

Ravens Hit the Field Over Winter Months

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The first day of preseason practice may have been a long way off, but the Ravenscroft lacrosse team hasn't been idle in recent months. In addition to their efforts in the weight room, the Ravens have weekly field workouts. The independent school rules allow Ravenscroft coaches to work with up to nine players at a time, and the Ravens take full advantage of that opportunity.

"The off-season workouts are an important part of our program," Coach Sandy Kapatos said. "We take a lot of good things away from the sessions. It gives us a chance to work on some things that we don't have time to work on during the season. Plus, the workouts give me a chance to get to know the boys in an atmosphere that is a little more casual. Finally, the time we spend cements the investment that the boys have in the program. That investment of time creates a deep commitment to our team goals."

The atmosphere at the workout sessions may be a little lighter than the intensity level at a regular practice, but serious work is being done.

"It's basically a high level clinic," Kapatos explained.

"We work on individual things like shooting technique, and then we work on the finer points of our offense and defense. If we can get the basic concepts in place, that gives us a chance to hit the ground running in February."

"We are working, but we try to keep it fun for the guys. It's little things, like spending some extra time on shooting because that's something they enjoy."

The Raven players recognize the value of the program, and they have fully embraced the process.

"In the beginning, it's a good way just to get your stick skills back," said junior midfielder Drew Davis. "When we first start, it can look pretty awful, but it comes back quickly. Then we get into our basic offense, and we work on our rotations and movements. As we go along, the sessions get more and more intense."

"We have a good time, but there are times when the coaches can turn serious," added senior defenseman John Bailey. "As time goes on, we get more and more into game type defensive situations. I think it really gets us prepared for the start of the season."



The stick time helps jump start the season, but the time the players spend with their teammates is equally important. They learn about the Raven culture, and about each other.

"It's particularly good for the new players," Kapatos noted. "It gives them an introduction to how we do things. The older players have a chance to learn about the skills of the younger players, and that helps everything come together a little quicker when we begin our official practices."

"We get a lot of the younger guys out there, even some of the eighth graders, and it's a good opportunity for them," Davis added. "They see how we do things, and it's important for the older guys to lead. We need to set the pace, so that the new players understand how we approach practice."

The workouts have been going well this winter, and the performance of several new players has lifted expectations that were already high.

“The No. 1 goal on our list is definitely the state championship,” Bailey said. “We have a lot of special players on this team, we’re working hard, and we’re working together.”

