legs and get a quick snack before the show would return and the curtains would open again. A day of absence where I could take a mental health day without having to make up four hundred homework assignments, where time would stand still, and I wouldn't miss a beat. But for the first time in my life, for the first time in my parents' lives, in March of 2020, I got the pause I had always wanted.

Our lives remained on hiatus for 2 whole months where we had no business to tend to, nothing on the calendar but staying in our pajamas and binging all of the shows on our Netflix watchlist. Nothing to do but eat too many quarantine hot pockets and plan my post-high school future despite the future, in those months, seeming so incredibly distorted and unknown. When school got called off, I was nearing the end of what became my favorite year of high school yet. I had a really solid group of friends, was attending more social gatherings than ever, and finally felt like I was somebody. Like in a crowded room, I had a place to stand. And I spent that year believing that I had overcome the self-loathing pit of darkness where my ninth-grade self resided, convincing myself that this was the happiest I could ever be. Yet until what we thought would be a 2 week vacation off from school turned into 2 months, I failed to realize that I had taken the illusory short-cut route to what I thought



was recovery, for my happiness was completely derived from my social life. And when all of it was gone, without all of these people around me, I had no happiness inside of myself to fill my insecure voids in their absence. There was nothing to distract myself, nothing to numb myself from the fact that I felt substance-less, like I was wasting my life away doing absolutely nothing that mattered. I wanted to get back the part of myself that I had lost in the midst of becoming so deeply intertwined in other people. The constant undertones of feeling out of place had made me bitter and resentful, and I needed this time to learn to be alone again so I could return to those relationships with the capacity to love them with the love that powered my own happiness first.

And so, I spent my quarantine trying to feel like myself again, trying to remember who that person even was. So, I wrote and took walks with my family and made a list of all of the places I wanted to visit. I deleted social media and consistently spent time working on my mental health. But more often than not, when I wasn't being this productive human, I was sleeping too long and crying too much. I felt trapped and stir-crazy and isolated and without the leisure to drown out the noise in other people, I was learning to face all of these painful emotions alone, looking inside myself to heal the right way. To my surprise, as May approached and my parents let me hang out with a few friends, I didn't even want to. Ironically, the girl who couldn't spend a single Friday night alone without bursting into tears forgot how to interact with people. As quarantine transitioned into the "new normal" phase of masks and social distancing, I slowly acclimated to social climates and reverted back to my natural inclination to be around other people. But I came into my eleventh grade year feeling different. Desks were spread apart and half

of the school was at home, but I realized how little I missed having everyone in the building. How much more I appreciated my space and my alone time.

At the risk of sounding cliché, quarantine, in a way, sort of changed me. It forced me to delve into the different layers of myself and amid all of the chaos and misfortune throughout the world as a result of the pandemic, I am grateful to have found some good in it. Experiencing that time off in addition to the Hybrid-school model has allotted me the time to explore my creative ninth grade self again, yet a mentally healthier version. For me, tenth grade was all about branching out and learning to have fun, but eleventh grade was all about making the personal strides to be full on my own without outside input. Immersing myself into my meaningful relationships yet no longer requiring the social construct of a friend group to feel confident and whole, I am gradually learning the art of balance. And for the first time in my life, I finally feel like I am doing well. Like I am actually becoming a person that I am proud to be, and I hope I can sustain this.

I am well aware that for most of us, quarantine was not some picturesque, existentially-altering event, and I apologize if I made my experiences sound anything in the ballpark of that. I know that I was lucky to reap such rewards, lucky to have faced minimal money problems compared to the larger part of the world, lucky to have a healthy and supportive family by my side during all of it. But regardless of what everyone's experiences were, whether leaning towards the good or bad side of the scale, no one can say that the pandemic didn't affect their life in some shape or form. But life is all about perspective. And I am helplessly convinced that all of these brutally awful, terribly painful things are thrown at us with the intention of revealing how complex we are. And to all of us who

are still sort of kind of in one piece, waiting for their lives to unpause themselves, well, I can assure you that the lights are starting to dim. And the show will begin again.



Reflections On Quarantine (And What You Can Take From It) By Sutton Daraneau

So, this is a bit different for me. There will be no absurd amount of research in this article. There will be no creepy stinger or inane implications or overall surreal vibe, so to speak. This month's theme is reflections on quarantine, and for the life of me, I can't find a spin to put on it, so that's exactly what it'll be. What did I, Sutton Daraneau, self-proclaimed chaos gremlin and unwilling participant in the famed writer's block, do during quarantine? Secondly, and more importantly, what advice can you take from it?

We'll start at the beginning, as most people do. It was still the spring yet when I broke a little bit. The details are irrelevant, but it led to three things: first and foremost, a series of revelations about myself. Secondly, I had a rather abrupt personality change. Finally, I figured out that I am less than straight (biromantic asexual!). The third doesn't exactly matter when it comes to advice (other than to love who you love and be yourself), but I can tell you this much. If something cataclysmic happens, if you break down and fall apart: take it in stride. Use it to learn about yourself and piece yourself back together however you like. In my case

the learning and the piecing happened during quarantine, so I had as much time and space as I needed, which leads me to my second point. That second point being that as terrible quarantine was, it had its uses, mainly being the aforementioned time and space. I cannot stress this enough, any off day you get, any day with nothing going on, use it to improve yourself. If not physically, then mentally. Take stock of your stress and your emotions and your direction in general. Where does your conviction lie? All of this helped me immensely, and I have a fairly good feeling it'll help y'all too.

Moving ever forward, summer came. I found myself working every Sunday, and every other week day at cross country. The best advice I can give you here is pretty simple. Appreciate your friends. I can't tell y'all how much I missed them. Regardless of if you see them only once a year versus every other day, just appreciate them. Spend time with them. Additionally, remember that whole "reflect on yourself" stuff? I found a few of my "friends" less than necessary. I'm not saying that you should ditch them, but I am saying that it's real easy to "get caught up in things" and "lose track of time" during the summer, and it would be a shame if you just barely talked to them for a fourth of the year. It's not as if you'll be seeing them in the halls, anyway.

Continuing onwards to August. School tried rather desperately to begin, and I started my YouTube channel That Banjo



Kid, hint hint *cough* shameless promotion *cough*. Anyhoo I began a multitude of commitments, namely school, the channel, and a series of little challenges and games. For those of you who know me, I am so very sorry. For those who don't, I happen to love both challenges and games. This is where the next piece of advice comes in: make your own. It's really rather simple. Working from personal experience, say you have difficulty keeping commitments. To remedy this, I vowed to comment "thanks for your donation" on every last Cyana picture by PM Seymore, a VA YouTuber and occasional blue elf artist. I continue that challenge to this day.

Consider the bonsai tree, needing care and love every day to grow ever bigger. It's the same principle: training yourself to be better at a certain trait without any real consequences for failure. With the bonsai tree you get better at keeping promises and commitments, but with the little games and challenges you get entertainment value as well. And this could work with anything. Wanna get more social? Make a game out of talking to new people, give more points depending on how much they seemed to like you and so on. Want to learn a song? Refuse to stop playing until either a half hour has passed or you can play the song. It makes you look absolutely insane from the outside, but it works.

From August to now I didn't really have any big events, so this last paragraph will be just overall advice that I happened to learn over quarantine. I suggest that you not read too far into it, especially concerning

what I did to form this advice. First and foremost, the best café to eat, unless you're on a diet of course, is Dosie-Dough. I don't care who you are, I don't care what you like to eat. They have a day olds section, so if you don't mind eating basically sugar and carbs for breakfast, you can eat like a king for like a dollar and a half. You can't even taste the difference. The worst café is Parkside (formally Bold). Hands down. It's expensive, not that good, the selections are small, and anything you can get there you can also get at Dosie-Dough. If you live closer to West Reading, it's obviously a longer walk, but it is entirely worth it. Another thing, respect pronouns. Part of it is common decency, but another part concerns our non-binary friends. They go by they/them, which is plural.

Wear your mask, it can't hurt you, but it will protect you. Finally, the last piece of advice: get your vaccine y'all. I want to be able to go out without a mask again. Just do it, please.



Pro-tips For Surviving Fourth Quarter By Grace Diehl

If high school during the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that school doesn't get easier as the years go on, and since we can't all just go Wave, we have to adapt to the rigorous workload. On top of this, we have to make sure that our mental health isn't compromised in the process of trying to graduate high school and deal with the stress of the pandemic. It's fourth quarter, and a lot of us are barely holding on, so, to help you

accomplish this seemingly daunting task, here are some of the best pieces of advice given to me in regards to maintaining a healthy balance of school and life.



Never push things off until later if it's not necessary. This might seem obvious, but we are all guilty of procrastination. The best way to make sure you have a balanced day is to sit down and get work done in order to leave time for relaxation later.

Use your Wednesdays to catch up on school work if it's necessary, but make sure that you take advantage of these days off to give yourself a break or to spend some time with friends.

Stay organized. Chances are, if you have a designated spot to write your homework down, you won't forget about it and it'll be easier to manage. Plus, keeping organized notes and keeping your papers in order will make it easier to prepare for tests later.

Don't listen to music or watch TV while doing homework. You might think it's helping you, but trust me, it's not. If you want to listen to music, listen to non-lyrical music. I'd recommend Productive Music Playlist.

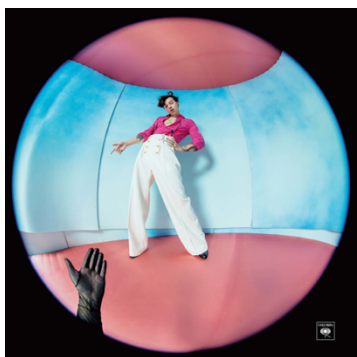
Last, but not least, make sure your priorities are in order. You won't be able to do your best in class if you're not feeling up to par. If you feel exhausted or sick, take a day off and get stuff done at home. Don't forget to live in the midst of school, sports, and work. Grades may seem like the most important thing at the time, but taking care

of yourself physically and mentally should always be your top priority.

Everything My Sister, Reese, and I Did During Quarantine

By Riley Dauber

- Watched all eleven Star Wars movies
- Watched the Star Wars prequels (again)
- Watched all five Twilight movies
- Watched all the Disney Princess movies
- Watched season three of Dawson's Creek
- Played Animal Crossing: New Horizons
- Asked our grandma to buy us an inflatable pool and then only used it a handful of times
- Had sleepovers
- Watched our grandma's cat, Honey
- Ate Wendy's
- Drove around and listened to Harry Styles
- Ate an ungodly amount of ice cream
- Went shopping at Barnes and Noble
- Wore our masks
- Went on family walks
- Baked a lot of desserts
- Recorded episodes of my podcast
- Watched Ratatouille, the best Pixar movie
- Played board games
- Played Just Dance 2021
- Played MarioKart and Mario Party
- Painted decks of cards
- Worked on different diamond art projects



How Animal Crossing Taught Me To Do Business

By Reese Dauber

Animal Crossing New Horizons is a fantastic game. But like all other games in the series, you need bells, the in-game currency, to do anything. Of course, you can plant money trees, and sell fossils, fruits, and shells, but you can also do business. I have learned that there are two full-proof ways to earn a lot of money in animal crossing: the stalk market and Nookazon.

Nookazon was created by Daniel Luu and is a website and mobile app) to sell, buy, and trade items. The name is a play on Amazon and Tom Nook, the lovely capitalist tanuki that owns the entire in-game economy. On the website, you can list items you wish to sell for bells or NMTs (Nook Miles Tickets), or trade for items on your wishlist. You can also buy items from other sellers. Once your offer is accepted, the seller will ask for your DODO code or send you theirs. A DODO code allows you to fly to other island to complete the trade. Afterward, you can leave them a review. The concept is simply yet ingenious. This can make you filthy rich if you have desired items, villager, and DIYs. For example, I sold a statue I didn't want for 2 million bells.

Nookazon has taught me how to do business. I've done dozens of trades, and all of them have been successful. But there are scammers out there, so beware. The best tip I can give if you get scammed is to press and hold the power button on your Switch, turn it back on, and get into the game. This will cause a connection error, and your island will reload to before the trade was made. I have had nothing but a great experience On Nookazon and I think you will too.

Is Nookazon not your cup of tea? Maybe you want to be a real business person? Then I introduce you to the Stalk Market, more specifically r/acturnips. Every Sunday between 6 am and 12 pm, Daisy Mae will wander around your island selling turnips. Then for the rest of the week, Timmy and Tommy will buy your turnips for a price either higher or lower than the selling price. You can, of course, watch your island's prices, or you can go to someone else's island. Enter r/actunips, a Reddit community focused on selling turnips. On Sunday, people will post their low sell prices, and the rest of the week people will post their high buy prices. A typical post will include the buy/sell price and will ask you to respond with something to notify the person that you wish to buy. Of course, high prices will attract more people, so it might take hours to get a DODO code. Or simply you won't get it at all. But there is always tomorrow since turnips will only rot by next Sunday or by excessive time traveling. I've paid off my house loans with this method, and I highly recommend it. Just remember to turn notifications on so you can get notified if you're in. Both Nookazon and the Stalk Market are great ways to make bank in Animal Crossing New Horizons; I highly recommend both.



The House By M.H.

There is a house. It's nothing special, really; it's just a house. Well, not so much a house as a manor. It's a rather large house, you see. It has a great many rooms. Many many rooms. It has just the three floors, including the basement and attic, but renovations are constant and seemingly infinite. Money seems to mean nothing to the owners. Despite this, it truly is just a house. It has really nice flooring. The hardwood is rather pretty, as is the carpets, marble, tile, and so on. I suppose I should explain. The owners can't seem to make up their mind about what they want the house to look like. Each renovation gives us another wing, you see. But over all, it really is just a house. Their interior decorating is just marvelous. One could get lost moving through its many halls. Many have. They roam forever, their minds lost in the absolute majesty of the house. But I mean really, it's just a house. It's not a normal house, but it is just a house in the end. Sure, most houses don't have an uncountable number of kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, and so on. Most houses don't have a room for every last shade of color, including the ones you can't see. Pest problems, in most houses, don't include ghosts and sentient spiders and the occasional rat of usual sizes, I'll give you that. But really, truly, it is just a house. People live there, after all. They eat, go to the bathroom, find love, and die. Sure, most people leave the house to do these things, but there are so many rooms! The residents simply don't need to leave the house. Some people don't leave their houses at all. It's

called being a hermit, or having agoraphobia. So really, it's just a house. Most houses don't whisper to you in your dreams, and you don't conduct ritualistic sacrifice to appease most houses, but that just makes this one a little different. Most houses also don't have a courtyard! Furthermore, most courtyards don't hold uncountable acres, entire oceans, or Erdrich entities in the depths of said oceans. That doesn't make it any less of a courtyard, however, just as the room full of blood makes it any less of a room. The underwater wing doesn't make it any less of a wing, and the cultists in the graveyard for unknowable things makes it any less of a graveyard (if the cultists actually manage to resurrect the unknowable things will, however). Because the house holds all of these things doesn't make it any less of a house. It has a fireplace and all! In fact, it has a great number of fireplaces! It's nothing special, really, it's just a house. Well, not so much a house as a manor. It's a rather large house, you see.

