

The Centurion



The Award-Winning, Financially Independent, Student-Run Newspaper of Bucks County Community College

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Bucks Certified in Suicide Prevention

GABRIELLA PIRMAN

Centurion Staff

Bucks was recently certified as a Suicide Prevention Institution of Higher Education, making it one of five schools in the state to earn this title.

According to Dekia Smith, a counselor here at Bucks, “While Bucks has always offered free and confidential counseling services for students, the Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention plan is a little different. This plan specifically addresses mental health and suicide prevention in a way that gives more in-depth information like warning signs and risks for suicide and most importantly, campus, local, and national resources that students, faculty and staff can access.”

Bucks submitted their plan in August, and was certified after a month and joined five other schools in PA with the certification.

The resources and aid that come with this certification can be found on Bucks’ website, www.bucks.edu, under the Campus Services option on the Students tab. Any student who is struggling mentally or emotionally is urged to make use of these resources.

With the onset of the



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

COVID-19 pandemic, these resources have only become more of a necessity.

“With COVID and moving to remote learning, this had a direct impact on our students. Some, who already had identified mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression or even substance use, had reoccurrences that really caused them to struggle, but we also saw an on-set of these mental health disorders in students that had never dealt with this before,”

said Smith.

“From March 15 to the end of the June, we had over 400 student appointments and from July until the end of December, I estimate that we will have well over 600 student appointments.”

Bucks counselors also participated in a 10 hour Telemental Health Counseling training in order to better support the student body at BCCC, but students aren’t the only people who benefit from this achievement.

“While the Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan web page is designed for students in mind, all of resources can be used by faculty and staff as well members of the community except for free counseling services which is designated for Bucks students only,” said Smith.

“We understand how intimidating, overwhelming, and sometimes embarrassing, that can be for many. Having the information listed on the website give every-

one the tools and information they need to make an informed decision on their mental health and overall well-being.”

Regarding the school’s plan, Smith added, “I think it’s very important to know that putting this plan together means that we care for the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. Having our plan certified means that we have hit all the major points that make our plan safe and effective.”

Centurion Wins 17 Awards in Keystone Contest

CENTURION STAFF

The Centurion, the student newspaper of Bucks County Community College, won a record 17 awards in the statewide Keystone Media contest for 2021, despite the fact that its staffers had to produce the paper from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Centurion, competing in the two-year college division, has won more than 130 awards since 2010 in the contest run by the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association.

Students won awards for articles and news videos on everything from student government elections and a shooting in a Bucks County park to the pandemic and the presidential election.

Journalism Professor Tony Rogers, the faculty advisor to the Centurion, said winning 17 awards was a terrific accomplishment in itself. But the awards, for work done in the spring and fall of 2020, mean even more this year.

“Our campus shut down last March and since then the students have had to write and edit their stories and lay out the paper from home,” Rogers said. “The fact that they did such excellent work under such trying circumstances is absolutely amazing to me. I couldn’t be more proud.”

The Centurion swept the sports story and news video categories. It won second place in the general news category, and second place and honorable mention in ongoing

news; first place in public service/enterprise package; second place for feature story; and second place for personality profile.

The paper also won first and second place in the review category; first and second in the layout and design category; and first place for its website.

Working from home forced the paper’s staff to be innovative. Reporters did interviews via Zoom, email or text. Editors downloaded Adobe software to their home computers or laptops so they could lay out the pages.

Rogers singled out two students in particular for their work: Alyssa Moore, the current editor-in-chief, and Sarah Siock, who was last year’s editor-in-chief and is now studying at Rider University.

“Alyssa and Sarah were in uncharted territory when they took on the job of running a student newspaper in the midst of a global pandemic,” Rogers said. “This has undoubtedly been the toughest year for everyone in the history of this college, but Alyssa and Sarah absolutely rose to the occasion and met those challenges head-on.”

Moore said she “became the editor-in-chief this past fall at home. I had to try to replicate the system that we had going in the journalism classroom in my own room, which was a lot more difficult than I expected. But overall, things worked out pretty well and that is thanks to the journalism team that is so passionate about



(left to right) Alyssa Moore and Sarah Siock

the work we do.”

Rogers mentioned that several graphics students, under the tutelage of graphic design Professor Michael Kabbash, also worked from home in helping to get the paper laid out.

“Professor Kabbash’s students have been a godsend to us this year and we really appreciate their help,” Rogers said

Normally, the Centurion prints 2,000 copies that are distributed across the college’s three cam-

puses in Newtown, Bristol and Perkashie. But with most students taking classes virtually, the editors have instead produced a PDF of each issue that is emailed to all students.

The Keystone Media Awards contest recognizes high school and college journalism that provides relevance, integrity, and initiative in serving readers. Any student who has had his or her material published in the school newspaper may enter the contest,

which has divisions for large and small universities, two-year colleges and high schools.

The Centurion website is located at www.bucks-news.com

The Bucks journalism program website is at www.bucks.edu/journalism

For more information contact Rogers at Tony.Rogers@bucks.edu.

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News

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Letters should be limited to 500 words. They will be edited for spelling, space and malicious or libelous statements. Letters must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. For identification purposes, letters must include the writer’s full name and telephone number.

Save Our Local Stages



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Local performers are some of the people that have had it the hardest when it comes to working in a pandemic world. Over the last year, many organizations were forced to adapt to a socially distant format in an attempt to stop the spread of COVID-19. Some organizations found it easier to adapt than others. Venues in the Philadelphia area that support the local music scene are struggling to keep their doors open, and many local musicians

are at their wits end for what they can do. Most local venues cannot afford to accommodate the COVID-19 guidelines. One Philadelphia venue, The Voltage Lounge, spoke about the struggles they faced because of the pandemic. “I’m not sure if there’s gonna be a voltage lounge a few months from now... nobody’s making any money, so I don’t know how much longer we can keep doing this,” said Nate Miller, The Voltage Lounge’s sound technician.

Miller had played in bands before choosing to run sound full time. Like many members of the local arts community, he has been hit hard. Luckily, the Save Our Stages (SOS) act passed on Dec. 21, 2020 and provided \$900 billion dollars in total federal aid for venues that met specific requirements. The SOS act was a big help for most venues, but with COVID-19 restrictions still in place, independent artists are still struggling.

Eddie Tamanini, 20, a local musician from Langhorne, talked about adapting to the changing musical landscape. “It’s tricky,” said Tamanini. “You have to do a lot of the virtual stuff like Instagram live concerts, and putting out creative content to keep people interested in what you’re doing”. According to Tamanini, one of the most important things to do as an artist is to stay in touch with the venues you play at. “Because I’m maintaining a

connection with these places, when they start to re-open, I’m pretty sure that I’ll be on the shortlist for bookings. That’s just from emailing and calling and doing whatever I can till we get this over with,” said Tamanini. The light at the end of the tunnel seems to be what most local artists are waiting for. But, with it having been over a year since the shutdown, it’s scary to think about how many aspiring artists are still waiting and how many have been forced to stop.

Practicing Self Care During a Pandemic



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

ANGELA LEAMON
Centurion Staff

Self care, especially during a pandemic, is important for your mental and physical health. Having some good techniques may help you find more motivation to get out of bed and take care of yourself. I interviewed a couple of high school and college students to ask them about some self care techniques that they use. Each student said the hardest thing overall was finding the motivation to get up and do it. For Ashley Weckerly, a junior at Kutztown University, self care

has been hard. The hygiene aspect was lacking for a while due to not going anywhere. “I get up and get dressed, listen to music, and do anything else to at least get out of bed in the morning,” said Weckerly. She also said that her hobby of photography has helped a lot mentally. Mental health is a big factor in self care. If you are not feeling okay emotionally, it can also affect you physically. Little things like taking a walk or doing something that you really enjoy are some ways to help with your mental self care. “Working out makes me feel good and forces me to take a

shower afterwards,” said Bucks students Riley Murray and Connor Bailey. Maya Long, another Bucks student, finds it slightly harder to carve out time for self care. This is because she works full time and is also a student full time. She is also in a long-term relationship. Long said that she finds peace in perfecting her craft, which is her major, cinematography. “Finding new movies to watch, or re-watching good movies makes me happy and feel good,” Long said. Focusing on what you love to do is ideal self care. Everyone has something different that works for

them. People’s hygiene routines, sleeping schedules, and daily activities are all different. You have to find what works for you. Jimmy Leamon, a junior at The Pathway School, said that playing basketball and playing video games with his friends is helping with his self care. “Basketball helps with the hygiene part of self care too because showering must happen after getting all sweaty,” said Leamon. Everyone had the same thought that self care should be taken more seriously. These students all said something along the lines of “I find what works for me and what makes me feel happy and

good.” Taking a mental health day could be the start to your self care journey. If you truly don’t have time for an entire day of relaxation, then do an hour a day. I try to do an hour a day for myself and it has been working so far. Knowing that everyone has different ideas of self care, find what works best for you. Getting the motivation for self care might be hard at times but it will always be worth it in the end.

News

Going to Disney During a Pandemic

EMME OLIVER

Centurion Staff

As the spring semester flies by and summer approaches, there is no doubt that vacations are on many peoples' minds. After the endless loop of cancelled plans that was 2020, many are hoping that 2021 will offer us the chance to pack our bags and get away that we all deserve.

A year ago, my family was scheduled to visit Disney World in April. When that no longer was an option, we rescheduled to June, then August, and finally March of 2021.

As an avid Disney fan, I was beyond thrilled that I would be spending my spring break in the happiest place on earth. With COVID-19 restrictions still in place, here's what you can expect if you visit Walt Disney World Resort in the middle of a pandemic.



From bear hugs to distant waves.

It might be hard to believe that an 18-year-old finds joy in taking selfies and hugging Mickey and Goofy, but I do. Families with little kids who love the Disney princesses and other iconic characters may be disappointed to learn that character meet and greets are no longer what they used to be.

While you'd normally spot characters walking around the park, they are now stationed at designated high up areas where they wave to guests from below. Other times, "impromptu parades" take place at traditional

parade routes where unmasked distanced dancers and characters prance around on floats and across the walkway.

Guests are not permitted to go up to the characters due to social distancing. My heart broke as I watched a little boy run up to Pluto and he had to step back and hold up his paws to encourage the boy to follow social distancing. We can only hope that once the worst of the pandemic is over, we are allowed to hug our favorite cartoon dog again.

"Be Prepared," you have to order all your food online.

After screaming your lungs out on a ride, you may start to feel a little hungry. Guests will venture over to the closest cafe only to be greeted by an employee letting you know that you must download the Disneyworld app and create an account to order a chicken nugget platter.

The days of dining at Disney are temporarily a thing of the past. Guests should take note that cell phones are not only encouraged, they're a necessity in order to secure a truly magical day. Of course, guests are able to get ice cream and popcorn from pop-up stands scattered within the park, but if you're looking for a heavier bite, I'd recommend making reservations for restaurants way ahead of time or making sure that you have the app and an account before you even set foot in the park.

Yay! Less wait time, right? Wrong.

While waiting about an hour and a half for Splash Mountain (which will soon be updated to a Princess and the Frog-themed ride), I chuckled to myself at a guy near me wearing a shirt that read, "I grew this beard while waiting in line at Disney." Ironically, his beard was not that long.

While only at 35 percent capacity, Disney still faces excessive wait times for popular attractions. (Pro tip: ride times are usually estimated to be 20 minutes lower than they are as advertised.) Under promise to over-deliver is the way to ensure that magical Disney



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

satisfaction, but unfortunately this formula isn't perfect.

The Splash Mountain line wait was definitely the most brutal of my day at Magic Kingdom, clocking in at an hour and 24 minutes. Especially when compared to the wait for its neighbor, Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, which was estimated to be a 40-minute wait and ended up being 10. Wait times are really a hit or miss, so definitely plan out what rides you want to do before you head to the park and book it to that line first.

Social Disney-ing done right.

Last summer, I went to Six Flags with a few friends. Distancing stickers were placed throughout the lines, but guests barely followed these guidelines and many people were seen with masks under their noses or even no masks at all. A few warnings were issued from employees, but there were no repercussions for not following a simple rule.

These actions seem preposterous at Disney. This may be a place of smiles and cute characters, but these employees are not afraid to get on you if you're not following guidelines. For

starters, you are only allowed to eat in drink while stationary and not while walking throughout the park or in line. Social distanc-



ing within the lines are heavily enforced and if you are seen not wearing your mask correctly one too many times, you will be asked to leave with no refunds.

Personally, I'm proud of Disney for reinforcing the idea of distancing and mask-wearing as an

essential part in aiding the safety of yourself and others. Cast members constantly put themselves in the awkward position of shedding that all-smiles exterior to remind guests that we are still in a pandemic and that we must all do our part to keep everyone safe.

Despite the restrictions, the magic is far from gone.

These restrictions are all minor inconveniences. The rides are still just as fun as you remember them, and new additions, like Hollywood Studios Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge area, makes the trip worth it.

At the end of the day, it's all about finding the best time to visit. I can guarantee, as a Disney super fan, that these restrictions did not take away from me having a good time. The decor alone immerses you into a land of wonder and imagination.

Other amusement parks can learn from Disney's practices and should implement similar standards into their locations to ensure a magical and fun experience for everyone. But of course, it's hard to beat Disneyworld. Even during a global pandemic, the "Mouse House" is on top!

Continued from page 1.

Here is the list of winners from the Centurion:

General News, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Sellersville Teen Shot Dead at State Park - Payton Schreier

Ongoing News Coverage, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - The 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic - Centurion Staff

Ongoing News Coverage, Honorable Mention, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Special Report: The 2020 Presidential Election - Centurion Staff

Public Service/Enterprise Package, First place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - The Results and Winners of Bucks' 2020-2021 Student Body Election - Alyssa Moore, Dakoda Carlson, Olivia Ruddell, Kristen Reiter

Feature Story, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Coping With Boredom During COVID-19 - Alyssa Moore

Personality Profile, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Ethel Rackin is a Professor and a Poet - Shannon Goldhahn

Sports Story, First place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Spring Athletics Forced to End Seasons Due to COVID-19 - Karagen Kelly

Sports Story, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Mens' Basketball Fall Short of Playoffs by One Win - Cole Schug

Sports Story, Honorable Mention, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - 2020 Philadelphia Union Season Preview - Skyler Hoffner

Review, First place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - RDJs Dolittle Does Little - Bradley Hare

Review, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Sonic the Hedgehog Speeds Past Everyone's Expectations - Bradley Hare

Layout and Design, First place, Bucks County

Community College - The Centurion - Bucks prepares for the Coronavirus (Centurion Vol 55 Issue 9) - Sarah Siock, Alyssa Moore, Shannon Goldhahn

Layout and Design, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Joe Biden Wins Presidential Race (Centurion Vol 56 Issue 5) - Alyssa Moore, Dakoda Carlson, Olivia Ruddell, Kristen Reiter

Website, First place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion, www.bucks-news.com - Centurion Staff

Video Story, First place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Effort to Provide Low-Cost Textbooks Gains Momentum - Sarah Siock

Video Story, Second place, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Acme Workers Keep Shelves Stocked During the Pandemic - Jon Corley

Video Story, Honorable Mention, Bucks County Community College - The Centurion - Students Make the Adjustment to Online Classes - Sarah Siock

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Joe Biden Wins Presidential Race

By Alyssa Moore

American voters have chosen former Vice President Joe Biden to be their next president in an election that defied the COVID-19 pandemic, sweeping the electoral college.

The result of the 2020 presidential election provided a historical moment for Kamala Harris, Biden's running mate, who will become the first female to serve as vice president and is also of Black and South Asian descent.

Following the victory over President Trump, Biden ended the race with 300 Electoral College votes and Trump 216 votes. Although, to clinch the presidency, a candidate must win a total of 270 votes from the college.

Due to the severity of COVID-19, mail-in ballots were used in place to ensure one's health, though the option slowed down the election's counting process as it was prolonged for a few more days.

Marisa Carroll, 44, expresses her relief about the results of the election and says,

"I'm so happy. After all that time, we finally got a president that we can all agree on. We need a president that is for all Americans and not just the few."

On Saturday evening, Biden and Harris visited Wilmington, Delaware and presented their respective views on president-elect and vice president-elect.

William Biden's address, he promised to serve as a leader who will unity, setting his aspirations towards the 74 million Americans that voted for him. Also, he was pardoned with those who chose Trump as president, relating to their decisions when he last lost the election.

During Harris' speech, she demonstrated the campaign's positive influence on young girls by stating the nation's nuclear possibilities.

President Trump, as expected, did not miss over the outcome of the race. His supporters claim that the election is rigged and posted several tweets about the outcome of the race. Trump plans to sue legal action as he is convinced many mail-in ballots were fraudulent.

18-year-old Richboro resident David Northcott shared his thoughts about the election.

"Well, to be honest, I am not necessarily happy with the results. However, I would not have been too fond of Trump either. My worry is that Biden is a bit too old."

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During Harris' speech, she demonstrated the campaign's positive influence on young girls by stating the nation's nuclear possibilities.

President Trump, as expected, did not miss over the outcome of the race. His supporters claim that the election is rigged and posted several tweets about the outcome of the race. Trump plans to sue legal action as he is convinced many mail-in ballots were fraudulent.

18-year-old Richboro resident David Northcott shared his thoughts about the election.

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Politics

Third Stimulus Package Can Benefit Students



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

ANDREW COATES
Centurion Staff

The latest federal stimulus bill signed by President Biden includes many economic benefits amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Many new measures added in the latest bill may be beneficial to Bucks students.

Over the past 12 months, many Americans have seen some sort of financial impact due to the ongoing pandemic. More times than not, this impact has been negative to downright devastating at times. The government has sent out

multiple stimulus checks, increases in unemployment benefits and other measures over the past year in efforts to help eligible individuals and other entities, such as small businesses.

The American Rescue Act of 2021, which is the third and latest economic stimulus package, signed by Biden, includes a payment of \$1,400 to each individual eligible.

This stimulus payment is unlike the previous packages as the newest payment makes adult dependents eligible. Adult depen-

dents, anyone who is 18 or older who is claimed by their parents or caretaker, were one of the only ineligible demographics previously. This allows many Bucks students to now partake in stimulus funds.

In addition to the stimulus checks, students have a few other financial benefits from the latest package. The first of which would be student loan forgiveness tax-free through 2025. Any Bucks student currently on unemployment will see an extension in benefits and other unemployment services.

In addition to unemployment benefits, any student who has children may be eligible for the Child Tax credit. This credit was also created in the American Rescue Act, and parents can collect up to \$3,600 per child if eligible.

The American Rescue Act also allowed further funding for higher education, as well as funding for vaccines, mental health, small business and housing assistance. This funding will allow Bucks County residents to get help they need in many different financial situations.

If you have not received a stimulus payment, you can look into the matter through the IRS’s “Get My Payment” tool, which will tell you when you are getting your payment or why you have not yet received it. The IRS has announced that they are releasing payments in phases. Which may cause delay of some people’s payments.

Other information regarding eligibility for stimulus payments and finding information about filing for your 2020 taxes can be found on the IRS website at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).



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Sports

NFL Prospects: Top Three Underrated

MICHAEL TARAPCHAK
Centurion Staff

When reading and watching film on CFB “College Football” players, you see the gems and the busts. It’s definitely hard to call someone a bust based on never playing, but there are definitely players who are being projected too high for their value evidently labeling them as overrated.

You see guys who were gems like Tampa QB Tom Brady, Colts LB Darius Leonard, and Denver RB Terrell Davis. But, with that you also get guys who haven’t really worked out like Dolphins T Isiah Wilson, Chargers QB Ryan Leaf, and Patriots WR N’keal Harry.

Long time sports fan Mike Vogel, 42, described his favorite underrated prospect that’s been drafted.

“Well of course I’m gonna go with an easy one but it’s gotta be Antonio Brown,” said Vogel. “Nobody knew of Brown in that year’s draft, and certainly nobody thought he was going to be such a dominant player.”

In this year’s draft we can’t tell if there’s going to be anyone even close to what Antonio Brown is, but we do believe there’s some underrated prospects that aren’t getting even hype.

Asante Samuel Jr. ‘CB’ is definitely one of these underrated guys. Samuel has the frame and technique to be a boundary corner as well as a slot corner. He’s one of those guys who can kind of do it all, although other prospects in his position group are shadowing



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

over him. Samuel is projected to be a mid-second round pick.

Charles Snowden ‘LB’ - if you want a guy that’ll basically break every measurement for his position, look no further. Snowden is a 6’6 linebacker with 4.51 speed. He’s easily one of the most gifted athletic players we’ve seen in a while. He’s technically a very raw player, but if you give him the right coaching staff, you could have found that steal of the draft. Snowden is projected to be an early fourth round pick.

Javonte Williams ‘RB’ - shifty and powerful Williams can and will be a starter for almost every team. With guys like Najee Harris and Travis Etienne in the class, it’s hard to rank higher than them. But Williams’ skill set speaks for itself, he is a fearless runner who almost looks for contact. He has great breakaway speed and balance, he’s somewhat of a raw athlete but can definitely play like the top player for his position.

Williams is projected to be an early to mid-second round pick.

When describing a running back like Williams to a fan, Peter Bishop, said, “Man I wish my team (Dolphins) would take a guy like that. It’s hard to find good talent outside of the first round, but when you do it can be a great boost to your team and a guy like Williams sounds like someone teams should target.”

When speaking about the potential with Asante Samuel Jr., Jake Daldonate, 21, said, “After what his dad did in the NFL, I’m sure he’ll be just as good if not better.”

Asante Samuel was an All-Pro Cornerback in the NFL. Samuel Jr. will have some big shoes to fill.

With all the speculation around draft day with COVID-19 being a factor, there can be a lot of guys falling in the draft. This could result in a lot of late round gems for teams. This upcoming draft might be one of the most interesting yet.

Wordsmiths

- Spring 2021 -

FRIDAY, APRIL 16 • 7:30PM
Maggie Smith & Cleveland Wall

Maggie Smith is the author of four award-winning books: *Lamp of the Body*, *The Well Speaks of Its Own Poison*, and *Good Bones*, named by the *Washington Post* as one of the Five Best Poetry Books of 2017, and her most recent *Keep Moving*. The title poem of *Good Bones* was called the “Official Poem of 2016” by Public Radio International and has been translated into nearly a dozen languages. Smith’s poems have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Tin House*, *The Believer*, *The Paris Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Best American Poetry*, and on the CBS prime-time drama *Madam Secretary*. A Pushcart Prize winner, Smith has received fellowships and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Academy of American Poets, the Ohio Arts Council, and the Sustainable Arts Foundation.

Cleveland Wall is a poet and teaching artist who performs with poetry improv troupe No River Twice and with musical combo The Starry Eyes. Her work has appeared recently in *River and South Review*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, and *Monday Journal*. She is the author of *Let X=X* (Kelsay Books) and many small, handmade chapbooks.

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All events are free and open to the public and will be broadcast on the
Bucks County Community College YouTube Channel: [youtube.com/user/BucksCCC](https://www.youtube.com/user/BucksCCC)
Contact: Ethel Rackin, ethel.rackin@bucks.edu • The readings are funded by the Cultural Programming Committee.

Sports

Can the Sixers Win it All?

CHRIS WARREN
Centurion Staff

A strong start and an impressive run of form without star-big-man Joel Embiid has Sixer fans feeling optimistic about the future of the franchise.

“I didn’t think we were going to be this good,” journalism major Xander Weinstein said. “Especially after how last season ended, we were humiliated in the first round and were left looking for a new head coach.”

This embodies how most fans were feeling last August. The bubble was not particularly kind to the Sixers, to say the least. After losing Ben Simmons via knee injury, the Sixers were swept 4-0 by the Boston Celtics in the first round of the playoffs. Head coach Brett Brown was promptly fired afterwards, and the potential replacements at the time were not intriguing.

The Sixers were embarrassed, banded up and financially tied up. Any improvements they wanted to make on the court and on the books were almost impossible. Luckily for Philadelphia, lightning struck twice when Daryl Morey and Doc Rivers came to town.

“If you had told me after we got swept by Boston that we would end up with Daryl Morey as our GM, and Doc Rivers as our head coach, I would’ve told you that the quarantining had gotten to your head,” said business major John DiVeronica.

Both moves were equally surprising, as Morey had recently claimed he was taking time off for personal reasons after stepping down as the general manager for the Houston Rockets.

Morey was responsible for the plethora of blockbuster trades the Rockets made throughout the

2010s that brought in players such as James Harden, Chris Paul, and Russell Westbrook — all future Hall of Famers.

Rivers, on the other hand, was fired as the head coach of the Los Angeles Clippers just one season after they signed Paul George and Kawhi Leonard. Although he never reached the NBA finals as the coach for the Clippers, he helped lead them to their most successful seasons in franchise history, and prior to that coached the NBA Championship winning Boston Celtics in 2007.

Both of these moves erased any doubt that “The Process” was going to fail, and it didn’t take long for them to make an impact on the Sixers franchise.

Morey made two moves on the night of the 2020 NBA Draft that changed the complexion of the team. First, he traded Al Horford — who is on maybe the worst contract in the history of the NBA — to the Oklahoma City Thunder for three-time NBA Champion and veteran three-and-D wing, Danny Green. On top of that, he traded starting guard Josh Richardson to the Mavericks for sharpshooter Seth Curry.

He also went on to sign future Hall of Fame big-man Dwight Howard in free agency, who was fresh off of winning an NBA Championship with Danny Green and the Los Angeles Lakers.

Throw these new additions in with Tobias Harris, who was coached by Rivers before being traded to Philly, as well as Simmons, Embiid, and a handful of young auspicious players in the second unit, Sixer fans were excited to see what this team could do.

Right from the opening tip, this team did not disappoint. Led by Embiid, the Sixers won seven

of their first eight regular season games, and immediately established themselves as the team to beat in the Eastern Conference.

They’ve taken some losses here and there — every team does at one point or another — but the important thing is that they’ve stayed atop the conference for almost the entire season. They’ve also won key games against other contenders such as the Los Angeles Lakers and the Utah Jazz.

Throughout the past few seasons, the Sixers success was predicated upon the young duo of Embiid and Simmons. Under Rivers, we’re seeing more guys contribute on both sides of the ball. Tobias Harris has taken that next step towards becoming an all-star. Seth Curry and Danny Green have made clutch shots when the Sixers have needed them most.

What might end up being most important for this team’s future however is seeing our young studs like Matisse Thybulle, Shake Milton and Furkan Korkmaz make noticeable improvements on both offense and defense.

Thybulle especially has shown a growth in confidence lately, and his shooting numbers after the all-star break speak to it. Something else to keep an eye on is the fact that he is top 10 in the league in steals despite playing half as many minutes as everyone else above him.

If he can develop a consistent offensive arsenal: watch out. As long as he continues to improve, and continues to get more minutes, he has Kawhi Leonard level potential.

It wouldn’t truly be a Sixers season review however without mentioning how dominant Joel Embiid has been. Prior to his injury, he was averaging over 30 points a game, and established



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

himself as the front runner in the MVP race. He also leads the league in 40 point, 10 rebound games this season with five. At the time of his injury, there were only four other 40 point, 10 rebound games throughout the rest of the league combined.

In seasons past, the Sixers have collapsed without Embiid, but this season has been different. The Sixers have won five of their six games since Embiid went down. While the Sixers are remaining cautious when it comes to bringing him back, the team’s recent run of form is making fans question how far this team can truly go.

“If they can stay healthy, I think there’s a good possibility that they can make the finals,” communications major Omar Santos said.

“Embiid has to be healthy, he makes or breaks their postseason run.”

Whether or not this team can stay healthy will determine their ceiling. When fully fit, the starting lineup is one of the best in the league, having only lost a few times with all five starters healthy. Although almost every player in the current rotation has made the injury report at one point or another, the Sixers have been lucky enough to avoid any major injuries.

This team has been tough to beat in the regular season, and it’s hard to imagine it becoming any easier to beat this team four times in a seven game series. If the Sixers can stay healthy, they can absolutely win it all.

Is the NBA Becoming Too Political?



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

JOHN MADDEN
Centurion Staff

Basketball icon Lebron James is one of the many athletes being called out by AC Milan star Zlatan Ibrahimovic for using his status to share his political beliefs.

Zlatan said that while he admires James for his talent, he also believes that it is a “mistake” when athletes get involved in political and social issues.

“[LeBron] is phenomenal at what he’s doing, but I don’t like when people have some kind of status, they go and do politics at the same time,” Ibrahimovic said. “Do what you’re good at. Do the category you do. I play football because I’m the best at playing football. I don’t do politics. If I would be a political politician, I would do politics. That is the first mistake people do when they become famous and they become in a certain status. Stay out of it. Just do what you do best because it doesn’t look good.”

“I preach about my people and I preach about equality, social injustice, racism, systematic voter suppression, things that go on in our community, I know what’s going on still, because I have a group of 300-plus kids at my school that’s going through the same thing, and they need a voice, and I’m their voice. I’ll use my platform to continue to shed light on everything that’s going on around this country and around the world. There’s no way I would ever just stick to sports, because I understand how powerful this platform

and my voice is,” James responded to Zlatan’s comments.

This is not the first time James received criticism for being outspoken about social and political issues. In 2018, conservative television host Laura Ingraham made headlines when she told James to “shut up and dribble.”

A recent Harris poll has shown that 39 percent of sports fans think the NBA is too political and were watching fewer games as a result. Interestingly enough, 57 percent of Republican voters said they were more likely to turn it off on the television, compared to 22 percent of Democratic voters.

This anti-NBA sentiment seemingly increased after president Donald Trump criticized the league for allowing athletes to not stand for the national anthem.

“People are tired of watching the highly political @NBA. Basketball ratings are WAY down, and they won’t be coming back. I hope football and baseball are watching and learning because the same thing will be happening to them. Stand tall for our Country and our Flag!!!!” Trump tweeted.

A number of fans were also outraged in the decision by Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, to discontinue playing of the national anthem altogether before games. This was short lived as the league made its decision after 11 games without it. A league spokesperson said, “With NBA teams now in the process of welcoming fans back into their arenas, all teams will play the national anthem in keeping with longstanding league policy.”