



The Blue Jay



November 2015

Volume 88, No. 3

Jays honor moms at Mass, meal

Tradition reminds sons of greatest gift

By Alex Thomas
Staff Writer

Those who happened to stumble upon a group of young men dressed in coats and ties accompanying a group of older women wearing dresses and high heels on a recent Saturday morning in the Central Business District last month might have been caught by surprise.

But to Blue Jays, it's not only a tradition, but the Mother-Son Mass and Breakfast is perhaps the best way to annually commemorate one of a young man's greatest gifts: his mother.

This year's event emphasized just how important a role each mother plays in her son's

development and growth.

Fr. Frank Reale, S.J., stressed this point in his homily at the Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Conception on Baronne Street, the birthplace of Jesuit High School. He used the growth of the school as a metaphor for the growth of Blue Jay students, explaining how Jesuit's earliest years took place on Baronne Street and through many years of growth, became what it is today on the corner of Carrollton and Banks.

Before the Mass ended, seniors J.R. Malbrough and Noah Billeaud gave heartwarming speeches about their own mothers. Malbrough highlighted his mother's giving nature, telling a story about how after Hurricane Katrina, she had recovered some sweatshirts from the bookstore

Here's to you, Mom!



Scores of Blue Jays honored their mothers at the annual Mother-Son Mass, which was held at Jesuits' Church on Baronne Street on Oct. 10. The students and their moms then headed next door to the Roosevelt Hotel for a gourmet breakfast.

that had not been destroyed, washed and dried them, and handed them out to gloomy students in the courtyard.

Billeaud expressed the idea of giving back to mothers. "I'm not a bowtie person but my mom has always wanted me to wear a bowtie. And because today is all about mom, I did it. And I kind of like it."

Following the Mass, the Blue Jays accompanied their mothers to a breakfast across the street at the Roosevelt Hotel. The gourmet repast consisted of steamed asparagus, juicy bacon,

diced breakfast potatoes, a yogurt parfait, scrambled eggs, pastries, orange juice, and hot coffee.

Two Blue Jays and their mothers shared some thoughts following the meal.

Freshman Zachary DeBlieux described his mother as an amazing person who constantly provides an example of what it means to be loving and selfless. His mother, Karen DeBlieux, said her favorite memory with her son was the time he pitched and won a crucial baseball game, then looked up from the field and smiled at her in the stands.

Freshman Scott McKeough described his mother as a thoughtful woman who always encourages and assists him with cross country and his homework. Kristin McKeough said that her favorite memories with her son come during the conversations they have on their way to his early-morning cross country practices.

It is easy to overlook the importance of mothers in everyday life. This breakfast and Mass underlines the point that can be too easily forgotten: mothers are one of God's greatest gifts.



Businessman John O'Shea, Class of 1980, has been named Jesuit High School's 2015 Alumnus of the Year. His best advice for current Blue Jays: Stay committed.

Civic leader, oilman named Alum of Year

By Jonathan LeBrun
Staff Writer

As a successful oilman, John O'Shea Jr. has never forgotten the lessons learned at Jesuit High School to always be a man for others. With a career and talent that has brought him great blessings, he has regularly given back to the community in thanks for those blessings.

For that dedication, O'Shea

is the 2015 Jesuit High School Alumnus of the Year.

"It is very humbling and it is amazing to be with all of the great alumni who have received this award," O'Shea said recently during an interview from his home in Houston.

"It makes me want to become a better person."

O'Shea, Class of 1980, originally came to Jesuit in 1976, attracted to the school's reputa-

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Overnight in the gym: Pre-freshmen fun

By William Martin
Staff Writer

The Class of 2020 pulled its first all-nighter on a recent Friday night.

No, the pre-freshmen were not cramming for semester exams already. They gathered on Oct. 16 for the annual Eighth Grade Gym Night.

The timing for this event could not have been more perfect. It was a long week for the pre-freshman, having recently completed their first quarter exams in a new school. A fun pizza party started the evening off in the Traditions Courtyard. The classmates enjoyed running around, football and an ultimate game on Will Clark Field.

After that, they made their way to the Roussel Building, some with sleeping bags and pillows in hand.

But before bedding down, more activities followed. A homeroom basketball tournament, dodgeball, lots of food and candy, and movie screenings,



Members of the pre-freshman class gathered last month for the annual Eighth-grade Gym Night, an evening of fun, games, pizza and movies. Some members of the Class of 2020 then slept overnight in the gym that Friday night, waking to a doughnut breakfast in the morning.

Staff photo by William Martin

such as *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, were all part of the fun-filled Friday night. Some

pre-freshman headed out at midnight but the rest spent the night on the third floor of the Roussel

Building. Everyone woke up to a doughnut breakfast followed by a Mass in the Holy Name of Jesus

Chapel to conclude this year's Gym Night and welcome a new day.



English teacher Chris Bowes offers advice to senior Will Hurley on his writing. Bowes, Class of '02, enjoys being 'back home' at Jesuit, where he also is a co-moderator of the Student Council.

Staff photo by Jae Kweon

No place like home: For Bowes, that means Jesuit

By Donald Barrett
News Editor

English teacher Chris Bowes is familiar with both sides of the classroom.

Now in his fourth year of teaching at Jesuit, and having graduated with the class of 2002, he remembers well what it was like seated on the other side of the podium.

Bowes is an English teacher, student council moderator, and moderator of the Movie Critics Club. He is well-liked by his students for being a relaxed teacher

Teacher Feature

who uses projects and group work to encourage interest in a subject. He is known for a few other things as well. As sophomore Andrew Gruntz put it, "He is a fashionable man with a vast knowledge of many things."

When he was a student at Jesuit, Bowes had originally wanted to become a filmmaker or a novelist. He has always had an interest in both English, which he described as his favorite subject and easiest class, and French.

Among his most influential

teachers was the late Linda Wandersee, whom he described as being a bold and talented French teacher. He also cited Malcolm Villarrubia, whom he said "taught me critical thinking as well as any writing or reading technique."

It was after graduating from Jesuit, that Bowes realized that he wanted to become a teacher. He went to Louisiana Scholars College, a liberal arts school, and majored in English. He then went on to earn a master's degree in education from the University of Pennsylvania.

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Ultimate Frisbee team hopes to soar into championship

By Will Hurley
Staff Writer

Many may treat the sport of Frisbee as a simple pastime, but, for many in the Jesuit community, Frisbee is an active part of their daily routine.

The Ultimate Frisbee team has a wide diversity of athletes from all grade levels and has recently benefitted from an outpouring of newly joined seniors.

The season kicked off in early September, and since then, the Jays have been hard at work. The team meets twice a week to prepare for the state tournament in April.

The team hopes to make a successful run at the state title similar to that of the football team just a year ago.

The 2016 season is only three years removed from the last Ultimate Frisbee state championship brought to Carrollton and Banks.

That championship team had many of its star players graduate. In addition, this year a new coaching staff was brought on in order to help the team win gold once again.

The Blue Jays are led by moderator Susan deBoisblanc and head Coach Maggie Tyson and assistant, John Zimmer.

The Jays have been in the process of rebuilding for the past two years, but many players

Club of the Month

Ultimate Frisbee
practices Mondays
and Fridays after
school at the track
in City Park.

believe that this season will be different. One of these members is senior offensive specialist Reginald Jackson.

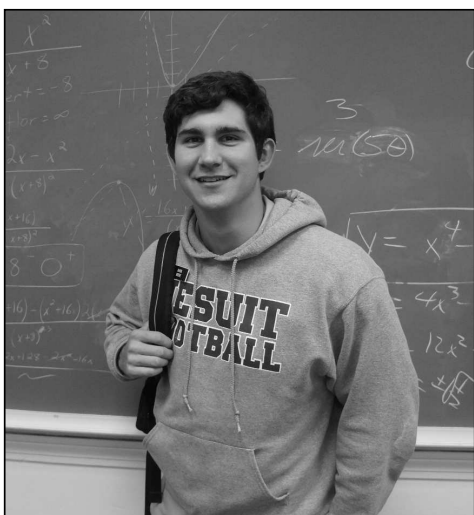
He is just one of many examples of players who have played another sport and have since brought their talents to the Frisbee field. He credits his athletic abilities on the field to his four years as a Jesuit lacrosse player.

"We have a solid group of athletes, so as long as we maintain focus anything is possible," he said when asked about his outlook for the season.

Playing on the opposite side of the field is a track athlete and former football tight end Andrew Mieras, who is optimistic about the season prospects.

"We have this [the state title] locked up!"

Only time will tell if the Ultimate Frisbee team will perform as expected, but the team will be working hard until they get their chance to prove themselves in April.



From court and field to classroom, senior Mark Beebe dedicates all of his efforts to promoting Blue Jay spirit, making him our Blue Jay of the Month.
Staff photo by Jae Kweon

Sports, spirit drive Beebe's life at Jesuit

By John Nimmo
Staff Writer

From the football field, the baseball diamond and the basketball court, senior Mark Beebe is a strong presence throughout Jesuit athletics. He also, however, bolsters Blue Jay pride through his work with the Student Council, as well as simply embodying that spirit of Blue and White.

Beebe clearly embodies all the ideals that make him our Blue Jay of the Month for November.

Senior year has started off with a bang for Beebe, and that probably will not slow down until graduation on May 24. Throughout the first two quarters, football, without a doubt, has consumed most of his time. Practicing every day and having games every weekend, Beebe has stayed busy whether on the field or reviewing films with his coaches and teammates.

Beebe was an essential player on the 2014 Jesuit state championship football team. He described the event as "the greatest experience of my life thus far."

Although being part of the first team to win a football championship since 1960 was an incredible feat, the sentimental value was particularly exceptional for Beebe. His grandfather was on the 1953 state championship team for Jesuit. He took his grandson to Jesuit football games when Beebe was little; and now being on the field, Beebe has accomplished a lifelong dream.

While football takes up a majority of his time, Beebe also manages to juggle involvement

Blue Jay of the Month

in many other co-curricular clubs and societies including the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Peer Support, the Big Brother program, Student Council, and the Spirit Club.

Although all of these programs are significant, a unique activity stands apart from these: being a member of the 2015 Homecoming Court. This was an experience that Mark had never encountered before. If you think ballroom dancing is easy, think again!

The Court practiced for two hours, three times a week, for a month. That is twenty-four hours of practice just to dance for 10 minutes!

"Though the preparation was nerve-racking, once we started dancing, it was a lot of fun," he said. Beebe encourages anyone who is looking to try something different to definitely run for Homecoming Court next year.

Looking forward to the rest of the year, Beebe also is part of both the basketball and baseball teams. Although the 2015 high school baseball season has yet to begin, the team already drew action over the summer in the 2015 American Legion World Series. What stood out most for Beebe was the hospitality of the people of Shelby, N.C., the home of the series.

"They were very hospitable and treated us like rock stars when we were there. Also, we got to hear stories from Robert

See BEEBE, Page 5

Greeting new students continues a long line of Blue Jay tradition

By Kevin Credo
Opinions Editor

October and November always have Jesuit High School in full recruitment mode. The old place gets polished up as our community presents itself at its very best.

In addition to the big events like Open House and Blue and White Friday Night, it also feels like there's a tour of prospective students – prospective Blue Jays ready to hatch – looking at the school on nearly a daily basis.

With all this bustle of prepping for the next class of Blue Jays, it might lead current students to think about their place in the Jesuit community as well; and just what it means to be a student here.

I recently had the honor of speaking about Jesuit's music programs at Blue and White Friday night. It made me think about how my older brother gave a similar speech when I was in the audience five years ago. As I spoke, I thought there might be a young guy in the room who might eventually give the same speech and continue the cycle.

I remember the pep rallies presented to us as eighth graders. My fellow classmates and I – now seniors – were told then about how we were going to be "the new generation" of Blue Jays.

Now we stand before the expectant classes and say the same. I'm in the Resource Center when I see young students prepping their World Geography projects. They were studying European countries just as I had at the same part of the same grade; I still remember Luxembourg.

What I'm getting at here is



A prospective student (already donning a Blue Jay sweatshirt) examines a microscope in one of the science labs during this month's Open House.

Thoughts of a Blue Jay

that Jesuit (and high school, in general), can often feel like a sort of conveyor belt that students have to be rolled through to make room for the next batch.

But our school is unique in that it is so much more.

The entire Jesuit experience is designed to bring students closer together. We share the same classes for years, and you're never far off from seeing an old buddy in the hallways.

Just about every student on campus is involved with some co-curricular activities, and some of them are so big a part of the life here that we spend even more time with one another.

Jesuit provides the materials for the education, but the students make the school what it is – they have always done so, and will no doubt continue to do so in the future.

Perhaps the greatest example of Jesuit's timelessness is its ability to pass down traditions from generation to generation.

How did the seniors today learn the stories about the pool on the roof or the necessity of a costume at the October pep rally? We learned it from those who came before us and these little bits of "Blue Jay lifestyle" have survived for years.

The pride we take in our school's culture is a testament to the ageless sense of brotherhood that we have come to associate

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Even Jayson popped in for a tour to greet prospective new Blue Jays at this month's Open House.

En garde! It's swashbuckling fun as Phils stage *Three Musketeers*

By John Kling
Staff Writer

The Jesuit Philelectic Society is known for building a strong sense of camaraderie and producing lifelong friendships. The classic tale of "All for one, and one for all," therefore, is a natural draw for the acting troupe.

For its fall production, the Phils will thrust and parry their way through the swashbuckling tale of *The Three Musketeers*.

The timeless story of adventure and romance by Alexandre Dumas has been adapted for the stage by playwright Ken Ludwig.

The main protagonist of the play is d'Artagnan, a young Frenchman from Gascony, who sets off for 17th century Paris in search of adventure and to join the famed Musketeers, the guards of French royalty. D'Artagnan is played by junior Jordan Kelley.

Joining him on the road to Paris, where she is supposed to be enrolled in a convent school, is his sister, Sabine. Played by Sylvia Owen, she disguises herself as a boy and becomes a part of her brother's adventures.

In Paris, d'Artagnan meets the titular trio of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, played respectively by senior Ben Gillen, and juniors Edward Medina and Matthew O'Neill. In his initial encounter, d'Artagnan offends the Musketeers while trying to speak with Rochefort (senior Henry Mason), an agent for the wicked Cardinal Richelieu (senior Thomas Hellmers).

The Musketeers challenge d'Artagnan to a duel, but Richelieu's men attempt to arrest the group before the duel could begin. However, the four join ranks to defeat the soldiers, ensuring d'Artagnan's welcome by the trio.

Later, d'Artagnan falls in love with the lovely Madame Constance Bonacieux, (Lindsey Falgoust). Yet, the new Musketeer must prove his worth to his love when he and his men must rescue Constance from the evil clutches of Rochefort, who has captured and beaten the young woman by the orders of the nefarious Richelieu.

Other key characters include King Louis XIII of France (senior Adam Ledet), and the Countess de Winter, a dangerous woman with a dark past, portrayed by Ellanor Patton.

Also featured is theology teacher Julio Minsal-Ruiz, S.J., who plays d'Artagnan's father.

The play promises action, suspense, and romance throughout and is sure to please Jesuit audiences throughout its several performances.

One of the highlights of the



Swordplay and action abounds in the rollicking adventure of *The Three Musketeers*, the fall production by the Jesuit Philelectic Society. Junior Jordan Kelley, left, stars as d'Artagnan, who fights the wicked Rochefort, played by senior Henry Mason.

Photos courtesy of Charles Bourg



In a pause from their adventures, d'Artagnan (Jordan Kelley, left) joins the Musketeers at a tavern. The trio (from left) consists of Porthos (junior Edward Medina), Athos (senior Ben Gillen), and Aramis (junior Matthew O'Neill). The colorful costumes depicting the court of King Louis XIII are among the highlights of the lavish production, directed by the Philelectic Society's Kate Arthurs-Goldberg.

show is the use of advanced swordplay.

The main cast has practiced extensively in the field of classic fencing in the weeks leading up to the performance.

To stage the fight choreography, the Phils called on Alex Wallace, a member of the noted NOLA Project theatrical troupe.

Kelley said he has particularly enjoyed his experience in learning swordplay.

"Learning stage combat for the show was quite possibly the most enjoyable thing I've ever done," he said.

"Instead of simply going through one various position and on the other you have to react like you're about to die at any moment.

"It's exhilarating and is truly an art form like no other," he said of the realistic looking fights.



Hours of rehearsal went into choreographing the elaborate swordfights that energize *The Three Musketeers*. Here, senior Ben Gillen, left, and junior Jordan Kelley square off during a rehearsal.

Staff photo by Richi Fernando

The Three Musketeers

The Philelectic Society presents the classic tale of love and adventure.

When: Final shows at 6:30 Thursday, 7:30 Friday & Saturday, and at 2 Saturday.

Advance Tickets: \$5 students, \$10 adults; at the door, \$10-\$15.

O'Shea still carries values learned here

O'Shea

Continued from Page 1

tion for being the very best academically and for having great athletic programs.

He quickly joined the wrestling and football team. He fondly recalled the great coaching staff and the wrestling team's dominance in the 1970s. O'Shea's wrestling partner, whom he would regularly beat in practice matches, would go on to become a multiple state champion. O'Shea said he still regrets leaving the team in his sophomore year.

O'Shea also described his friendship with Fr. Wayne Roca. One of his favorite memories at Jesuit, was a trip which Fr. Roca and some of his classmates went to Las Vegas and visited the Grand Canyon.

After graduation from Jesuit in 1980, O'Shea enrolled at Louisiana Tech University. While attending college, he married Ms. Charlene Brandau. (Her father also is a Blue Jay, from the Class of 1951.)

After college, O'Shea relocated to Texas where he briefly was employed as a production engineer for an oil company. He went on to start multiple compa-

nies with varied degrees of success, but in 2002, he hit it big with Millennium Midstream Partners, which would become one of the fastest-growing oil companies in America.

He sold that company in 2008, and currently is the chief executive of Navigator Energy.

For all of his business and financial success, however, O'Shea said he is proudest of his work with the Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory School in Houston.

He was a key contributor in starting the school, which was up and running for the 2009-10 academic year. In 2014, O'Shea became interim president of the Cristo Rey Network. The school focuses on serving teenagers from areas with high poverty and crime rates, offering them a chance for a better education and moving on to college.

If he could go back to his time at Jesuit, and give himself some advice, O'Shea said, "Be more even tempered and peaceful and not to always be in a hurry. Enjoy things while they are happening."

His advice to today's Blue Jays is similar.

"Just study hard, be committed, try not to be distracted by college and learn to manage your time."

moments include those where he is able to connect with students. He also enjoys seeing the relief and the pride that his juniors experience when they finish their research papers. As a Student Council moderator, he enjoys seeing the seniors outside of school at events like Senior Prom.

Chris Bowes, a man who once aspired to become a filmmaker, writing scripts for and directing his own films, currently writes and directs today, but not for films. Bowes plays a role in writing a part of the script of each of his students' lives and directs his students in their education on to great successes.

moting Blue Jay spirit, traveling is one of Beebe's favorite pastimes. He has been all over the world, Rome, Florence and Venice in Italy; Barcelona, Madrid and Granada, Spain; Bermuda and Hawaii (which he called his favorite).

As his Jesuit career heads toward its close, Beebe reminisced on how "it feels like just yesterday I was sitting in the hallway as an eighth-grader." For all seniors it must be a strange feeling to grasp that they only have a little more than half of a year at Jesuit. Beebe said he thanks Jesuit for everything it has done to prepare him for the long road ahead.

"As ridiculous as it sounds, I will miss putting on khaki every morning and being with my friends every day."

Pep Rally Performers!



The annual October Pep Rally features the mad senior scramble to the gym floor, where this year's class upheld the lively tradition, costumed in a colorful assortment of characters ranging from the satiric to the downright silly!

Staff photo by Richi Fernando



What goes better with a hot dog? Spicy mustard, of course! And if you want a glass of milk with that dog, well you might have trouble getting any from this particular herd of cows!

Staff photos by Jae Kweon

Bowes

Continued from Page 2

After teaching in Philadelphia for a year after college, Bowes came back to New Orleans.

"Being away from home" he said, "really taught me how important home was to me." After teaching for three years at Archbishop Shaw High School, he was finally able to return to Carrollton and Banks.

Returning as a teacher has offered Bowes a "broader view of the school." From a teaching perspective, some of his favorite

Credo

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with our institution.

And when we do walk across the stage at graduation, is that truly the end? If it was, then it would be hard to make sense of an entire office devoted to keeping alumni connected.

Up on the third floor of the administration wing, the tables in

the hall are decorated with books about the history and culture of New Orleans. I think that they serve as a reminder that former Jesuit students go on to play major roles in the city, even the nation.

Although Blue Jays go on to do so many amazing things, we are all united through the bonds and growth that we experienced together, growth that comes from the common school experience we all share.

It's always becoming easier and easier to realize that Jesuit is a fond place for men of all ages, whether they're experiencing the anticipation of a prospective student, the day-to-day life of a current student, or the fond reminiscence of an alumnus.

No matter what stage of Blue Jay life you are in, you are already part of a larger picture that only grows each year. You are a man for others and a Blue Jay forever.

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Beebe

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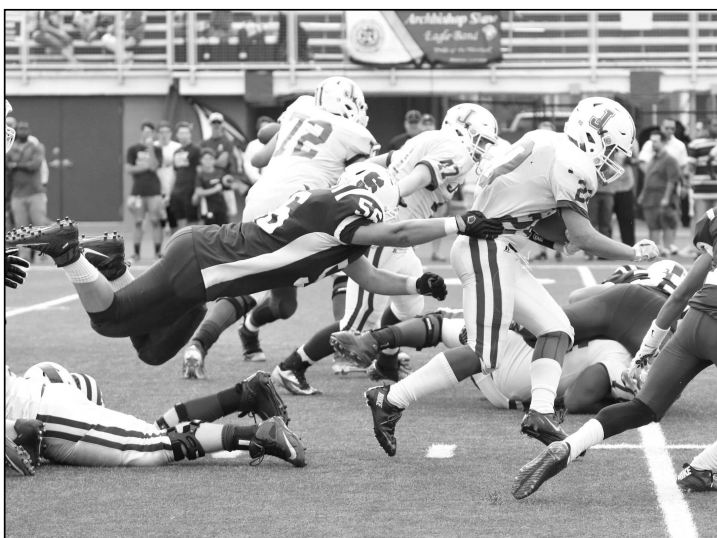
O'Neill (the man who killed Osama bin Laden) of his time as a Navy SEAL, which was pretty amazing," Beebe said.

He looks forward to getting on the field for the 2016 season this spring.

With high school coming to an end, one thing all seniors are focusing on is the college application process. Beebe's top three schools are the University of Virginia, Boston College, and Washington and Lee University.

He is, however, looking at other schools depending on whether he will play collegiate sports.

Other than sports and pro-



Connor Prouet begins his third touchdown run from the 13-yard line, dragging a host of Archbishop Shaw Eagles the entire way. The Blue Jays won the game on the West Bank with a score of 42-14.

Football's rollercoaster season leads to playoffs

By Ian Fogarty
Sports Editor

What a rollercoaster of a season it has been for our Blue Jays! After starting the year off strong with a record of 2-1, the Jays dropped the next four games to fall to 2-5.

It was heartbreaking to watch those four weeks. Since then, the Jays have been playing their best football all season, including a rout of the Shaw Eagles, a hard fought victory at Franklinton, and a shoot-out with Brother Martin.

In the middle of October, Jesuit hosted Rummel, the top-ranked team in the division, at Tad Gormley Stadium.

The Raiders ran all over the Jays as they scored twice in the first quarter and went into halftime with 21-7 lead. Those seven points of the Jays came from a 78-yard screen pass and run from Peter Hontas to Kalija Lipscomb, who finished the game with six receptions for 181 yards. The outstanding individual efforts of the two seniors, however, was for naught as the Jays were outplayed by their opponent and lost with a final score of 28-14.

Looking to bounce back, the Jays traveled to Hoss Mentsas Stadium on the West Bank to face the Shaw Eagles.

Spoiling the Eagles' homecoming activities and their senior tailback's breaking of a school record for all-time rushing yards, the Blue Jays ran away with the win as junior Connor Prouet tallied for 153 yards and three touchdowns on just 17 totes.

The defense played superbly as they forced four turnovers on downs and recorded two interceptions, one by senior Mark Beebe and the other by junior Matt McMahon. Special teams

FOOTBALL SEASON AT A GLANCE

vs. Warren Easton
(Sept. 3)
LOSS 26-21

vs. St. Paul's (Sept. 11)
WIN 17-14

vs. Escambia (Sept. 18)
WIN 28-17

HOMECOMING
vs. St. Aug (Sept. 25)
LOSS 32-20

GREAT AMERICAN
RIVALRY
vs. Holy Cross (Oct. 2)
LOSS 28-21

vs. John Curtis (Oct. 9)
LOSS 24-16

vs. Rummel (Oct. 17)
LOSS 28-14

vs. Shaw (Oct. 24)
WIN 42-14

vs. Franklinton (Oct. 30)
WIN 19-14

vs. Bro. Martin (Nov. 6)
LOSS 49-46

were led by senior Malachi Hull, who returned a punt 60 yards for a touchdown. The Jays finished the rout of the Eagles with a final score of 42-14.

The Blue Jays then traveled to Franklinton some 70 miles from Carrollton and Banks. The Jays defeated the Demons 19-14 improving their record to 4-5. With their opponent favored to

win, the Jays overcame those odds as quarterback Hontas connected with junior wide receiver Bryce Musso for two touchdowns. Lipscomb also snagged a touchdown from Hontas.

On the other side of the ball, the defense held the Demons, who were previously averaging over 30 points per game, to only 14 points.

Next up was Brother Martin, arguably the most exciting game since last year's state championship. Hontas and the Crusaders' quarterback combined for 11 passing touchdowns while Lipscomb recorded 180 yards and three touchdowns.

With a 4-point lead and with just 19 seconds left in the game, the infamous hook-and-lateral took place. Brother Martin performed one of the trickiest plays in all of high school football as they scored a touchdown to set the score at 49-46.

But Blue Jays do not quit! As time expired, Hontas threw a screen pass to Lipscomb, who patiently followed his blocks, only to be stopped just a few feet before the endzone. A depressing defeat indeed, but football is a game of inches and Jesuit fought the good fight to the last inch.

The past four games have been altogether solid performances from Jesuit. The Jays look to keep this momentum through the playoffs. As the Jays discovered last season, it only takes three or four wins in the playoffs to capture the state championship. Jesuit fans are certainly hoping the team can produce another magical run in the playoffs this year. First up is Shaw, then a rematch against Rummel if the team advances.

Editor's note: The playoff games begin after The Blue Jay's press time. For latest results, check the school website at www.jesuitnola.org.

Cross Country takes district, in run for state championship

By Reed Darcey
Staff Writer

Following a stellar 2014 campaign, the Cross Country team had big shoes to fill in its 2015 season.

As the first meet of October rolled around, the Country Day meet, one big question remained unanswered: who will be running to defend their state title?

Three runners really stepped up and made their statements: senior Carlos Zervigon and juniors Eli Sisung and Reed Meric. Behind them a group of 12 runners remained clustered together.

Despite the lack of roster clarity and difficult decisions to be made, the squad rallied to claim first place with a score of 30 points. (The overall score is the sum of the places of the top five runners on each team; the lowest team score wins.)

Four other Jays crossed the finish line in under 17 minutes: senior John James (16:43), junior John Kling (16:44), junior Tanner Tresca (16:52), and senior Nick Slay (17:00).

"I definitely saw some things I liked today," Coach Rudy Horvath said at the time, "but I haven't seen enough yet to make any definitive calls on the final four guys for the state roster." The pivotal race the next week was the Walker Shootout in Walker, La.

The Walker Shootout happened without Jesuit's top five runners from the Country Day meet. The runners clustered close together had to be given a final chance to earn a spot on the seven-man lineup for the district championship.

Tresca (16:08) and senior John Nimmo (16:22) both delivered, finishing as the first and second Jays and earning the next two spots for the district meet.

They set personal records in the process. Three other Jays also set their personal records when Slay (16:39), junior Luke Malter (16:45), and sophomore Jordan Tufts (16:46) finished third, fourth, and fifth, respectively.

However, the team finished in seventh place, well behind first-place St. Paul's. The district roster is now set, but the state roster is still largely up for grabs.

"We could still see some movement by the time state rolls around. At this point, the only guys who have definitively punched their tickets to Natchitoches (site of the state meet on Nov. 17) are Reed Meric, Carlos Zervigon, and Eli

Sisung," Horvath said.

The Blue Jay runners next competed in the Jack Schommer invitational meet, where they took second place as Malter put up another strong showing by finishing third overall with a time of 17:12. Slay also put forth a great effort by finishing seventh overall at 17:31. Tufts finished two spots behind Slay at 17:35, and sophomore Ryan Guillot (18:41) and junior Hayden Ricca (19:12) rounded out the top five. Horvath sat out his top seven runners so each would be fresh for the district meet.

"If we are going to be as successful this year as we were last," said Coach Horvath, "we have to learn to run as a tight pack. We really don't have a superstar on our team, so our guys toward the back of the pack have to gain confidence to stay close to the guys in the front."

The strategy worked as Jesuit captured its fourth consecutive district meet, defeating second-place Brother Martin and third-place John Curtis to capture the title.

All seven Blue Jays finished in the top 20, thus bringing back the well-known "pack" from last season. A major goal is to duplicate the astounding 27-second split between the first- and seventh-place runners. They displayed a very respectable 56-second split in the district meet and look to improve before the state meet.

Meric finished first for the Jays, crossing the finish line in fourth place overall with a time of 16:12 for the three-mile course. Zervigon also cracked the top ten, finishing ninth overall with a time of 16:19. Rounding out the scoring for the Jays were Sisung (16:29, 11th), Kling (16:33, 12th), and Tresca (16:55, 14th). James and Nimmo finished in 19th and 20th place, respectively.

The last run of the regular season was the Sugar Bowl meet in which Jesuit placed second behind Brother Martin. Four Blue Jays finished in the Top 20, earning All-Metro honors in the process. Zervigon crossed the line seventh (16:17), followed by Meric (16:29, 10th), Kling (16:36, 12th) and James (16:50, 16th). Also running for the Jays were Tresca (17:10, 26th), Nimmo (17:14, 29th) and Malter (18:27, 56th).

Editor's note: The state meet in Natchitoches was run on Nov. 17, which fell after The Blue Jay's press deadline. For the results, check out Jesuit's website at www.jesuitnola.org.