

BHS athletes perform sport rituals to avoid bad luck

NEIL PICKERING
Sports Editor

There are many superstitions that arouse when an athlete enters his or her competitive atmosphere. These superstitions can be found at any level of athletic competitions and vary from sport to sport.

"I always carried two lucky quarters with me while I competed in golf tournaments," said senior Ben Johnson, a golfer for Bloomington High School.

One of the most universal superstitions known in the world of sports is the bad luck of wearing the number thirteen on a jersey. It is similar to how there is no 13th floor on many elevators, or no row 13 on airliners. Some notable exceptions to athletes wearing the number thirteen in the past have been Hall of Famers Dan Marino in football and Wilt Chamberlain in basketball.

"I wore the number 13 during my junior varsity years," said senior soccer player Ben Leifheit. "I was

always a little superstitious."

In baseball and softball it is quite noticeable that many of the players in or near the batters box perform unique routines to prepare themselves before they go up to the plate. Some of these activities include spitting in their hands, drawing shapes in the dirt with their bat, chanting mantras, and blowing bubbles with their gum.

"I swing three times before stepping into the box," said senior BHS softball player Chelsea Batty. "I do the same routine every time before I bat."

In basketball during a free throw some players have different technique for making sure they make their basket. Sometimes the shooter will dribble the ball a certain number of times, hold it at chest level for a second or two, and then shoot.

"I dribble the ball three times, spin it, and dribble once more before I shoot," said junior BHS basketball player Shaneice Bell.

Some other common sport rituals consist of not

washing a favorite piece of clothing while on a winning streak, eating the same pre-game meal regularly, not shaving during a good performance streak, putting on clothing in the exact same way every day, and changing up that order if a slump occurs.

"I can't run a race or play a game of soccer without my lucky pair of Batman boxers," said senior track and field runner Ben Hanson.

Professional athletes are not the only people that believe in taking precautions when it comes to superstitions. Some Raider athletes partake in their unique rituals before or during a sporting event.

"On the school volleyball team we would wear one lime green shoelace on our right foot," said senior Alli Kirk.

To observers, the practicing of these rituals to avoid the bad luck from superstitions may appear silly, but to the athletes it is one way to feel comfortable about their upcoming and hopefully flawless performance.

Boys swim team ends in success

REID GOLOWSKI
Writer

The boys swim team went out with a bang this year sending five members; Joey Fleming, Shaun Wolfe, Charlie Boaz, Steven Lust and Jeff Drake to State.

"It was a really long season, with a lot of hard practices, but the final result is always worth while," said junior Charlie Boaz

Boaz qualified for state in both the 200 free relay and the 500 free. The 200 free relay placed 25th overall with a time of 1:28.56 and set a school record in the process. The three other members of the relay included Steven Lust, Jeff Drake and Shaun Wolfe.

"Every one on that relay has at least another year or two so were expecting to finish a lot better next year," said sophomore Shaun Wolfe

Wolfe who visited state for his second consecutive year finished 8th in the 50 free with a time of 21.13 seconds setting a school record. Wolfe holds two solo records at BHS along with three records in a relay.

Another school record holder who made it to state is senior Joey Fleming. Fleming holds two records in diving one for total points for six dives and another for total points for 11 dives. Fleming finished his high school career by placing 13th overall with a total of 259.45 points.

"I'm a little disappointed but overall I'm pleased with all the effort I put in over the years I dove, and hopefully my records will stay up for a long time," said Fleming

The swim team will lose two seniors, but will be returning at least 10 members, half of which who went to state either as an alternate or a qualifier.

"We will be returning a lot of good kids next year so hopefully we can make it next year as a team instead of just sending a couple of people," said Boaz

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