

# Some pain, all the glory

By Emma Ockerman  
MANAGING EDITOR

"My joints will swell up, it'll be hard to move, and they'll be stiff in the morning, almost like you have a broken foot--that kind of pain."

Freshman Charles Stahl was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at one year old, but this doesn't stop him from skating his black penny cruiser with Rasta-colored wheels eight blocks to school every morning.

"I'm slower when I push," Stahl said. The task of riding a skateboard is physically grueling on his ankles, yet Stahl still finds a way to fuel his passion for skateboarding and has since he was in fourth grade.

"(Freshman) Patrick Mason came over (to) my house and said, 'Let's skateboard'. So we did," Stahl said.

Stahl said it took him roughly three years to get skateboarding down to a skill and to discover his pain threshold.

"Certain tricks are harder for me to do," Stahl said. "I can't kickflip, but some tricks are easier--like footplants."

"I don't have to use my ankles as much. I don't have to flick as hard."

The aching reminder that Stahl's passion can leave him in discomfort is never far behind when he steps onto a skateboard.

"One time I was bombing a hill, and I hit my knee on my rock. It would have just been a bruise and been swollen for a few days, but since I have the arthritis, it turned into a full-blown flare-up," Stahl said. "It was swollen for a good three weeks."

But flare-ups aside, Stahl loves skateboarding enough to overcome any attribute of his

arthritis.

"It's not like a normal sport.

It's different," Stahl

said.

"I can do what I want with it. There's no rules. It's liberating."

Stahl found skateboarding as a coping mechanism for overcoming the activities arthritis held him back from.

"I played baseball for a while. I was never allowed to play contact sports. No football, no lacrosse. I just went to skateboarding. It was almost me trying to go against the curve and do something I wasn't supposed to," Stahl said.

Stahl's relationship was pushed further at Wild in the

Streets this year, where thousands of professional and local skateboarders stormed the streets of Detroit.

"It was an unthought about unity between skateboarders," Stahl said. "I loved the fact that you got to meet pros and everyone was joined together."

But even with his enthusiasm growing stronger by the day, Stahl can't escape the nagging notion of his arthritis.

"Sometimes it's better than others. Sometimes it's just hard to move around," Stahl said.

Though both of his knees, wrists and ankles tend to be swollen and in pain, Stahl doesn't let that put a damper on his skating--even when injured.

"At most I would take a break from skating," Stahl said. "I just keep taking my pills, put a brace on it--I just manage."



KAYLEE DALL

## Senior finds motivation in an unusual place

By Andrea Scapini  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Since the passing of his father in his sophomore year, senior Chris Hamilton has used the memory of his dad to drive him in football. But he doesn't dedicate his playing in a way one would expect.

"I devote football to make him bitter, like, 'I should have been in my son's life more and now he's doing productive things with football,'" Hamilton said. "That's really what I focus on -- making him regret not being around at my games. That's why I go so hard."

While his father never came to games, Hamilton has had a steady group of supporters there for him.

"My sister comes to all the games," he said. "My mom, she goes to work early just to leave early to make it to my games. My coaches are always there for me no matter what. My coaches care about me a lot. I always try to put the effort out for them."

Hamilton said the absence of a paternal influence in his life caused him to act up, until his coaches, especially coach Butch Hill, put him into the right mind set.

"Talking to coach Hill helped me gain a level head. You can't get upset when things don't go your way. You've got to roll with the punches," Hamilton said. "...If things aren't going your way, just keep composure and do what you have to do."

Coach Hill has stepped in as somewhat of a father figure to Hamilton by continuously reaching out to him, which changed Hamilton on the field and off of

it. "Chris Hamilton as a senior is an incredibly different young man as Chris Hamilton was as a junior. Chris is focused, he's intense, he is there at practice every day. He is a leader," Hill said. "Mentally, Chris was not with us last year and this year he's all in."

Hamilton gives lots of credit to Hill for his success and for pushing him at practice and in the games.

"He cares the most about me. I've been wanting to play running back for three years and I've never gotten the chance," Hamilton said. "Coach Hill just stayed with me throughout the years and told me that I'd have my chance and to just keep working."

Coach Hill's encouragement paired with Hamilton's own self-determination is what makes Hamilton constantly strive to become a better football player.

"He has a good work ethic and he sets a goal and he pushes for it and he achieves it," Chris' sister, Melissa Hamilton, said. "Everything he does is for football."

Although Hamilton used to walk to the beat of his own drum, his father's passing gave him a new perspective, resulting in a more focused work ethic.

"With me not having a good relationship with my dad, I don't like authority. I don't respond well to authority of me. Last year I did things my own way a lot and that kind of hurt me and my chances of playing running back," he said.

His new attitude has been noticed by coaches and teammates alike.

"He's using a positive energy that rubs off on others too, sometimes. He knows when to get into everything with other people and when to interact," senior teammate Bryon Christmas said. "He's always working to get better."

Hamilton takes in advice from coach Hill to continue with a positive attitude, in football, but also in life.

"He basically tells me, 'You can't let things affect you'...As long as you have hard work ethic, you will get your chance," Hamilton said. "Doesn't matter when, doesn't matter where, it will happen."

## Seniors trample juniors in powderpuff game with a 48-6 victory

By Sean O'Melia & Kim Cusmano  
STAFF REPORTER & SPORTS EDITOR



**ABOVE RIGHT:** Senior Julia Guest runs the ball into the end zone for one of the seniors' two point conversions. "It was a great feeling making it into the end zone and celebrating after with my team," Guest said.

**ABOVE:** Senior Francesca Ciamaritaro kicks a field goal in pre-game practice, as senior coaches Sean McHale and Luke McGarvah look on. Ciamaritaro attempted three field goals during the game, scoring two of them.

**RIGHT:** Junior La'Shanay Mack runs the ball as junior Angela Scapini blocks the oncoming seniors. "This year was a tough outcome," Scapini said. "But now we know what we're doing and will go all out next year to win."

