



# Perspectives on athletics

*A seasonal review of the Perspectives Charter Schools sports program*

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## Football team a cooperative hit

Terry Jones faced an imposing—and unusual—challenge when he took over as the head football coach at Perspectives Charter Schools last winter.

Not only was he replacing a coach who had led the Warriors to an undefeated conference record and 7-2 overall mark, but he also would be selling himself and his philosophy to players from the four different high schools that make up Perspectives Charter Schools coop football team.

He also would have to do it with shorter-than-normal practices because of Perspectives' longer school days and the fact that athletes from the Joslin and IIT Math & Science Academy campuses had to take a bus from their schools to the Auburn Gresham campus to join teammates from Perspectives High School of Technology and



Linebacker-fullback Cordale Stokley  
Perspectives Leadership Academy.

The result of all this, not surprisingly, was a slow start this fall as the Warriors lost five of their first six games in what was only Perspectives' third sea-

son of varsity football and Jones' first as a high school head coach.

The problem, Jones said, was installing a new system, new expectations and new rules, all while trying to win over his 47 varsity players.

"It was definitely earning trust, establishing a sense I was someone they can depend on," he said. "But I had no doubts they would come around."

The turning point came against Agricultural Science, Perspectives' seventh game of the season. Jones put about 10 players, almost all of them starters, on the bench for periods ranging from a quarter to the entire game for not following team rules.

Perspectives promptly rallied from a 20-0 second-half deficit to win 21-20. The Warriors then beat Phillips 49-20

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## Volleyball program reaches new level

This was a big season for the Perspectives Leadership Academy/Perspectives High School of Technology volleyball program.

The Warriors fielded their first frosh-soph team, which helped lead to a record program turnout of 20 players. Eleven of those girls played for the varsity, which finished 10-10 overall and an impressive 7-2 in the Chicago Public League Pink 2 Conference. Perspectives was runner-up in the Orr tourna-

ment and had its best state tournament seed ever.

"It was a great season," said Eron Powell, in his first year as varsity head coach. "Even in some losses the kids felt good because of the level of competition. We were playing some of the top teams in the city."

Powell praised his captains, senior outside hitter

Toinette Crudup and junior setter DeJenea Shaw, for doing "a great job."

"DeJenea was our best setter and motivational leader and has a 4.0 grade-point average," Powell said. "Toinette was a great leader and played with great perseverance."

He lauded his lone varsity freshman, starting  
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# Perspectives sports program all about excellence

By Vinay Mullick

Athletic Director

Welcome to the first Perspectives Charter Schools athletic newsletter. This is my fourth year as athletic director and just the third year we have had a full network program incorporating Perspectives/IIT Math & Science Academy as well as Perspectives Joslin, Perspectives Leadership Academy, Perspectives High School of Technology and Perspectives Middle Academy.

We now have 45 teams with 600 athletes and 80 coaches. We slowly but surely have built a strong program that will be competitive for years to come. Our teams have produced six Chicago Public Schools conference champions and five state playoff victories, and we have qualified individual athletes for city and state championships.

Al Rapier, a Joslin graduate, became our first NCAA Division I full scholarship athlete when he joined the Stony Brook basketball team this season. Joslin's Anthony Davis will play basketball

## About the newsletter

This newsletter was written and produced by Barry Temkin, an award-winning journalist at the Chicago Tribune who retired in 2008 and is now a volunteer in the Perspectives Charter Schools athletic department. He spent the last 20 years of his Tribune career writing a high school sports column, covering hundreds of schools, including Perspectives.

for Kentucky on scholarship next year.

At Perspectives, though, we stress one's intellect as well as his or her athletic prowess. One in three student-athletes has achieved a 3.0 grade-point average or above, and our athletes also have higher attendance rates and fewer discipline issues than do our non-athletes.

A Disciplined Life, the character development program which is the foundation of PCS, is also basic to our athletic program. We strive to win, but to do it the

right way while using sports to build better citizens as well as better athletes.

Our players work hard, and we support them however we can, including through a variety of fund-raising initiatives. We recently installed a trophy case for high school teams at our Auburn Gresham campus and hope to do the same at our MSA campus soon.

Our athletic visibility has grown tremendously, which would have been impossible without our coaches' effort and dedication. They work nights and weekends and serve as role models and mentors for athletes. They are unsung heroes.

Perspectives believes strongly in the value of sports, and we hope to increase student participation every season.

I'm really excited about what we've accomplished and what the future holds. For more information on our athletic program feel free to contact me or stop by my office at our Auburn Gresham Campus. Thank you for the support!

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## Late-season surge shows football on the rise

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and Carver Military Academy 28-26 to close out a 4-5 season. They were 3-3 in the Chicago Public League's Chicago Great Lakes Conference, good for a fourth-place tie but just one game out of first place.

"I wanted to send a message that you do have to work harder and do things the right way to continue to have success," Jones said. "I don't want to keep young men from succeeding; I want them to work harder."

The message came through loud and clear.

"That was the start of realiz-

ing what we needed in the game, and what we needed was energy, energy and leadership," senior linebacker-fullback Cordale Stokley said. "And Coach Jones talked a lot to the seniors about leadership."

"Once we realized we needed each and every one of us to win, everyone started to take care of their jobs, so we kept our heads and finished the season with three wins."

Jones said he changed his captains during the season as he continued to search for strong leaders. He eventually settled on Stokley, junior running back-defensive back

Spencer Williams and junior quarterback-defensive back Elijah Stokley, Cordale's brother.

Those three, along with senior offensive and defensive lineman Eric Johnson, were Jones' top players.

The coach is optimistic about next season, when his team moves to the Chicago Windy City Conference. He loses just five starters off this year's team and should get good leadership from his current juniors, whom he calls "very talented young men."

"It's real exciting," he said of the Warriors' 2011 prospects. "We definitely have our

core back; all our skill guys are back.

"The Windy City is a better league and has better exposure (than the Great Lakes). The teams have more history.

"We're climbing up the ladder and making strides, and the only way you can do it is by beating some teams that have been around."

Cordale Stokley is confident Perspectives will do just that in 2011.

"The (coaching) change was for the best for the team," he said. "I think next year Coach Jones will take the varsity to the next level."

# Perspectives middle school sports roundup

The **Perspectives Middle Academy volleyball team** finished 7-0 in the regular season and won an area championship before losing its first playoff game.

“It was a great season, considering how many girls we had who were brand new to volleyball,” said Stephanie Madziar, who coaches the team with Bridget Brennan. “There was amazing improvement.”

Season highlights included strong serving and one player improving a grade enough to rejoin the team and then become a game MVP.

Team captain was Arianna Wiley. Assistant captains were Autumn Jackson and Shakiyla Jones. Top players included Trenarda Johnson. All are 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Her team had 14 players, but Madziar hopes to boost the turnout next season.

“We hope to continue having successful teams and keep improving our skills and level of competition,” she said.

Confusion among opposing teams left the **Perspectives/IIT Math & Science Academy middle school volleyball team** with an unexpectedly small schedule, but the team’s 20 players made the best of it, working hard on basic skills.

“As a team we grew immensely this year, practicing our serves, bumps, and sets,” coach Hanna Yang said.

The season highlight for the team and captains Simone Johnson (8<sup>th</sup> grade) and Robbie Lewis (8<sup>th</sup> grade) was a victory over Hendricks.

“Although we have improved a lot this year, we still need to work on our fundamentals,” Yang added. “We need to work on how to cooperate as a team.”

The **Joslin middle school soccer team** had an 0-4 record this fall, but its 22 players worked hard and made steady progress. Among the season highlights, co-coaches Kelly Plante and Erin Batory said,

“We made quite a quite a bit of progress this season. Even in some losses in tournaments we were competitive. The players coming back are pretty excited.”

The **Perspectives Joslin volleyball team** had 15 players, which coach Laura Harrington called a better-than-usual turnout. The season highlight was the Perspectives tournament, where the inexperienced Panthers successfully battled pre-match jitters.

Harrington said her players “were nervous and a little scared to step on the court for

the first time, demonstrating determination and battling through those feelings to reveal their skills.”

was goalkeeper Raphael Hutchins’ improvement and tremendous parent support. Team captains were 8<sup>th</sup>-grader Juan Avalos and 7<sup>th</sup>-grader Hutchins. Top players include Kevin Paz, Ricardo Alday and Matthias Allen, all 8<sup>th</sup>-graders, and 6<sup>th</sup>-grader Westley Bertha. Paz was the team’s MVP, and Christopher Harris was the Most Improved Player.

The Panthers hope to improve in 2011 through better passing and team play.

The **Perspectives Middle Academy flag football team** finished with a 4-1 record, running its mark in Tristan Roche’s three seasons as coach to 18-3. The team was 4-0 in Area 16 games but lost to Area 18 winner Metcalfe 20-19 on a missed extra point with 21 seconds to play.

Quarterback-defensive end Darian Whiteside, wide receiver-cornerback Marcus

Starks and lineman-tight end Ricky Jacox, all 8<sup>th</sup>-graders, were captains. Other significant contributors included 8<sup>th</sup>-grade safety-wide-receiver DaVaughn Reed, 7<sup>th</sup>-grade running back-linebacker Dominic Smith and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade wide receiver-linebacker Hakeem Adebimpe.

The **Perspectives/IIT Math & Science Academy middle school flag football team** had a 1-2 record but showed the kind of perseverance that will lead to success in the years ahead. Coach Gabriel Hernandez said his 21 players showed impressive dedication, coming to every practice “even when we weren’t sure when our next game was going to be due to league scheduling difficulties.”

Eighth-grader Shondale Smith was the team’s practice captain; game captains were 8<sup>th</sup>-grader John Fleming and 7<sup>th</sup>-graders James Jordan and Rashard Sanders. Top players were Jordan, Fleming, Sanders and 6<sup>th</sup>-grader Anthony Davis.

## Perspectives volleyball programs poised for growth

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setter Willeasha Love, for her positive attitude. Powell believes young players such as Love will help his team prosper in upcoming seasons.

“We have a good farm system in our middle school,” he said. “We’ll be competitive the next few years for sure.

“We really want to build up, especially the frosh-soph. That will allow us to hone in on the varsity. Our long range goal is to win conference and advance past the first round of the state playoffs.

“We made quite a quite a

the first time, demonstrating determination and battling through those feelings to reveal their skills.”

Joslin’s tournament captains were junior Amina Wade and freshman Desiree Zepeda.

Harrington is looking forward to next season, hoping her veterans will help newcomers develop their skills and encourage more focus and dedication toward volleyball.

“Knowing we should have a large turnout, next year we look forward to more practices and more games to improve our skills,” she said.

The **Perspectives/IIT Math &**

**Science Academy volleyball team** finished 1-5 this season, but every player improved tremendously, which led to the Wolves’ first victory against Perspectives Joslin and a closely contested match against the University of Chicago Lab School.

Captains were sophomore Nina Ridgner and junior Aryies Bridges. Ridgner was the team MVP, and Bridges was Most Improved Player. Coach Beth Wright said she hopes to improve her team’s league affiliation next season and be able to practice daily on a regulation court.

# Anthony Davis keeps a team perspective

Anthony Davis didn't want to celebrate the biggest moment of his basketball career alone.

So moments before he signed a letter of intent Nov. 10 to play for Kentucky, the 6-foot-10-inch Perspectives Charter Schools Joslin campus senior forward called on his teammates to stand next to him.

"Without these young men and my coaches, I wouldn't be where I am now," Davis said to the students, faculty, staff and media who jammed the Joslin cafeteria for the signing celebration.

Although he is generally regarded as one of the top five high school players in the country, Davis, who likes to



Forward Anthony Davis

be called, "A.D.," has retained that sense of perspective.

"He's a very, very humble kid right now," Joslin coach Cortez Hale said. "He loves his team."

Davis enrolled at Perspectives in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and as recently as his sophomore year was a relatively unknown 6-2 guard. A four-year starter, he shot up to 6-10, joined a club program last spring and quickly went from "Who's he?" to fielding scholarship offers from most of the country's top college programs. He chose Kentucky over Ohio State and Syracuse.

"It was very overwhelming," Davis said in an interview about his sudden fame, "but great at the same time."

Davis probably is a once-in-a-lifetime player at PCS, which has a relatively young athletic program. He now likely could be playing for one of the Chicago hoops power-

houses, but he has stayed put, partly from loyalty.

"I wanted to stay with my team and fight to the end," said Davis, whose twin sister, Antoinette, also attends Perspectives.

Davis is a B-plus student who, unlike some other top stars, doesn't have to worry about meeting NCAA freshman eligibility standards. His goal is to play in the NBA, but he knows his Perspectives education gives him a solid Plan B.

"In case I don't make the NBA, I'll have something to fall back on," he said. "Basketball will not be here forever. Academics will always be around."

## Perspectives basketball team goes national

The Perspectives Charter Schools Joslin campus basketball team is having a Cinderella season.

What has transformed a previously under-the-radar program into hoops royalty—if only briefly—is a 6-foot-10-inch glass slipper named Anthony Davis. The senior forward's transformation from virtual anonymity to national stardom on the club team circuit last spring and summer has pushed a previously average program onto basketball's main stage.

Suddenly a schedule that was largely confined to obscure Chicago opponents includes stops in Ohio and Massachusetts and games against local powerhouses such as Young and De La Salle. And suddenly coach Cortez Hale was fielding recruiting calls from some of the top college coaches in the country, attention that stopped only after Davis chose perennial power Kentucky.

"It has been an amazing experience so

far," said Hale, in his third season in the Wolves' basketball program but his first year as varsity head coach. "It's overwhelming and keeping me humble and making me notice a lot more things as far as how high school basketball is going."

All the excitement stems from Davis' mix of size, athletic ability and skill.

"He's a do-it-all player," said Hale, whose team also has players from Perspectives/IIT Math & Science Academy. "He can shoot, pass, rebound and block shots. He can guard the post, guard the point guard, even play the point."

Perspectives' success depends greatly on whether Davis' teammates rise to the challenge his presence has created.

"He knows in order for him to have success, the team needs success," Hale said. "He tries to get the team as close to his level as possible."

The Wolves' other starters are 6-5 junior forward Manuel Whitfield, 6-7 junior center Tavares Larramore, 6-2 junior guard Marcus Dixon and 6-foot sophomore guard Chris Yates. The top reserve is 6-2 junior guard-forward Eddie Harris.

Besides Davis, the team's main strength is its good overall height. One key is how well Yates handles the point guard duties.

"It's how he deals with the pressure and all the attention from the big games and media ... all the lights," Hale said. "He knows how to control the ball, runs the team well and has a nice touch. He gets to the basket well."

One of the Wolves' most imposing tasks is its game against Young, which is Dec. 16 at Chicago State University and will be televised nationally on ESPNU.

The coach believes his team is prepared for a storybook season.