

Normalize Gap Years



Emily Pratt
Staff Writer

The moment senior year of high school rolls around, the only question that appears to be on the lips of every adult is, "Where are you going to college?"

It was jarring for me personally when first approached with this question, sometime during my junior year of high school.

At the time, college had only recently become a subject to start seriously considering and people were already wanting a complete layout of my life plan.

What many people don't appear to realize is that this push for college so soon after wrapping up high school can lead students to making hurried and often rash decisions.

I may be happy with my college choice but there are plenty who aren't.

Many young adults jump into the rigor of a college schedule because they don't feel like they have another choice and it often leads them to be extremely unhappy, causing them to drop out and waste thousands of dollars.

Society assumes college is the natural next step to take after high school, looking down on non-attendees as the "less educated" sort, which influences young adults to continue with their education.

While college remains an important step in most careers, this route doesn't have to be the only one popularized and it shouldn't.

Before starting my senior year of high school, I seriously considered taking a gap year in Sweden after I graduated.

Aside from wanting to work on my language skills, I felt I needed to figure out exactly what I wanted to do next.

College was definitely in my future but I was unsure what direction I would take when I got there.

My parents ended up convincing me that it would be much cheaper to study abroad through a college program but I can't help wondering if taking a year off from study would have helped organize my options.

Many would argue that that is what college is for, figuring out careers and plans for the future.

Looking at the many programs at schools across the nation, there's no doubt that this is a viable and encouraged option.

But students are encouraged to do this on top of homework, on-campus or off-campus jobs, and participating in student organizations to keep their social life active.

It's a lot to keep up.

Gap years, while seemingly a far-fetched idea to those in the United States, are actually extremely popular across Europe.

It's not uncommon for young adults to take a year, or even a few, to travel or work before returning to the school setting.

Aside from giving them time to take a mental break from studying, gap years allow individuals to grow and help develop global perspectives before taking their next step in life.

Seeing the world from a different point of view can really change your ideas of what career would best fit you.

This is much better than waiting until your junior year to



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A student contemplating his future.

travel abroad through a college program.

Gap years don't have to involve travel, they can simply be a chance to grow the amount of money in your bank account and work on different responsibilities without having to worry about classes on the side.

One of my friends I graduated high school with enrolled in one of the local universities only to drop out about a semester later because he was failing most of his classes.

This had nothing to do with how smart he was, because he had plenty of brains, but rather

his lack of preparation and motivation to jump from one kind of school into another.

He realized college wasn't where he needed to be quite yet and that taking a year off to work would help him figure out where he should go next.

The above example is one of many cases where young adults follow the trail of their peers because they're not aware of another path and end up stumbling along the way.

Promoting the idea of gap years would lessen the stress of this big decision because the type of college students choose

really does affect where they end up farther down the road. Let's stop urging

students to grow up faster than they're capable of because their confidence and mental health at the peak of their career is more important than how fast they get there.

Why Russia is "bad news" believe me



Priscilla Otero
Staff Writer

Why is Russia bad news? No seriously, if you've been watching Russia recently you'll notice that it is all over our news.

What you won't notice is us all over their news.

That's because they are too busy blocking United Nations Human Rights Council meetings.

On Monday, Russia blocked a meeting of the United Nations Security Council meant to discuss the status of human rights in Syria.

Of course, China assisted in blocking the United Nations Human Rights Chief from discussing the situation.

The Human Rights Chief has urged the council to recommend Syria to the International Criminal Court.

Meanwhile, the UK based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an organization founded in 2006 to monitor human rights abuses in Syria, reported at least fifteen children were killed by Russian bombing in Syria's rebel-held Eastern Ghouta region.

This past week, Amnesty In-

ternational reported that Syrian government officials "are committing war crimes on an epic scale" in Eastern Ghouta.

The Russian government continues to back the Syrian government in "intentionally targeting its own people."

In addition to many parts of Syria, "war crimes" have also been reported in Damascus.

Why has the international community failed to act?

For over six years the international community has idly watched as attacks on civilians and sieges on civilian areas rage on.

Chemical weapons have been used against the Syrian people which, is not only an atrocity in its own right, but can also influence the further use of chemical weapons in future conflicts.

Throughout these atrocities the international community

has catastrophically failed in its convention in support of human rights.

What is this convention?

The duty to uphold the dignity and rights of all people.

There needs to be a humanitarian truce in order for there to be a possibility of a cease fire.

The United Nation Security Council must enforce its own resolutions.

Member states should abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law by granting safe passage for civilians wanting to flee from war ridden areas.

This is 2018, a cease fire is completely reasonable for an alleged globalized, cooperative, and interdependent world.

The United States has failed in its duty to adhere to our values ratified in the United Nations Charter of 1945 stating, "To

reaffirm faith and fundamental human rights, and the dignity and worth of the human person, and equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom..."

While the United States has voted in support of permitting discussion of the human rights violations occurring in Syria, I dare say we are not doing enough.

On another note, Russian President Vladimir Putin has been re-elected.

No surprise there.

It's the little things in life



Hannah Haas
Staff Writer

Opening yourself up to other people can be the scariest thing to do.

This choice can also be the best decision you've ever made.

I would not consider myself an "extrovert" or extremely outgoing.

I don't go out of my way to meet new people as often as I maybe should.

But what I do pride myself on is really focusing on building relationships with the people that I do have in my life.

These people have come into my life in a variety of ways: school (high school and college), work, similar friends, hobbies, extracurriculars, and so on.

Something that has always been really difficult for me is just truly enjoying the people I am with, their company, and the time that we have with them.

Something that I've been working on doing I got from an episode of *The Office*.

It's from the episode when Jim and Pam are getting married, and Pam says that her aunt told her that everything with the wedding goes by so fast that they should try and take mental pictures of the highlights.



Take a mental picture when something big or small happens to look back and remember.

Caroline Probst

And as cheesy as that sounds, it resonated with me so much.

I started taking my own "mental pictures" anytime I could remember to do so. But not just the highlights.

I would do it when I was just sitting with my best friend playing a game of cards, really appreciating her company and having the opportunity to spend

time with her.

I did it when my brother and I got in an argument a few weekends ago about something pointless, because I wanted to remember why this was something that I didn't need to be upset about for the future.

I took a mental picture when I was in my kindergarten classroom for class and I was sliding

down the hill and playing in the snow and smiling so big my face hurt.

I also took a mental picture when my best friend left for a semester abroad in Peru and I cried in her bed.

Life is about embracing all of these moments.

We should not just be celebrating the high points in our life with our loved ones, but also our low points and hard times as well.

This is what makes us human, our ability to feel and love without a filter is what literally makes us who we are.

I want to share that with everyone in my life.

One of my biggest fears is that my family and friends don't know how much I truly love and appreciate them.

So I'm starting to work on showing them that in any way that I can.

Whether if it is actively listening to their story, and not just waiting for my turn to talk; or sending them a thoughtful text, or even actually picking up the phone and calling them.

I've also never been very big on showing my affection through touch, but I know some of my friends are.

They love to give me a hug goodbye before I leave for the night or play with my hair when I'm stressed out.

I've grown to look for and love this type of affection, because they do and it has helped me open up to a different kind of love.

I'm not saying to change

yourself for your friends, but if you're willing to be open to them and their needs, it will only increase your connection and love for each other.

When you really open up to others you are leaving yourself out there and vulnerable.

This is something I used to almost literally run away from.

Now it is something that I try to look for and bring out in others.

I love people; watching them and seeing them interact with others they have a connection with, seeing them laugh, and really just being themselves is beautiful.

You need to break down that wall and let others in as much as you can.

Because once you do, the way that you get to know people and connect with them is literally nothing like I've ever experienced before.

I want everyone that I care for to know that I will always be there for them no matter what.

If you're reading this and I know you, know that I truly appreciate you and I love the time that we get to spend together, I treasure every moment of it.

Or at least I'm trying to, no one is perfect.

If I don't know you, I hope that I get to one day and just remember to let those that are close to you know how much you love them, and the ones you're not as close to try, and let them in a little more.

The Good, the Bad, and the Meh (weather edition)



It was nice for a couple days this week.



There's another snowstorm expected this weekend.



Spring break and warm weather is still one week away.

The unappreciated Women's Rugby team



Ella Napton
Staff Writer

They are ranked fourth in the nation.

They participated in the Final Four tournament in Marietta, Georgia.

They traveled to Ohio and Georgia on the road to the National tournament.

They are the best Division 3 women's team in Minnesota.

They have two players that were selected for the Final Four All-Tournament team.

The majority of their players did not play the sport before college.

The number one team in the nation, in the higher divisions, asks to play them every competitive season because they give them a challenge.

Practice and playing field is being considered as the designated smoking area on campus.

Their field is used as a driving

range for the golf team.

Their coach balances being a firefighter and father of two young boys with coaching them, and he is underpaid.

They had to pay their way to both the Regional and National tournaments.

They rode a bus 17 hours to the Regional tournament in Ohio.

They received next to no recognition for even making it to the Final Four tournament.

When there was snow on the ground they were given two practice times: 6:15 a.m. and 9:30 p.m.; IM teams were a higher priority.

They are the Gustavus Women's Rugby team, and their coach is Charlie Johnson.

Led by senior captains Tory Makela (Merc) and Kristen White (Buff), they are the least talked about successful sports team on campus.

Instead of getting coverage about their journey to the national tournament from October to December of 2017, the first time in program history, the football team winning a game was discussed.

The only coverage given to the team was a tweet on the Gustavus Twitter account with a link to an article about the team and their trip to nationals (which was much appreciated, do not get me wrong).

But a large majority of the Gustavus population had no clue that the women's rugby team even participated in a na-



A player running to score.

Submitted

tional playoffs, let alone making it to the Final Four.

This is in contrast to varsity sports playoff games being projected in the cafeteria for the whole student body to see.

While varsity sport participants can miss class no questions asked for a regular season away game, the rugby team had to convince professors to allow them to miss class for the regional and national tournaments without losing participation points.

They were expected to be in class (even if they had an 8 a.m.) the day after getting back to campus from the regional tournament in Ohio at 4 a.m.

This is not to say that the rugby team goes completely unappreciated at Gustavus.

There are a good number of professors that knew about their trip to nationals and made accommodations and offered congratulations.

Friends of rugby players watched the games live-stream online.

Gustavus helped with their fundraising efforts to get to Nationals and the Student Senate gave them money, in addition to the fundraising they did themselves.

But in comparison to other, varsity-level, sports teams at Gustavus (many of which

have not been to a National tournament in years, besides Volleyball, Women's Hockey, Women's Soccer and various individual based sports, of course) the treatment they receive is much lower than that of those teams.

Of course, there is the argument that the rugby team is a club level sport and that the college is not required to give the team the same benefits as a varsity level sport.

The women's rugby team is not even allowed to use the classic Gustavus three-crowns logo on the apparel they design and buy themselves.

While this is true, wouldn't one assume that if a team went to nationals and represented your college you would allow them to use the emblem of said college? Yes.

But the women's rugby team is not even allowed to use the classic Gustavus three-crowns logo on the apparel they design and buy themselves.

For reference, the ultimate frisbee team has permission to

use the logo.

Wouldn't you want to promote an extremely successful team and its players campus-wide to bring in perspective students that want a competitive, but still fun, sport experience in college? You would think so.

Furthermore, even considering turning the area around the only rugby pitch on campus into a designated smoking area is a ludicrous idea.

A good majority of players on the team suffer from asthma, and having remnants of smoke (if students would even use the designated smoking area) would trigger this even more than the exercise they are participating in.

In addition, using the pitch as a driving range leads to twisted ankles, spending warm-ups and a good portion of practice picking up golf balls strewn about everywhere, and even harder, more hazardous, landings during tackling drills.

Now, I'm not saying the team needs the ritz treatment but they do deserve recognition for their achievements, the respect of their facilities, and maybe an athletic trainer at games every now and then.

It's not like they're tackling people with pads on.



Gustavus rugby players doing a lift in a game.

Submitted

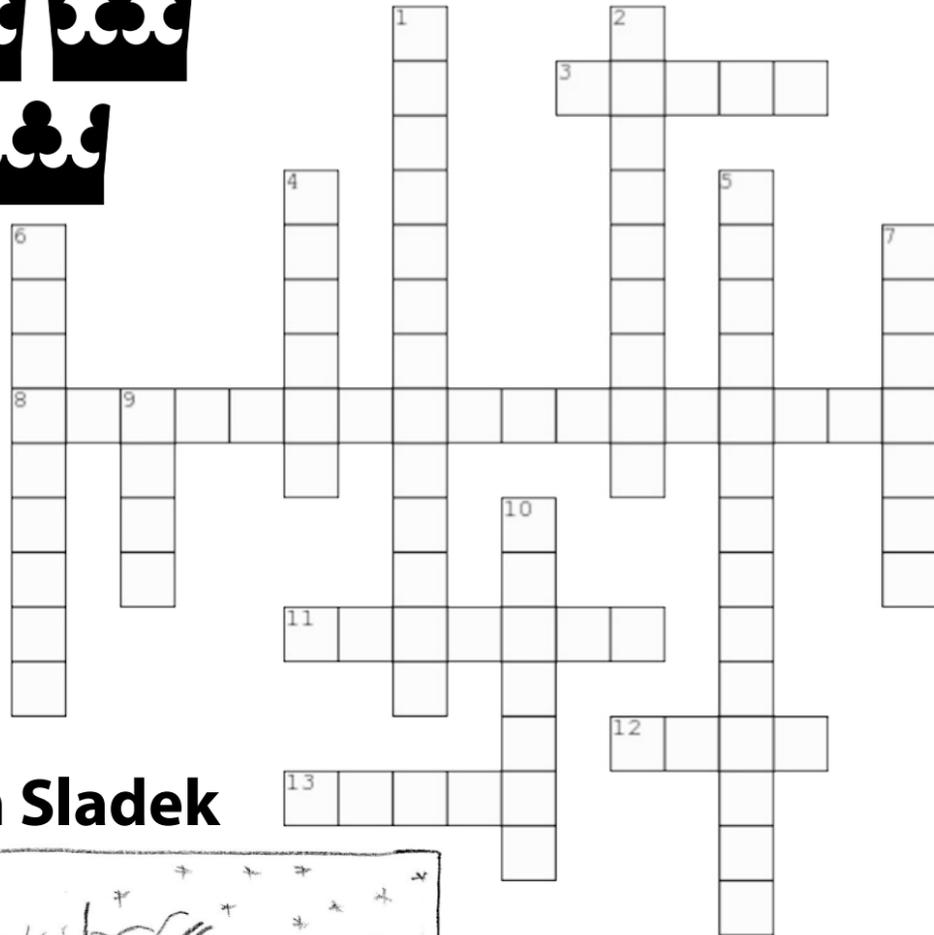
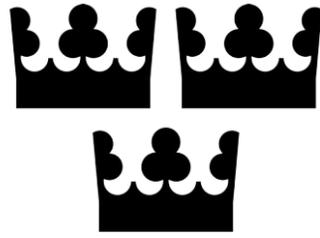
Campus Crossword

Across

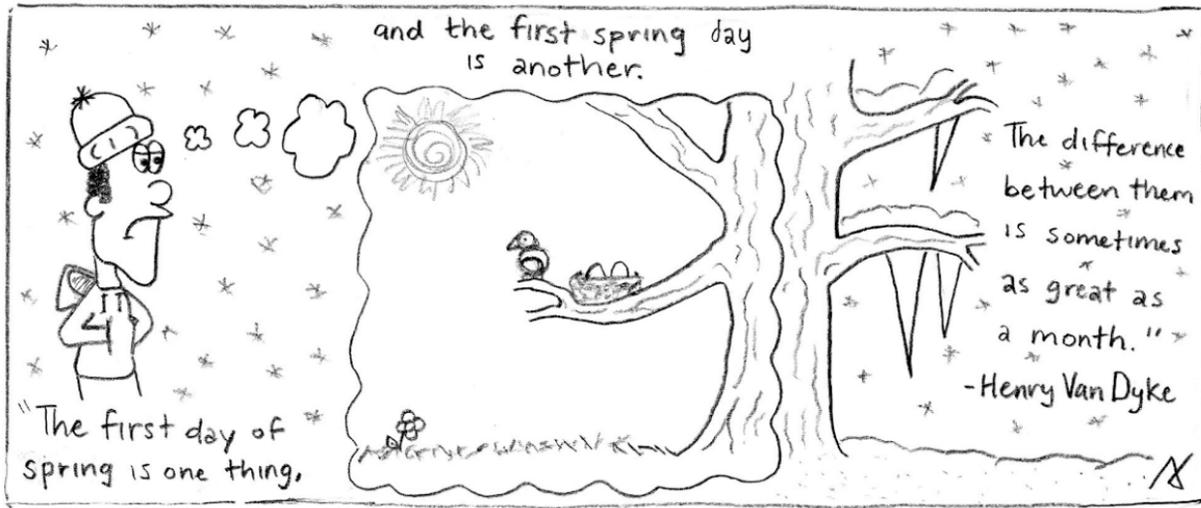
- 3. Björling's first name
- 8. Full name of the Arb
- 11. Freshman dorm once known as Valley View
- 12. Officially known as Norelius
- 13. You can see this part of Christ Chapel from miles away

Down

- 1. The football field
- 2. Has a chapel in the basement
- 4. Go buy this History prof's new book!
- 5. Amphitheater outside of Fine Arts building
- 6. Sidewalk from Uhler leading to Pittman and Sohre
- 7. Haunted by cows probably
- 9. Campus cat
- 10. Nickname for three connected sophomore dorms



"A Spring Poem" by Trevon Sladek



- ACROSS
- 3. Jussi
- 8. LinnaeusArboretum
- 11. Pitman
- 12. Coed
- 13. Spire
- DOWN
- 1. Hollingsworth
- 2. Rundstrom
- 4. Keller
- 5. ShakespearePit
- 6. HelloWalk
- 7. OldMain
- 9. Nemo
- 10. Complex

Pun of the week

"I used to be a banker but I soon lost interest..."



The zodiac signs as spring break destinations

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  Gulf Shores	Taurus (April 20-May 20)  New Orleans	Leo (July 23-August 22)  Cabo	Scorpio (October 23-Nov. 21)  Florida
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)  Arizona	Gemini (May 21-June 20)  Home	Virgo (August 23-Sep. 22)  California	Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)  Cabo San Lucas
Aries (March 21-April 19)  Las Vegas	Cancer (June 21-July 22)  Bahamas	Libra (Sep. 23-October 22)  Cancún	Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  Somewhere in Europe

Softball competes at Tucson Invitational

Gusties finish invite with a record of 3-7



Gustavus Sports Information

Sophomore Aly Freeman lines up at the plate during a game last season. The Gusties recently participated in the Tucson Invitational and finished the tournament with a record of 3-7.

Nathan Thompson Staff Writer

It's been a busy week for the Gustavus Softball team as they played ten games over the course of five days at the Tucson Invitational in Arizona, going 3-7.

After nearly three weeks of no games, the Gusties opened their week of action with two wins against Dubuque University and Stevens Institute of Technology, scoring 23 combined runs.

Against Dubuque, the Black and Gold began the scoring in the first frame, and never looked back.

They knocked in a season high 12 runs on 11 hits and six walks while allowing only six to Dubuque.

Freshman Ariel Debeer registered the win from the mound, only allowing three runs and striking out three opponents in the six innings she pitched.

Senior Kim Kurtzweg led

the way at the plate with two hits and two RBIs while going 2-3 over four at-bats.

Gustavus continued to shine on the offensive end against Stevens Institute, scoring ten of their eleven runs in the first two innings.

Sophomore Aly Freeman pitched a complete game, allowing three runs and striking out three, while Sophomore Sidney Welp went 3-4 at the plate with an RBI.

In a rematch of Thursday's game, it was Dubuque who controlled the diamond, taking an 11-3 win despite a three-run opening inning from Gustavus.

Welp and Junior Emily Webb both went 2-4 in the game.

In their second game on Friday, the Gusties dropped a 2-13 decision against Case Western Reserve.

Despite the offensive struggles, Sophomore Emily Carlson shined bright for the Gusties, going a perfect 3-3 from the plate and accounting for three

of Gustavus' five hits.

The loss went to Neuenfeldt after six innings of work pushing her record to 1-2 on the season.

On the third day of the event, the Gusties lost two games against Valley City State and Bellevue, dropping their record to 3-7.

Valley City opened the game with three runs and added seven more in the final two frames.

Gustavus managed two runs total with one coming in both the third and fourth innings.

Webb brought in the first Gustie runner in the third with a single while Carlson was brought home on a bunt an inning later.

In game two against Bellevue, the Gusties fell 5-2, despite a solo home run from Carlson and a 3-4 game from Welp.

Senior Jess Neuman also recorded an RBI, bringing home a run off a single in the second. Heading into day four, the

Gusties competed in a doubleheader against UW-La Crosse where they lost both games with scores of 1-5 and 1-10 respectively.

In game one, Gustavus registered its only run in the first inning off of an RBI groundout by Webb.

Freshman Ashley Neuenfeldt suffered the loss after three innings on the mound.

Game two followed suit with another Gustie run to open the game off of a sacrifice groundout from Webb, but was answered by ten runs from La Crosse.

Neuenfeldt led the Gusties on the offensive end, going 2-3 with a pair of singles.

On the final day of games, Gustavus faced Buena Vista in a doubleheader where they were shut out in game one 0-8 but responded with a win in game two, 7-3.

Buena Vista registered two runs in the opening inning as well as two in the third and four in the fourth inning.

The Beavers Moriah Guyett threw a no-hitter in the game while Neuenfeldt took the loss for the Gusties after three innings.

Gustavus came back fighting in the second game to close out the Tucson Invitational, snapping a seven game losing streak and finishing with a 3-7 record.

The Gusties were led on offense by Neuenfeldt who went a perfect 3-3 in four plate appearances.

Webb and Sophomore Caitlin Kammerer also had strong showings as both went 2-4 while Webb drove in three. Also recording RBIs was Welp, who drove in two runs while pinch hitting.

Neuenfeldt pitched a complete game on her way to the win, allowing three with two earned while striking out one.

The Gusties hope to carry this momentum into their next game when they host Bethany Lutheran for their home opener April 2.

Baseball faces Luther for two double-headers

Gusties await their home opener



Gustavus Sports Information

Junior Sam Archer pitches for the Gusties in a game last season. The Gusties currently hold a record of 5-6 and are anxiously waiting to play on their new turf field when weather permits.

Jacob Woodrich
Staff Writer

The Gustavus baseball team has played 11 games so far this season, yet their biggest competitor may very well be the weather.

While this Tuesday may have marked the first day of Spring, the weather did not follow suit.

With snow still on the newly renovated Gustie Baseball Field turf, the team had to cancel its home-opener against Mount Marty last weekend.

As for the action that has taken place on the field, the Gusties boast a 5-6 record on the season.

The team most recently took part in two double-headers on back-to-back days against Luther College.

The Gusties went 1-3 in the four games, winning the first game by a score of 7-5, but dropping the next three.

"Our first game, we had a great battle to come back and win. After that, we struggled a little bit, but never let up. We always wanted to play like we were in the game no mat-

ter what the score because we knew we could come back at any time. It only took a couple hits to get something started," First-year Cole Pengilly said.

"We have a lot of young guys on the team this year, but a few of them have really stepped up for us and are exceeding my expectations."

—John Lundquist

Currently batting .462, Pengilly has been a key player for the Gusties so far this season.

Playing four games within two days against the same team was by no means easy for the team.

"Playing two doubleheaders on back-to-back days is challenging, but when playing against the same team makes it even more difficult. You see the same players each game, and you have to adapt to what they do in the past games. The hardest part of playing four games

in a weekend is trying to stay focused. 32 innings of baseball in two days is a lot, so making sure I keep myself and my teammates in the game is a key part of our success," Senior John Lundquist said.

Lundquist, who earned the lone win on the mound for the Gusties in their competition against Luther, is enjoying his final year of collegiate baseball here at Gustavus.

"At the beginning of the season, it felt a little different being one of the oldest guys on the team. We have a lot of young guys on the team this year, but a few of them have really stepped up for us and are exceeding my expectations," Lundquist said.

These younger players have most definitely stepped up, including Pengilly.

"So far I have really enjoyed the transition into college baseball. I enjoy the faster pace of play. It makes you work even harder when you are out on the field because the players we play against are that much better. I just have to make sure I keep making plays in the field to help the pitchers out and

hopefully keep hitting well," Pengilly said.

Looking ahead, the Gusties are definitely excited for warmer weather and playing outdoor baseball.

"We are hoping the weather is nice the next few days so the snow can melt off the field. The team has been out on the field the last couple days shoveling the snow off the field. Baseball

in Minnesota can be tough at times," Lundquist said.

Barring any other weather-related setbacks, the Gusties will host Bethany College on their brand new turf this Friday for the team's home opener.

The Gusties will then begin conference play right here at Gustavus when Macalester comes to town for a double-header on March 31.



Gustavus Sports Information

Sophomore Brice Panning prepares himself for a pitch during a game last year.

Women's Tennis continues winning streak

No. 33 ranked Gusties improve their record to 6-5



Gustavus Sports Information

Junior Briana Hartmann returns the ball in a match last season. After a rough start to the season due to playing competition from higher divisions, the Gusties have improved to a record of 6-5.

Michael O'Neil
Staff Writer

The Women's Tennis team continued its winning ways recently with three more wins, extending their streak to five in a row.

On March 10th, the squad traveled south to Rock Island, IL for two non-conference matches against Augustana College and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

In the first match of the day, the Gusties started strong with overpowering doubles play. At number one doubles, the duo of Junior Bri Hartmann and Senior Ally Baker won by a score of 8-1.

The number two doubles team of Senior Katie Aney and Junior Lilly Hartman and the number three doubles pairing of First Years Hannah Borgh and Ginger Valentine each took their matches, 8-3.

In the singles, the Gusties continued to roll, taking four of the six first sets.

At the top singles spot, Hartmann dominated in the second set after a narrow victory in the

first to secure a 7-5, 6-2 victory.

In the second singles match, Ally Baker used her experience to come back after losing the first set.

"I am very proud of this team and hope the excitement continues to grow throughout the season."

—Coach Carlson

Baker took the second set 7-5, and the match came down to a third set super tiebreaker which is player to ten points. Baker held tough and won the breaker, earning a 3-6, 7-5, 10-7 victory.

In stark contrast to the battle at No. 2 singles, Aney and Valentine won with ease at the third and fourth spots by scores of 6-1, 6-1 and 6-1, 6-2, respectively.

Junior Sheila Sullivan controlled the fifth singles spot in a 6-4, 7-6 victory and fellow Junior Ally Thorsen fell narrowly by a score of 6-1, 4-6, 10-6.

Later that day, the Gusties were back in action against the No. 28-ranked University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

This time, the top doubles spot didn't go the Gusties' way as the top team of Baker and Hartmann fell, 8-6.

Their loss was equaled out by a big 8-3 win at the second spot from Aney and Hartman.

At No. 3 doubles, the first-year duo came up with a huge 9-8 win that gave the Gusties an important lead going into singles play.

After Baker went down 6-3, 6-1 at the second singles spot and Borgh went down 6-0, 6-0 at sixth singles, the Gusties trailed 2-3.

When Hartman lost 7-6, 6-3 at No. 5, the Gusties were on the brink of defeat and trailed 2-4.

However, the Gusties responded with clutch play in the biggest moments of the match. Hartmann scored a point at the top singles spot by taking a tight match by a score of 7-5, 3-6, 10-8.

After dropping the first set, Aney responded at third singles by taking the second set and the

match by a score of 4-6, 6-2, 10-7.

With the match all squared at 4-4, Valentine entered a third set breaker to decide the match. After going back and forth, she ended up on top by a score of 7-6, 2-6, 13-11.

"It doesn't get any better than having a freshman clinch the match with a tiebreaker in the third," Head Coach Jon Carlson said.

Carlson was pleased with the team's first win over a ranked opponent of the season in their second match of the day. They showed great resolve to pull out the win in what was surely an exhausting day full of tennis.

"It was a great day for the whole team, I think having everyone on the trip made a big difference," Carlson said.

After their two big wins in Illinois, the 33rd-ranked Gusties returned to Minnesota for a conference match against St. Olaf on Friday, March 16th.

Once again, the Gusties took control early with a 3-0 lead after the doubles play.

At the top spot, Baker and Hartmann won by a score of 8-6,

while the second doubles duo of Aney and Hartman won 8-0. Valentine and Borgh completed the sweep with an 8-5 victory.

In singles, the Gusties won in relatively straightforward fashion at the top of the lineup.

Bri Hartmann, Ally Baker, and Lily Hartman won by identical scores of 6-1, 6-3 at the No. 1, No. 2, and No. 5 singles spots, respectively.

Aney and Valentine gave up just two games each throughout their singles matches. Aney won by a score of 6-1, 6-1 while Valentine cruised to a 6-0, 6-2 win.

At the sixth spot, Borgh dropped a very hard-fought match by a score of 6-1, 6-7, 12-10.

With the series of wins, the Gusties' record improved to 6-5, and they remain undefeated at 3-0 in the MIAC.

"I am very proud of this team and hope the excitement continues to grow for the rest of the season," Carlson said.

They return to action on March 30th against Saint Benedict.