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U-46 hosts kickoff events at libraries for annual STEM Expo

By: Madhu Krishnamurthy



Hundreds of students presented their projects at Elgin Area School District U-46's STEM Expo at South Elgin High School in 2017. The 2020 expo will be Feb. 22 at Streamwood High School, 701 W. Schaumburg Road, Streamwood. It is geared toward kindergarten through 12th-grade students and celebrates STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning.

Elgin Area School District U-46 will host four kickoff events at local libraries in October and November to prepare students and families for the 2020 STEM Expo.

The annual expo is scheduled for Feb. 22 at Streamwood High School, 701 W. Schaumburg Road, Streamwood. It is geared toward kindergarten through 12th-grade students and celebrates STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning.

At each kickoff event, students will be able to engage with cutting-edge technologies, experiment with next-generation science and observe live chemistry and physics demonstrations. Activities are designed to help students brainstorm project ideas they will showcase at the expo.

"The kickoff events are designed for students to explore their natural curiosities," said Deb McMullen, U-46 coordinator of K-12 science and planetarium. "We encourage the students to learn through hands-on interaction and to share their learning experiences with their family and peers."

Kickoff events are free and open to the public with no advance registration required. They will run from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on the following dates:

- Wednesday, Poplar Creek Public Library, 1405 S. Park Ave., Streamwood
- Oct. 10, Bartlett Public Library, 800 S. Bartlett Road, Bartlett

•Nov. 6, Gail Borden Public Library, 270 N. Grove Ave., Elgin

•Nov. 7, Gail Borden Public Library Rakow Branch, 2751 W. Bowes Road, Elgin

Students need not be enrolled in a U-46 school to participate in the STEM Expo. They will present their projects to peers, family and community members for critiquing at the expo.

SPORTS

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Girls volleyball: McAllister, Hoffman Estates outlast Bartlett

By: John Leusch



Hoffman Estates' Niyah McAllister goes for the slam against Bartlett in game one of the girls varsity volleyball matchup at Hoffman Estates on Monday.



Bartlett's Abby Weithofer blocks the shot from Hoffman Estates' Nora Rakoci in game one of the girls varsity volleyball matchup at Hoffman Estates on Monday.



Bartlett's Bria Lomax goes up against Hoffman Estates' Niyah McAllister in game one of the girls varsity volleyball matchup at Hoffman Estates on Monday.



Bartlett's Bria Lomax blocks the shot in game one of the girls varsity volleyball matchup at Hoffman Estates on Monday.

It was hardly a secret as to what was happening at the end of the third set on Monday.

Get the ball to Niyah McAllister.

"It was kind of obvious to everyone in the gym who had the hot hand," said Hoffman Estates girls volleyball coach Pat Moran of his junior middle hitter. "And all I had to do was look at Callie (Meese, senior setter) and she already knew she had to get the ball to Niyah."

McAllister had a dominating run, putting down kills or blocks for the Hawks' 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th point to seal a 15-25, 25-21, 25-20 victory over visiting Bartlett in the nonconference match,

"I love my setter Callie," said McAllister, who runs relays and does the long jump for the girls track team. "We work hard in practice every day blocking straight down, hitting hard and we just fought real hard for this."

McAllister finished with a career-high 18 kills from 26-of-27 hitting while senior Patricia Wadas (32-of-34) clubbed 10 kills, all coming in the second and third sets.

"At the end, I said 'Niyah, they can't stop you right now -- we're setting you and you put it away' -- and she just did what she was told," Moran said. "We were just going to set the ball to Niyah until they stopped her and that never happened."

McAllister's final kill came off a quick set from Meese.

"We had no answer for No. 8 (McAllister)," said Bartlett coach Robert Schwantz. "She had fun. It seemed like she put the ball in the middle of the court 75 times and we just could not pick it up."

Bartlett's talented freshman Bria Lomax had some tough shots to pick up as she finished with a team-high 10 kills. Bella Diaz had 5 kills for the visitors (11-6). Riyana Chacko added four. Setter Dakota Johnson handed out 14 assists with an ace while Maddie Hankins (9 digs), Diaz (8) and Kristen Manur (5) led the back row.

"Give Hoffman credit," Schwantz said. "They had a ton of momentum at the end. "

The score was tied at 19-19 on a kill from Hoffman (6-8) junior Nora Rakoci. The hosts then received 2 kills and 2 blocks from McAllister and an ace from Gwen Madsen to take a 24-19 lead.

"They had that 6-0 run to put them at 24 and anytime a team goes from 18 to 24 that quick, they've got new life and they deserve to win," Schwantz said. "We had some undisciplined play but we we'll shake it off and get ready for our next match with Streamwood.

"I thought Bria played well. She did not have an error. What happens is that we find a hot hand and then we get way from it."

Just the opposite of Hoffman on Monday.

"She (McAllister) can jump out of the gym," Schwantz added. "A lot of times my blockers seemed to be coming down and she was still up there. So she was hitting over our block. "Both teams made a lot of errors. It just came down to who could find the cracks in the other's team defense and they did."

Ashley Poland led the Hoffman defense with 19 digs while Emma Essex added 12. Meese finished with 38 assists.

"Callie is a really good setter," Wadas said. "She helps with everything in practice. She pushes and I respect her for that. If there's a ball, she's going for it."

"It was awesome," Moran said. "We just came out a little flat in Set 1 for some reason but we then we had a nice talk in between sets and the defense really stepped up. We were getting a lot more touches which led to us running a better offense. Patricia and Niyah are two very talented hitters and kind of hard to stop when the passes are there. So our defense is what really made the difference in sets two and three."

Boys soccer: Cox scores twice late to send Bartlett past Streamwood

By: Chris Walker

Streamwood was far more dominant than Bartlett during Tuesday's Upstate Eight Conference game.

But that didn't make a difference in the outcome as the Hawks avoided another tie, rallying late in the second half for a thrilling 2-1 victory.

"We could've been at 7 ties if we didn't finish that," Bartlett coach Vince Revak said. "All things considered, we were completely outplayed today. If you were to count possession today, I would guess 75 percent to 25 percent and that's optimistic for us."

Making the outcome more exciting was that the game was played at Millennium Field because the natural surface at Bartlett was still recuperating from last weekend's rain. So technically the Hawks beat their rival on the road as the home team.

Streamwood (6-6-4, 2-2-1) finally broke through with 17:06 remaining after missing numerous chances earlier.

Junior defender Jose Ibarra fired a 30-yard missile just under the crossbar to give the Sabres a 1-0 lead.

A few minutes later Aldo Jiminez nearly gave the Sabres an insurance goal, and shortly thereafter, fellow freshman Angel Diaz blasted a shot off the crossbar with 12:45 remaining.

It was that kind of afternoon for the Sabres, which unfortunately has become a tendency.

"We have chance after chance so it's frustrating," Streamwood coach Matt Polovin said. "It's been the epitome of how our season has been. We hit the pole twice. It seemed like the goal couldn't be any smaller tonight, and then they get two chances and that was pretty much it."

As the calendar turns over to October, the Sabres are running out of time in figuring out how to finish more consistently.

"We move the ball so beautifully most of the time, but the thing that has been hurting us all season is our finishing in the final third," Polovin said. "Now we're getting to the point of the season where we're getting close to regionals and if we're still hitting the pole and we're missing all our good opportunities inside the box, it's going to be a quick postseason."

Bartlett sophomore Sean Cox scored with 7:39 to draw the Hawks even.

"When I received the ball I turned and saw daylight," he said. "So just took my opportunity."

Ibarra nearly pulled the Sabres ahead when he blasted a shot off the near post with 3:02 remaining, but the Hawks countered just 24 seconds later when sophomore Marco Zamora got the ball to Cox who sent in the game-winner with just 2:38 left to play.

"I just had to hit it clean and get it in the net," Cox said. "That's all you've got to think about when it's this high intensity."

Talk about making the most of your opportunities.

"All season we've been more of a second half team," Cox said. "We started thinking that we've got to win this here or go home. It feels good. We haven't been doing too well in conference so this really helps us going forward, especially against one of our rivals."

Bartlett (6-3-6, 2-1-2) seemingly came alive offensively after finally having to look up at a 1-0 deficit.

"We were finally aggressive on the attack," Revak said. "Mauricio Vigil had a lot of chances and was taking off. Kamil Jarzabek was making great runs and Sean Cox was obviously flying through. And we started to make those right passes instead of booting it long. We had purpose behind it so we were able to keep the ball and build up the attack more."

And when a team like Bartlett has six ties to its name, it's going to play all the way to the buzzer to try to win.

"It was another situation where these boys played until the last minute," Revak said. "I couldn't be prouder of this effort to pull out a win against all odds."