



# The Talon



Volume II

Issue IV

Onteora High School

Boiceville, NY

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## A Guide to Sports During Lockdown

Brian McHugh

**M**arch Madness: CANCELLED.  
The Masters: CANCELLED.  
Wimbledon: CANCELLED.

Many sports fans, like myself, are struggling to cope with the fact that their main source of entertainment has been ripped away from them. We were all waiting for Tiger to repeat as Masters champion, we were all very excited to see the underdog pull off a major upset in March Madness, but unfortunately none of this can come into fruition, which leaves most sports fans feeling helpless.



Courtesy of Talon staff

For many of us, sports can provide a distraction from the chaos of the world surrounding us, but there may be a few things

that can still distract us. With no live sports it will still be very hard for sports fanatics to stay at ease, but we just have to remember that sports will come back.

### Watch Old Games:

Over the past few weeks, it has been quite entertaining to watch classic sports games that remind me how great it will be when we have sports come back. Although it doesn't have the nail biting atmosphere of a live game, since you know what happens, you still are able to relive some of the greatest moments in sports. From Game 7's of the World Series, to the World Cup final, there are so many games that can quench that thirst for sports.

### Play Sports Video Games:

If you can't watch your favorite players why not play for them. Keep yourself occupied with some Madden NFL or NBA 2K and play the games that your favorite teams would have been playing if the season was going on. Although it might not be exactly what you want to help you cope with your loss, it can at least give you something from the world of sports.

### Listen to some Podcasts:

While you are working from home, you can listen to some of your favorite sports podcasts. A few of my favorites include *First Take*, *Pardon the Interruption*, *The Lead*, and *The Players Point*. These podcasts cover various topics in sports and include a variety of different perspectives. There are also plenty of other podcasts that cover virtually every sport possible which you can access anywhere.

### Watch a Sports Film:

Sports Fans can also resort to sports movies to help them keep a level head while sports are currently non existent. *Space Jam*, *Rudy*, *Remember the Titans*, and *Moneyball* are all great movies that can cure the anxiety that sports fans have for maybe just a few hours.

### Exercise:

Don't stay inside and sulk for too long, go outside and play some of your favorite sports. Go on a run or kick the soccer ball around with a family member, there are so many things to do to help you stay in shape and to keep your mind off of the troubling fact that you don't have any sport.

## Onteora's New Groove

Shayne Durkin

Onteora High School has a pretty broad spectrum of athletics and extracurriculars. For the most part, every student finds a place outside of class where they can fit in and have fun.

This year, Onteora Athletics now has a new team—the Onteora Dance Team. The following is information from an interview with Manuella Jean-Pierre, the instructor and founder of the dance team.

According to Jean-Pierre, three years ago a group of students had the idea to form a cheerleading squad. However, there weren't enough students to make a full team, and there was no licensed cheer coach. There was the "Spirit Squad" formed a couple years back, but it was discontinued last year. At the beginning of this school year, Jean-Pierre was approached by students about forming another cheer team. Having the time in her schedule, she agreed and decided with the students to call the new group "The Onteora Dance Team."

"It didn't make sense to call ourselves cheerleaders, but the kids wanted to dance. We preferred "The Dance Team."

The inclusion of a dance team opened a door for many students. "There were so many kids who did not do any after



*Courtesy of Valerie Havas*

school activities, and when they heard about the dance team, they wanted to do it. They didn't see themselves as athletic, and they didn't see dancing as a form of sport, which is the greatest part about it. They sweat just as hard, they're working out and practicing for two and a half hours a day."

The team practices every day after school, rehearsals include group and individual practices, and students often record the dances in order to practice at home. "It shows when you don't practice at home. It's either you make it, or you don't. I think we're too young as a team to kick anybody out, but not participating in dances is usually what will happen if I see a real lack of energy or improvement."

When it comes to the long-term establishment as a team, the goal for Jean-Pierre is to build a legacy. "We would like for this to continue on, so recruiting younger is great. Younger kids mean we will last longer. We are always planning for the next event."

Perhaps the most important aspect of the dance team is the diversity that it brings. Jean-Pierre said it best. "The

dance group calls for all students. Black, white, Hispanic—they all have one thing in common: they all want to have fun dancing. It's the most diverse group that we have. Gender doesn't matter, race doesn't matter, size doesn't matter."

Being so inclusive is what makes the dance team so important to Onteora, and it's why they deserve to be recognized just as much as our wrestling, basketball, or soccer teams. It may not be something that people expect from a small public school in Boiceville, but everyone is impressed when they see the dance team for the first time.

There is little difference between the dance team and our other athletics, but at the same time there is all the difference in the world. It's a positive difference that puts a spotlight on the abilities of young people who aren't often recognized for their talents. "All that matters is if you're a lefty or a righty. So far we only have one lefty."

## Drug Pricing

By Liam Bertheaud

Retail drug spending for the typical American increased from \$90 in 1960 to \$1,025 in 2017. Unlike other first world countries that have universal healthcare, America's free market economy has full control over drug prices. Eighty-eight percent of respondents to a poll are in favor of making drugs less expensive.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a list of "essential medications" that are most effective and safe at fighting off diseases and helping treat disorders. Millions of Americans are relying on these life-saving drugs. If they don't have proper access to them, they could die.

Lower-income families are especially affected by high drug prices because they may not be able to afford them, or because



*Courtesy of Tallulah Potter*

health care providers deny them coverage. Among lower-income adults that have been denied coverage, merely a fraction were

able to receive their prescription, according to a study from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health involving lower-income families and prescription drugs.

States have cracked down on high drug prices recently. In 2019 alone, two states passed legislation that set a monthly cap on how much pharmaceutical giants like Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Sanofi—the main insulin providers for the U.S.—can charge their customers for insulin.

In 1996, a vial of insulin would set you back around \$21. As of 2020, the final price rests around \$275 per dose. The long-term consequences of capping insulin prices mean a significant decrease in annual expenses for diabetics all across the country, especially for families without coverage.

Colorado was first to approve a bill of stature to the issue. Illinois, following in the footsteps of Colorado, enacted a similar bill, though it only provided lower-cost insulin to a select few diabetics and it did not fix the cause of the issue. A \$100 a month cap was the maximum amount implemented in each state.

Virginia, Utah, and Tennessee lawmakers have also begun showing support for a cap. They want it to be cheaper than the current plan. They would price insulin from around \$25 to \$30 a

month. It seems that they are trying to follow examples set by other first-world countries, such as Portugal, Austria, France, and Italy, where insulin is virtually free.

Virginia's newer "Health Insurance Act" seems to be the future that drug pricing is heading towards. Utah Representative Norman Thurston has also just brought the "Insulin Access Amendment" to the Utah House. If accepted, it would mean easy access to affordable insulin to the entire state by January 1, 2021. Currently, these acts and bills are only statewide. The next step in the process would be to pass a bill out of Congress.

The WHO has Daraprim in the "List of Essential Medicines." Turing Pharmaceuticals acquired Daraprim not long after the launch. This experimental medication was developed by Gertrude Elion, and its main purpose was as an antimalarial medication, but it was soon discovered to help fight off certain forms of cancer and HIV. This acquisition deal also included other drugs such as an intranasal form of ketamine, oxytocin nasal solution, and Vecamyl.

Moments after purchasing this 67-year-old drug in 2015, its CEO Martin Shkreli broke headlines after he raised the price from \$13.50 to \$750 a tablet. The annual cost of treatment before the increase

went as high as \$1,130, but with the rise in price patients must now pay as much as \$634,000 annually for treatment. Martin Shkreli is now referred to as the most hated man in America. Millions would be dead without this drug and now hundreds of Americans will be unable to afford it.

It isn't solely prescription drugs that are on the rise. EpiPen Auto-injectors also saw a dramatic rise in price from around \$100 in 2009 to around \$700 in 2018.

Turing Pharmaceuticals, the same organization that increased the price of Daraprim to over 500 times its original price, also owns EpiPen.

For decades, EpiPens dominated the auto-injector market at a 90% market share, but because of bad business decisions like pricing them high, they now only take up 10% of the market, as new alternatives are introduced.

As of now, multiple pharmaceutical companies have begun offering similar devices at the fraction of the cost. CVS Health issued its own device and sells them in two packs for \$109.99 at all locations.

On February 4th, President Donald Trump delivered his State of the Union Address. He brought up multiple issues affecting our country, one being drug prices. His speech angered the Democrats who began

chanting "H.R.3," referencing the "Lower Drug Costs Now Act" that House Democrats created earlier that year. It would have brought cost-effective drugs nationwide and forced large pharmaceutical companies to cooperate with Obama's Medicare for all plan. The act passed in the House with ease, even with Republicans who said they were in favor voting against it. However, soon the bill was shot down by President Trump.

Democrats and Republicans both seem to agree that our prescription drug system is flawed, but they have completely different ideas on how to fix it. It is unlikely that the system will be fixed.

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## A Local Beekeeper

Oliver Milford

Oliver ten Broeke joined me for coffee at a small cafe in New Paltz, on an especially windy day, to talk about his hobby and profession.

A New Paltz High School senior, ten Broeke is one of the youngest beekeepers of the Hudson Valley. Self-educated on the subject, he has been interested in bees since middle school and has kept them since freshman year. He manages hives for Red Maple Vineyard and keeps some of his own in his backyard.

"It's less work than a dog most of the year, and more work than a

goldfish," he explains, speaking of his average workload. He checks in every ten days to two weeks to ensure things are running smoothly and occasionally dedicates a day or weekend to fix up the hives and set them back on the right track when something's amiss.

Ten Broeke doesn't use a visor or gloves when handling his bees. "I open up the hive, I smoke the bees," which is a process that causes the bees to believe their hive is on fire. "It's not harmful to them at all. They'll eat a bunch of honey, and the honey will make them kind of fat and drunk so they're not going to sting you." He'll then look through the frames to see if there's plenty of honey and eggs being laid.

In August he collects the excess honey from the hives, measuring how much they'll need to last through the winter. "Bees are hoarders, as long as there's nectar they're going to be bringing it in, even if they feel like they have enough for winter."

Their collection of nectar can be damaging when the hive is located near farms using certain types of pesticides. "Specifically it's neonicotinoids," said ten Broeke, "It's a certain class of pesticide that's super harmful. The drift from it, and that can be in particles in the wind or in a river nearby, will kill bees." Bees take the pesticides from the flowers or water source to their homes, which ends up poisoning

the hives and killing off the colonies. This is one of the main contributors to the recent bee crisis.

Another cause of the decline in bee populations is climate change. Because of the drastic changes in the jet stream



*Courtesy of Oliver ten Broeke*

winters have become more irregular, throwing off the internal schedule for the colonies. “They would start foraging and suddenly it would be a cold snap again, and they would all die.” Beekeepers have lost a lot of hives to this phenomenon.

Many beekeepers make their living off of creating strong colonies to send to orchards and plantations to pollinate the fruits, but this can be detrimental to bees’ health.

The almond industry is one of the greater contributors to the

decline because it doesn’t offer a healthy amount of nectar to keep bees in shape. “It’s kind of a detriment to the honeybees that they’re using.”

More recently, there has been a resurgence in the amount of honeybees. Many neonicotinoids have been banned and

beekeeping has become a more accessible hobby.

The awareness on the subject has led to more environmentally conscious practices in agriculture and, on a smaller scale, people planting their own wildflower gardens for the local bee population.

Backyard projects can always help the local ecosystem of bees, including planting wildflowers and making bee hotels, which are low maintenance hives for solitary bees such as the mason bee.

“Instead of having a hive or colony or living with a queen, it lays one egg, or a couple each

season, gives them food, and puts them in these tubes [in the bee hotel], and covers them in mud until the next year when those ones hatch and they continue that cycle. It’s a very singular endeavor.”

One organization to support bees is Bees For Development, which gives the necessary tools to villages in Africa to keep colonies and sustain a good income with wax and honey, helping to pollinate the local area at the same time. More foundations are Honeybee Conservancy, Avaaz, and the Environmental Justice Foundation.

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## Music From the 20th Century

Clara Mead

**M**y playlists mainly consist of music from the ‘60s and ‘70s, and I frequently take part in shows featuring songs from those decades.

Most recently, I was in a show called “Legends of Laurel Canyon,” which featured music from some of my favorite singer-songwriters. This includes (but is not limited to) Joni Mitchell; Crosby, Stills & Nash; Neil Young; James Taylor; and Carole King.

The beginning of my infatuation with the music of Laurel Canyon was the spring of 8th grade when I heard “A Case of You” by Joni Mitchell. I was in the car with my dad, and I decided to play that song on his phone because my



parents had always told me that I would like Joni's music, but I never believed them. I had heard the song before, but this time was different. I really listened to it this time. I listened to her clever rhymes and heart-wrenching poetry:

“Just before our love got lost, you said  
 ‘I am as constant as a northern star’  
 And I said, ‘Constantly in the darkness  
 Where's that at? If you want me  
 I'll be in the bar.’”

That night I listened to her masterpiece, *Blue*. Some songs I listened to more than once because I needed a little more time to soak in the beauty and transcendent quality of her songwriting. After that, I quickly spiraled into a fascination with Joni Mitchell that has yet to end. For my fourteenth birthday, my parents gave me an acoustic guitar. I had learned other songs, but “A Case of You” was the first

song I performed on guitar. I performed it at The Colony's open mic that takes place every Monday in Woodstock. I probably brought the age average down about fifteen years, but when I stepped up first to sing a song that the audience had grown up listening to, my mom told me later that I made people cry.

I had loved Joni Mitchell, but it wasn't until I saw the movie *Echo in the Canyon* with my friend around a year ago that I figured out that the bands and artists I knew and loved were all feeding off of each other to make incredible music. Though the movie wasn't impressive, it was such a strange realization that some of my favorite artists had been next-door neighbors.

For example, the iconic Crosby, Stills & Nash song “Our House” was written when Graham Nash was living with Joni Mitchell in a little house in Laurel Canyon. In his words, “It was a kind of a cold

gray morning as it sometimes can be in Los Angeles, and I said, ‘Why don't I light the fire and you put some flowers in the vase that you just bought.’ So she's cutting stems and leaves and arranging flowers in this vase, and I'd lit the fire.

Now, my and Joan's life at the time were far from ordinary ... and I thought, ‘What an ordinary moment.’ Here I am lighting the fire for my old lady and she's putting flowers in this vase that she just bought. And I sat down at Joan's piano and an hour later, ‘Our House’ was written.”

After all of the musical discoveries I made, I had the honor of playing and singing the legendary songs of Laurel Canyon that have shaped music in such a tremendous way. I sang the song “Helplessly Hoping,” by Crosby, Stills & Nash with two other people. There is a three-part, somewhat challenging harmony throughout the entire duration of the song. The harmonies complimented and made each other stronger, much like the neighborly hospitality and guidance through music that was so prevalent in Laurel Canyon.



## Sleep Deprivation Amongst Teens

Shane Stackpole

**D**o you feel constantly sleep deprived? Are you struggling to stay awake through the school day? Well, you're hardly abnormal, we're all in the same boat.

When we were younger, sleep was a priority. Most of our parents had a strict sleep schedule for us to follow which was vital in maintaining a healthy and happy life. As we became more independent and life got in the way, our priorities changed. Like many other parts of our lives that used to be essential when we were children, sleep has become trivial and insignificant in the busy lives that we live as teenagers.

Recent studies have concluded that teenagers need approximately eight to ten hours of sleep per night to function to their best ability. However, only fifteen percent of the teen population sleeps this amount.

Fifteen percent sounds shocking, right? But when you really think about it, it's not. So what exactly is the cause of this "epidemic?" The answers are pretty apparent, and they lie in the science of sleep

and the pressures of school and technology.

The biological sleep pattern alters during adolescence and as one adjusts to being a teenager. Pubescent hormones shift the teenager's natural sleep schedule forward by about two hours. Teenager's bodies are also in a constant war with the sleep hormone melatonin, which is naturally secreted at a later hour of the night for teens than for younger children.

It would be much easier if we could just leave it at that, but life isn't so simple. We can't blame sleep deprivation solely on the natural and biological processes of the teen body.

School is overwhelming enough, but add in some after school

social situations thrown at us on a daily basis.

Many schools, including ours, are conducting changes such as a new start time in order to improve teenagers' sleep, but it's up for debate whether or not these implements will truly improve our overall sleep quality.

It's difficult to go from the chaos of our day to lying in bed trying to fall asleep. By the time that I get into bed my mind is still racing. Having the day to day pressure of being a teenager can make it difficult to have a tranquil and calm state of mind during sleep.

Our devices also affect the time we fall asleep. Some of us are on Snapchat and Tik Tok until two A.M. Electronics also devastate

the quality of our sleep in ways that many of us are not aware of: the use of electronics suppresses the production of melatonin, and the blue light that is emitted from our screens is absorbed through our eyes, resulting

in a delayed release of the hormone.

In addition, the bright lights and sounds from electronics disturb



*Courtesy of pxfuel.com*

activities and you've got yourself a student who only sleeps about four hours. And on top of that, we are all trying our best to find ourselves and grapple with the

the atmosphere that should be soundless, dark, and calm during sleep. Those who fall asleep watching TV should consider the effect that it has while they are asleep in addition to the effect it has on the hour that they get to bed.

It's easy to dismiss this problem, but our sleep habits and quality will only improve once we begin to prioritize it like we did when we were younger. Sleep deprivation has always been apparent amongst teenagers, but it has been amplified by technology and electronics today.

It's so easy to let life get in the way, but sleep is something we should all strive to better the quality of.

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## The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly of Social Media

Sophie Frank

I woke up on Thursday the third at 6:30, like usual. Desperately tired and needing something to wake up my brain, I grabbed my phone and, partially blinded by the blue light, opened Instagram. I saw a barrage of messages from a group chat I'm in, and when I scrolled up the thread I saw that everyone was reacting to a meme about Trump.

The death of Iranian general Soleimani had been announced while I was asleep. *Is this for real?* one of my friends had written. I went to Twitter where

the story and #worldwarthree had taken up the top five trending spots. It certainly seemed like it was real.

Anxiety filled me for a moment, images of a horrible death by bomb rushing through my mind. But after a minute or so, the feeling faded. I felt so, so sick from all the anxiety that politics had caused me and so many others in past months.

I was sick of being scared that another threat had found its way onto social media because the President still treats us like we're watching his reality show. *This is not worth my attention,* I told myself.

In the past whenever a crisis rocked our country, I had been tense on the edge of my seat. But today I felt like handling the situation with humor, not fear. I wanted to ham it up and help my other American friends get rid of some of the tension that has plagued us since 2016.

*Omgggg this country I can't anymore,* I typed. Everyone answered with variations on *I feel you* or simply *lmao*. *Can someone from another country let me come live with them?* I continued, and my friend from

France wrote *lol I got you girl*. The conversation moved on.

In the following week, people posted fewer memes and more facts. Oftentimes that's what happens, either that or the other way around—people post facts first, and then the horror of the situation becomes overwhelming, and we have to switch to posting more memes and fewer facts in order to cope. I learned a fair bit from what others were posting but didn't post much myself.



Courtesy of Natalie Horberg

Social media is a platform for my generation. The ability to share both facts from experts and our personal opinions and to add a link with one click to dozens of organizations that are doing amazing work, and only asking for a few dollars, is a beautiful benefit of the Internet. These

capabilities often get the short end of the stick from older generations who discuss it.

I have lived through several of these major world events since getting social media, and it always amazes me how we react.

Teenagers—an age group notorious for being vacant, self-involved, and vain—spend their time researching complex issues to develop a deep understanding of them. We are on a constant journey to better ourselves, to express our own opinions but also respect the opinions of other people.

But despite my positive view of Gen Z and the Internet, I know there are drawbacks, and I still have to ask myself- what is the effect of all this news?

I like being informed; I like reading the news and actually understanding it. But what that means is that when I open Google to research a quick homework question, distracting headlines appear, tempting me to click and fall down the rabbit hole of all the sadness and misery this world can hold.

It means that when I open social media, I am opening myself up to any horrid or insulting comment someone wants to hurl my way solely because I commented a hands-clapping emoji on a post from an Instagram account focused on social justice.

I am connected to everything; that takes a toll. So I ask myself over and over- how does all of this affect me? And the morning the Iran story broke, I made a connection and asked a question I've never asked before. Is all this desensitizing me?

Getting used to all the bad news heaped onto us is difficult. When a big story broke, I used to wander around the house, stricken, disbelieving. But by this past summer, when I saw something particularly upsetting, I exhaled deeply and moved on. The sheer volume is too much. If I reacted the way I did at the beginning, I would drown in emotion. So I compartmentalize. I wondered- how can someone who cares passionately about human rights and is grateful for the platform social media gives her be looking at the news this clinically? Because they're the same issue. Two sides of a coin.

Social media is an amazing platform, and teens expressing their opinions is important. I have no doubt that the youth uprisings done by this generation will be in the history books. But what teens do, they do because they feel adults, including elected leadership, are doing nothing.

Teenagers do not feel that their rights are being kept safe. So herein lies the conflict: teenagers read the news and keep themselves informed because they are on the front lines of the battle for change. And yet, reading all this news weighs on

us, crushes our spirits, and makes life feel hopeless.

Those feelings of helplessness eventually become overwhelming- we begin to be unable to see the positive, we stop caring, and all of a sudden, we've become desensitized.

We begin to feel the feeling that I felt when I heard about Iran-inability to care. Tiredness. And though these feelings can be difficult to deal with, we push through, because this battle is about more than just us.

The fact that we are growing desensitized means that all of this bad news has become far too normalized. We should always feel shocked by tragedies like mass shootings, and we should never see it as fact that our President might start a war that we will be helpless to stop. We're in a terrible cycle, and it is everyone's responsibility to try to change it.

First step- media cleanse. If it works for you, fantastic. Get rid of the toxic presence of endless bad news and choose a few issues to be invested in, but not all of them.

Second step- this step needs to belong to the leadership. Systematic change, the kind the government is supposed to do. And teens- don't stop posting and putting your voices out there. They are so important. This fight for change belongs to everyone.

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# Slavoj Žižek : Falling in Love

Slavoj Žižek (SLA•voy JHEE•jheck) is a Slovenian philosopher and cultural theorist.



More and more,  
we are becoming  
afraid of these encounters

We want love  
without the fall.

We want to indulge  
without experiencing  
remorse, doubt, guilt etc.



The **DANGER** of love  
is idealization!

How could you love me? I'm far from perfect...

Don't you understand? That is why I love you!

You're the best person alive! You're flawless!

He doesn't really know me... he loves his own idea of me!

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