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Who Do You Think You Are?

Traer Schon  
Iowa State University

Taylor Wertzberger  
Iowa State University

Tiffany Herring  
Iowa State University

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Who Do You Think You Are?
Walking on central campus on a Sunday afternoon, you may notice a strange game being played. This game isn’t soccer, it isn’t dodgeball, it isn’t capture the flag—it’s a combination of all three. For Quidditch president Andrew Folkmann, it’s not just a game—it’s a competitive sport.

**Ethos:** How did you get involved in Quidditch?

*Andrew Folkmann:* The President before me, Chris Webber, was in my fraternity. I was pretty skeptical [of Quidditch], but one Sunday they conned me into coming out. I played beater and I basically annihilated, so I loved it so much that I didn’t want to stop.

**E:** What are some challenges of playing Quidditch?

*AF:* This is a semi-contact sport in the sense that there is tackling involved, but there’s only one-arm tackles (two-arm tackles are illegal). Just learning how to ball-handle essentially with predominantly one hand... and there’s a lot going on. This is basically like three different sports going on on one field. You’ve got dodgeballs being thrown around (the “bludger”), a deflated volleyball used for scoring “the “quaffle”) and [in full games] you’ve basically got a mobile capture the flag going on (the “snitch”).

**E:** Are you a Harry Potter fan?

*AF:* Not really, I mean I’ve read the books. I enjoyed them... but no, I’m not really a big Harry Potter fan. A lot of them [the Quidditch team] are, though. It’s really hard to get away from that—you play Quidditch, you’re gonna have some Harry Potter nerds.

**E:** Is that a misconception about Quidditch—that everyone is a Harry Potter fan?

*AF:* Not entirely... I guess I’m an anomaly, a majority are Harry Potter fans.

**E:** What is your favorite thing about playing Quidditch?

*AF:* You get stressed out a lot just being in college, so it’s nice to come Sunday and know that I can throw a dodgeball, release some anger, and know that no one can tell me no, because it’s part of the sport so they really can’t do anything to me. It’s fun to develop a certain athleticism that I never really had in high school.

**E:** Do you ever wish your brooms could actually fly?

*AF:* I really don’t—there’s the whole falling thing I’m not a huge fan of. We do joke that if anyone invented a flying broom, Iowa State would do it.

**E:** Does it start to hurt straddling a broom for a whole game?

*AF:* It doesn’t hurt, I don’t think, unless you fall on it wrong. [It’s hard] getting used to having a broom between your legs, but surprisingly no one gets injured from it. (He referred to it as “spearing”... Ouch.)

**E:** What do you wear for games? Are there robes involved?

*AF:* No, there’s not... last time they wore traditional Harry Potter stuff for Quidditch was when the IQA first started—they were playing with capes and stuff, but not it’s gotten really far away from that. We’ve got Nike Pro Combat on now (their official Quidditch jerseys). People wear receiver gloves to help grab the volleyball better.

**E:** When do you meet?

*AF:* Tuesdays and Thursdays we meet [on the practice field behind Lied] for about two hours, and Sunday—I call it Sunday Funday—we play on Central Campus and anyone that comes can try it out. We’re really not that demanding, I really just ask that they show up Sunday, because it’s the most fun.

**E:** When is the Quidditch “season”?

*AF:* There’s really no end to the Quidditch season. Sometimes we play in the snow, and we practice in Lied once we get space for that. The Snow Cup in Michigan last year was played in like two and a half feet of snow. They didn’t play very many games because a lot of people couldn’t feel their hands.

**E:** If you could be any Harry Potter character, who would it be?

*AF:* Mad Eye Moody. He’s like the Rooster Cogburn of the Harry Potter series—unorthodox, but extremely effective.
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