

# English III

## 2005-2006

### Sports Dilemma

by Kaitlin Crawford

During one of my attempt to over-commit myself, I began my quest to participate in two sports at once. I was unsure, however, if this feat of athleticism and time management was allowed at my school. After inquiring to several sources and winning no clear answer, I decided to ask the newly-appointed principal. He paused, took a deep breath, but, before performing his well-rehearsed reply, he stopped and said, "Would you like to know the real answer?" He then explained how the star quarterback of the school might be distracted from the football team if he participated in another sport simultaneously, which would then affect the game scores, and possibly a district or state title.

I was stunned by the principal's apparent lack of interest towards the student: a fair program should certainly allow student's full opportunity to participate in multiple sports programs. If the department was holding back athletes merely for the sake of vanity, then something needed to change. The reasons for this rule may seem logical to those who haven't felt the aching pain of athletes who are torn from sports they have known since childhood. I am currently facing the tearing decision of whether to play soccer or to run cross-country next fall. I played soccer for the past two years, but ran cross-country for two years before that. During the last soccer season, I was yearning to join cross-country again, but even the thought of leaving soccer makes me utterly miserable.

High schools may worry about tenacious students jumping on every opportunity to over-commit themselves. However, if schools set boundaries that restrict students' participation in activities, then some students won't be able to challenge themselves to their full potential. In junior high, soccer wasn't a school sport. Several students played soccer as well as participating in either volleyball or cross-country, and still maintained high GPA's. In high school, the level of academic difficulty is higher; making it harder for some students, but the capacity of work that students can handle varies with different individuals. These are students who could manage school work within the limited time allowed by participation in two sports. Schools may feel the need to monitor over-commitment for students, but they should at least allow the opportunity for the student with the capability to try to meet the challenge. "I think that it would take a very unique individual to play two

### Imbalance

by Kaitlin Crawford

Work and play; imbalance  
in our daily lives.  
Strange value rests upon the more tedious  
side of the scale: play is guilty pleasure,  
weighed down by the burden of compulsory work.  
Although game is happiness  
a necessity striven for, earned only,  
paradoxically, through hard work -- its joy  
flickers as a dim beacon  
on distant horizons.  
Work, a heavy shackle, outweighs all else on  
the teetering scale.

### Bias

by Kaitlin Crawford

A crimson glow of twilight dims humanity,  
the dark veil slowly descends.  
Man stumbles, unable to see,  
confusing dusk with backs of red eyelids.  
Enclosed by obscured vision,  
he is sure that Night has fallen.

Fearing what lies in his  
dark world, imagination compensates  
for reality: fantasies elaborate perils and sinister monsters  
consume  
his narrow mind.  
Threatened, he creates a refuge; constructing walls, with  
bars and locks, ostracizing any strange, curious observer  
who might penetrate  
this safe enclosure.

Dawn light shines on impressive walls;  
unable to illuminate their interior. Trapped behind thick  
ramparts,  
he will never understand that  
all from which he tries to hide lurks only  
in the cage of his own, fixed  
mind.

sports at once," says soccer coach Lex Bernstein, "but it's not for the school to determine whether they can or can't, because they could be holding the student back from scholarship opportunities, such as a soccer player being a kicker for the football team."

In high school where soccer is part of the school athletic program, student must decide between two cherished sports, leaving a gaping hole in their souls. All of my peers who chose soccer over volleyball and cross-county injured the latter sports from the loss of players. Some athletic programs do not challenge young athletes who wish to excel in physical activities. These students may find it necessary to participate in two sports, but are limited by school rules to one. In middle school, softball-a sport I had played for years-was part of the city recreation program, so I was able to both run track and play softball. In high school, however, I was forced to choose between an old friend and a new love. I chose track, but my guilt of betrayal towards softball still tears my insides.

Coaches may feel that a second sport distracts from their own team and teammates. Former swim coach Deb Staup says, "If you're going to join my team, you've got to be committed; it's like marriage, you can't have two spouses at once. It just doesn't work." If there were a game or meet form each sport on the same day, the athlete would have to choose which sport to support. But this is not an issue for the school to decide; it is for the coaches to make a decision. In the past, before baseball was a school sport, several athletes competed in both baseball and in track and field. Because the single sport rule did not apply to non-school sports, coaches and athletes were able to make a compromise. Kelly O'Connell, the track and field coach, explained that the two coaches and athlete would make a compromise: "I would sit down with the athlete and the other coach and talk about it. The athlete would decide which would be the primary sport, then we would make a practice schedule. We would take it week by week." When the athlete and both coaches are willing to make a compromise, and the athlete maintains fair grades, the school needs to take into consideration the ability of the student athletes.

Rules restricting an athlete's participation cannot easily be changed. High schools fail to realize the crippling emotional effects of this unjustified regulation. The blasphemy that students like me will have to choose, resulting in a heart-breaking departure from a loved sport, sadly, will continue. However foolish the rule may be, the schools may never see through this heartrending injustice, the bias that trades passion for a title