Class of 2023 smaller than 2022

While there were more applicants, admissions accepted fewer students

By Mo Juenger
Guest Writer

The admissions office has announced that the class of 2023 is between 200 and 300 students smaller than its preceding class. This significant decrease in class size was ultimately affected by the university’s decision to accept fewer students.

Factors such as previous incoming class sizes and strained on-campus housing greatly influenced the decision to accept fewer students, according to Lindsey Steller, the assistant director of admissions.

Steller clarified that accepting fewer students was intentional, “just to make sure that we can still give students the best experience,” she said. “We recognized that last year housing was a little bit tighter, and things here (at the Admissions Office) were a little bit tighter.” “We just wanted to make sure that we’re staying true to our mission of supporting students, and before we continue to grow, we just need to make sure we have some things in place, make sure that all that’s going to be true to our mission of supporting students.”

Steller added that the number of applicants for the class of 2023 was even larger than that of the previous year.

“We’re continuing to grow in that aspect,” she said, “it is just making sure we don’t grow too quickly.”

The decision to accept fewer students has affected multiple grade levels. For one, the housing situation has changed.

“The housing process was more difficult this year since there weren’t so many people,” sophomore biology major Jake Owens said.

This differs from last year’s inability to house many incoming students.

Many first-year students reported having little or no difficulty with the initial housing assignments, and noted satisfaction with their class sizes.

“I love how small my class is,” first-year social work major Abigail Evans said. “That’s why I wanted to come to Xavier in the first place. I wouldn’t like if there were 300 more people distributed throughout the class, though.

Many students agree the unique feeling of community a mid-size college like Xavier can achieve was an important factor influencing their decision to attend.

“I believe Xavier was built to be a mid-size university with a tight-knit community and as they bring up enrollment and take on the biggest class that Xavier has ever had, they can’t keep upping that because the part of Xavier that people are really drawn to is the community and tight-knit feel,” first-year English major Molly Hulligan said.

However, some students are still experiencing the negative effects of last year’s class size. Geno Griffith, a ’15 graduate and current education graduate student, spoke about the problematic situations Xavier’s overall growth has caused.

“The programs have increased from an academic standpoint. Numbers look good as far as graduation rates,” Griffith said. “But with that, I notice some things have changed, like… learning center accommodations and services provided to grad students, policy and procedures for grad students to be on campus have changed, in terms of access to technology.”

A disproportionate growth in undergraduates is linked to lack of services available to current graduate students, and Griffith believes that the decrease in size of this year’s admitted class will help to reconcile some of the problems previous growth has created.

The reduction of admitted first-year students has begun to resolve many issues experienced by the Class of 2022. Class size, housing and college community remain important factors to applying students, and many feel that a smaller Class of 2023 has helped to keep those factors at Xavier’s highest standard.

The official Xavier census numbers for the Class of 2023 will be released in October.
Pathways weekly program begins

BY JOSEPH COTTON
Staff Writer

Pathways is an initiative of the Office of Student Involvement (OSI) that will span across six weeks, starting Sept. 3 and ending Oct. 27, each representing one of the six different Pathways.

The weekly pathway themes include Leadership, Spirituality, Belonging, Social Concern, Wellbeing and Identity.

The different weeks are filled with events set up by Student Affairs and are meant to highlight the various ways to get involved on campus, as well as the learning priorities that relate to the OSI’s work with students. The Pathways theme for the year is “Make Your Mark.”

The initiative was established by the Pathways team, led by assistant OSI director Dustin Lewis. The Pathways team defined the different themes and planned the collection of opportunities and events for each week.

“Pathways week is an easy in and a good way to see the offerings of ways to get involved,” Lewis said when asked about the best way to engage with Pathways.

“It’s built a lot like a menu so you can pick and choose,” he said. Students are encouraged to explore the offerings for each week and find a theme that they connect with.

Visibility was handled by a branding and promotions division of Student Affairs led by the associate director of the Center for Faith and Justice (CFJ), Rev. Abby King-Kaiser.

“This is how the Pathways team worked. We workshoped them, they connect with. Visibility was handled by a branding and promotions division of Student Affairs led by the associate director of the Center for Faith and Justice (CFJ), Rev. Abby King-Kaiser.

The idea is two-fold,” King-Kaiser said. “It’s both to help students build the path of their Xavier journey and to help students get outside of their first interest and try something new.”

The Pathways team indicated that they wanted to give students the opportunity to explore other involvement opportunities through interdepartmental collaborations at Xavier.

“If a student sees that they’re interested in a particular theme and they want to jump on the bandwagon, they can,” King-Kaiser said.

Inclusion is collaborating with Recreational Sports, and Justice, Rev. Abby King-Kaiser said. “It’s both to help students build the path of their Xavier journey and to help students get outside of their first interest and try something new.”

The Pathways team indicated that they wanted to give students the opportunity to explore other involvement opportunities through interdepartmental collaborations at Xavier.

“If a student sees that the Center for Diversity and Inclusion is collaborating with Recreational Sports, they might be more likely to try something new,” added King-Kaiser.

Last week, the Pathways weekly program began with the Leadership pathway, which ran from Sept. 1 to 7. Events included Leadership Game Night, Helping Muskies and Hall Council Elections. According to the Pathways website, the Leadership pathway is designed to help students build effective skills to help shape the community.

Next week is Spirituality week, which runs from Sept. 8 to 14. Defined as “reflecting on your beliefs and purpose” in the Pathways brochure, events for this week include Find Your Sacred Space, GSC Open Meditation Space and Spirit Celebration.

“These events aren’t just for first-years,” Lewis said. “They’re also for sophomores who are finally comfortable on campus and want to now get involved, as well as anyone on campus.”

Look out for the posters around dorms and Gallagher Student Center in addition to the events around campus in the upcoming weeks.

Lastly, follow @lifeatXU on Instagram and Twitter for the most up to date information.

Lewis also emphasized the interconnectedness of the different pathways, noting, for example, that the CFJ isn’t the only place where students can incorporate spirituality into their Xavier experience.

“Although people may assume anything that deals with spirituality is handled by CFJ, spirituality can be found in all aspects of what we do at Student Affairs,” Lewis said.

“For me, involvement means engaging myself in a new environment that I don’t usually see myself in,” senior international studies and political science major Presley Owusu-Bonsu said. “I’ve tried to become comfortable being uncomfortable.”

She added that she has become better at having uncomfortable conversations about sensitive topics including race, sexuality and poverty thanks to getting involved with the CFJ.

Owusu-Bonsu stated that she connects with the pathway of Wellbeing the most.

“Xavier really taught me self-care. I’ve been meditating, doing breathing exercises and participating in other activities that help my spiritual and emotional health,” Owusu-Bonsu said.

“I went to high school in Chicago, which is a really fast-paced city, so I didn’t see myself doing things like meditation when I first came to Xavier. It’s something I really jumped into.”

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Gallagher’s basement-level student den converted into an e-sports lounge

By Mo Juenger
Guest Writer

This year, Victory Perk changed their coffee supplier from Carabello Coffee to Peet’s Coffee. See how students feel about the new coffee supplier on campus.

Victory Perk is located on the first floor of Gallagher Student Center and is open on Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m.-10:00 p.m., Friday from 7:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Saturday from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., and Sunday from 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

“I know a lot of people love it. My friend had five cups today!”
Zak Swetye Sophomore marketing and business analytics major

“I like Peet’s coffee! They have much better options.”
Nick Palmisano First-year psychology major

“Personally, I would say I like Peet’s coffee a lot more. Carabello coffee tasted like burnt water.”
Claire Kuchenriether Junior political science major

“We’re just getting started, so we’d love to hear back from students,” he said.

Initially, the Student Government Association helped pass the initial funding for it. He also plans to expand the catalogue of available games and is looking into ways to implement Nintendo Switches and PC gaming systems.

“A lot of the students wanted to place it in D’Artagnan’s Den. Ultimately, that space on the lower level wasn’t being utilized the way we had hoped,” he said, “of all the spaces, that would be the perfect spot for it.”

Students praise the decision to create an e-sports lounge and consider this transformation of the space a major upgrade, First-year student Jeremy Lefton expressed his interest in the popular Call of Duty franchise of first-person shooter games, and enjoyed the ability to play with other students in the e-sports lounge. “I just came down here and saw it one day,” he said, while also commenting that “it’s pretty awesome here.”

While students are enjoying the lounge now, Marshall noted several obstacles to the process. According to Marshall, the project’s funds were in question at the beginning of the process, but “ultimately, the Student Government Association helped pass the initial funding for it.” He also faced the issue of designing the space so that he, the rest of the GSC staff, and the students could use the space with ease.

As of now, all a student needs to do is go to the GSC Welcome Desk and check out a controller with their ALL Card, then walk down to D’Artagnan’s Den, turn on the TV indicated by the number on the controller, turn on the console and select a game. “Displays 1 through 4 house PlayStation 4’s, or the only issue that I have with Peet’s coffee is that they make you fill up your own black coffee.”

Hannah Frey Senior social work and psychology major

By David Ludwig
Guest Writer

During the summer, D’Artagnan’s Den, a space that had previously housed several televisions and a pool table in the basement of Gallagher Student Center (GSC), was converted into an e-sports lounge.

GSC director Chris Marshall explains that this concept came into the picture in the fall of 2017, when he put together a group of students and staff called the GSC Innovation Team. According to Marshall, this group, which is also responsible for the Clock Tower Lounge renovation, was to “focus on spaces in the building and ways to enhance it and repurpose it.”

During the Innovation Team’s discussions, the rise of competitive video gaming, known as e-sports, came into conversation. The team identified that there was no space on campus at the time where students could become involved in the growing world of e-sports, and wanted to make this an option available to students.

Marshall noted that several spaces in GSC were considered for the location of the lounge before finally deciding to place it in D’Artagnan’s Den. “Ultimately, that space on the lower level wasn’t being utilized the way we had hoped,” he said, “of all the spaces, that would be the perfect spot for it.”

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As of now, all a student needs to do is go to the GSC Welcome Desk and check out a controller with their ALL Card, then walk down to D’Artagnan’s Den, turn on the TV indicated by the number on the controller, turn on the console and select a game. “Displays 1 through 4 house PlayStation 4’s or Xbox One systems sponsored by the Recreational Sports department and that Xbox One systems will be installed by the end of the semester.” He also plans to expand the catalogue of available games and is looking into ways to implement Nintendo Switches and PC gaming systems.

Lastly, Marshall encourages students to come to him with any suggestions or improvements that can be made. “We’re just getting started, so we’d love to hear back from students,” he said.

D’Artagnan’s Den is located in the basement of GSC and is currently open for use.
Johnson & Johnson to pay out $572 million in opioid-related death settlement

By MO JUENGER
Guest Writer

Oklahoma’s Cleveland County Court ordered pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson to pay out $572 million last Monday in a settlement for an opioid-related death lawsuit.

This is the first successful legal action to prosecute a drug manufacturer for improperly paying physicians and pharmacies for inappropriate and misleading advertising of prescription painkillers.

Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter’s suit alleged that Johnson & Johnson, through its pharmaceutical subsidiary Janssen, caused a public health crisis that killed thousands of Oklahoma residents in opioid-related deaths. The court found Johnson & Johnson culpable of bolstering a “public nuisance.” The defendants caused an opioid crisis that is evidenced by increased rates of addiction, overdose deaths and neonatal abstinence syndrome in Oklahoma,” presiding Judge Thad Balkman said in a statement.

On Friday, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost asked a federal appeals court to halt a similar federal opioid settlement on October for claims made by Cuyahoga and Summit Counties in order to give the state of Ohio time to file its own case similar to Oklahoma’s.

He has asked the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals to dismiss the claims or order U.S. District Judge Dan Polster in Cleveland to halt or delay the first federal trial that is set to begin Oct. 21.

The companies facing prosecution in Ohio’s courts include Janssen Pharmaceuticals (a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson), Purdue Pharma, Endo Health Solutions, Cephalon and Allergan.

First-year Jacob Tarter noted the irony in the nature of the Johnson and Johnson brand: “Their specialty is baby products, so I think that it kind of defeats the whole purpose of being a family-oriented company when you’re contributing to the opioid epidemic.”

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, there were 588 overdose deaths involving opioids in Oklahoma in 2017. This averages to 10.2 deaths per 100,000 persons, compared to the national rate of 14.4 deaths per 100,000 persons.

Comparatively, Ohio had the second highest rate of drug overdose deaths involving opioids in 2017. There were 4,293 reported deaths in the state for deaths per 100,000 persons.

The $572 million that Oklahoma will receive from the settlement is less than the $777.5 billion, will fund the Oklahoma’s opioid recovery plan for one fiscal year.

Johnson & Johnson’s shares rose five percent in value immediately following the verdict. The amount Johnson & Johnson will pay to the state of Oklahoma is just five percent of the damages their product has caused across the state.

“It saddens me how many people we’re losing to something as preventable as opioid addiction. We need to put a stop to it,” first-year Maddie Schramm said.

“I think the opioid crisis is terrible, but they’re looking at the wrong people,” first-year Allie Greenwell said.

“I’m glad that we finally won (a lawsuit),” Schramm said.

The week in review: Labor Day weekend

No thermal detonators, Norwood police warnings, Gold Star chili, “Cincinnatti” and Harry Potter

• A man was jailed for 82 days for bringing honey into the U.S. from Jamaica. Officials claimed the honey tested positive for liquid methamphetamine, but later tests found no evidence of the substance. The case is pending, and the man is expected to file a lawsuit (Aug. 28).

• The TSA is banning Star Wars-themed Coke bottles because they look like grenades. The bottles are one of more than 1,000 different glass bottles available at the new “Galaxy’s Edge” park at Disney (Aug. 28).

• The Norwood Police Department reminded citizens that there are, in fact, laws when drinking Claws. A Facebook post explained that the phrase, “Aint no laws when drinking Claws,” is a reference to the popular hard seltzer White Claws, will not hold up in court (Aug. 28).

• Workers at a Pennsylvania engineering company laid down nearly 1,400 pieces of track to race a Hot Wheels car for 2,176 feet. They submitted evidence of the feat to Guinness in hopes of gaining official world record status (Aug. 29).

• Gold Star notched another victory in the Cincinnati Chili War after Food and Wine named it the best fast food in Ohio. The magazine said eating at Gold Star was “one of those weird, wonderful moments that sticks with you, in a really good way” (Aug. 29).

• T-shirts commemorating the Queen City stop on KISS End of the Road tour misspelled “Cincinnatti,” tacking on a “k” to the T-shirts were being sold for $50 (Aug. 29).

• The governor of New Hampshire urged the state’s DMV to allow a woman to keep her “PH•WE•GO” license plate. The division had previously asked the woman to surrender her plate, despite the fact that she had used it for 15 years (Aug. 29).

• A man was fined for transporting a broken car by balancing it on top of another car. He later admitted stripping the car to the roof was a “stupid thing to do” (Aug. 30).

• Police in Clayton County, Georgia, were able to finally catch a serial rapist they had been hunting for years when they realized they had previously been a recruit. “Had he not attempted to join the ranks of the Clayton County Police Department, it’s questionable as to when we would have apprehended him,” said Police Chief Kevin Roberts (Aug. 31).

• A nightclub in France is celebrating its 50th anniversary with two new robot pole dancers. The robots wear high heels and have CCTV cameras for heads (Sept. 1).

• Pope Francis apologized to thousands of gathers for being late for his traditional noon appointment with the public, as he had been stuck in a Vatican elevator for 25 minutes. The pontiff praised the priest who rescued him, saying “Thank God the Fire Brigade came. Let’s hear it for the Fire Brigade!” (Sept. 1).

• A Catholic school in Nashville, Tennessee, has banned the popular Harry Potter book series. Pastor Dan Bechel said in an email sent to parents that “The curses and spells used in the books are actual curses and spells, written by a human being, risking conjuring evil spirits into the presence of the person reading the text.” The Catholic Church has no official stance on the Harry Potter books (Sept. 2).
The Amazon continues to burn

*By Charlie Gatalder*

**Guest Writer**

This week, the G-7 convened and offered $22 million in firefighting aid to Brazil to help the country combat fires in the Amazon Rainforest. Brazil’s President, Jair Bolsonaro, rejected the aid, citing what he believed to be personal attacks by France’s President, Emmanuel Macron. Macron had previously claimed that Bolsonaro lied about Brazil’s efforts to combat climate change.

Bolsonaro expressed anger that the G-7 — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States — was attempting to intervene in Brazil and compared the G-7 aid to colonialism. Bolsonaro also ridiculed the age and appearance of Macron’s wife.

Bolsonaro then reversed his stance on the G-7 aid, explaining he would accept $12 million in firefighting aid from England and mobilize their military to fight the blaze.

The blaze primarily has been blamed on increased deforestation spurred by Bolsonaro’s policies. Bolsonaro believes that developing the Amazon would help spur Brazil’s economy and has promised to not allow “another centimeter” to be put under environmental protections.

The Amazon rainforest is responsible for processing a large portion of the world’s carbon dioxide output.

The forest is also responsible for protecting the world’s oxygen output.

Fears regarding the environmental impact of Bolsonaro’s presidency date back to late summer 2018, when the former army captain rose through the polls on a platform of minimal environmental regulation by pledging to leave the Paris Agreement, as well as nationalist appeals.

According to Datafolha Polling Institute, 33 percent of respondents said Bolsonaro was doing a “great or good” job. The rating is tied for the lowest approval rating of a Brazilian president in the past three decades.

“I think it was just such a big wake up call for the rest of the world to be like ‘Holy (cow) the world is actually doing it,’” first-year exploratory major Courtney Corrado said. “We’ve all joked that we’re going to die but now the Amazon rainforest actually is dying.”

The Amazon rainforest continues to burn, as this picture from space, Brazil’s President Jair Bolsonaro has rejected $22 million in firefighting aid from the G-7. The fires have been burning for weeks.
The Amazon inferno: Crisis or necessity?

As anyone who uses social media can tell you, the burning of the Amazon Rainforest was a major cause for concern throughout the world. The fires burning in South America were of particular concern to forest ecosystems.

So, in summary, the fires burning in South America, including the ones burning in the Amazon Rainforest, are by no means the crisis social media would have you believe. As stated above, fires can be essential to the continued survival and thriving of an ecosystem, and most of the fires burning now are not even the forest burning that’s being burned on purpose.

Christopher Rinner is a first-year criminal justice major. He is a guest writer for the Newswire from Cincinnati.

mission Statement

The Xavier Newswire is committed to reporting the news as well as explain its significance to readers. In addition to publishing opposing view points and opinions, the Newswire hope to foster a dialogue among students, faculty and staff.

For Your Information

The Xavier Newswire is published weekly throughout the school year, except during vacations and final exams. The students of Xavier University, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207. One copy free per person per week.

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I’m a pacifist. But I also think we need to have another Cold War. The 1950s-90s are already coming back into style. Bell-bottoms are hip again, fascist ideology is on the rise and Russia, America, and other nations, are accelerating their nuclear programs. Seriously though, Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un have spent the last two years escalating nuclear threats. In August, an accident at an offshore Russian facility killed the nation’s five leading nuclear scientists. Experts believe they were working to either develop a nuclear reactor for military purposes or attempting to create a nuclear-powered missile — effectively a doomsday device.

Following the breakdown of the Iran nuclear deal, Tehran has threatened rearmament if economic sanctions are not lifted. Last month, I claimed Kashmir, a disputed territory shared with Pakistan, as its own. In an opinion piece for the New York Times, Imran Khan, Pakistan’s prime minister, explained that if the world does not intervene, two nuclear-armed nations would move closer towards confrontation. With each passing day, the threat of a nuclear catastrophe rises around the globe.

Our world has not been at such a risk since the events of the mid to late 20th century when launch codes were lauded and children hid under desks. So why am I arguing to return to such a tumultuous and terrifying era? Because I love peace and I love science.

I am part of a generation that was born in the months after the Cold War was declared. I believe the world will not fall apart in the absence of a Cold War. Indeed, we are living in an era of economic globalization that is effectively a world war.

The mindset behind standardized testing is one of toxic impersonality. It trains us to think about life as a never-ending series of goals. In high school, your goal is to get to college. In college, it’s to get a job. In the workforce, it’s to retire. Thinking like this leads students down paths without passion. These goals sit along a singular line, don’t benefit (within their field) from preparing for a standardized test, but their scores can inhibit them from using many scholarship resources. "Cut-off" scholarship practices subject students based on their scores, and do not consider students below a certain score eligible to receive financial aid. Any non-STEM and non-English major is not being tested on skills that are relevant to their specific studies. This represents the devaluation of most college majors, all of which are valid and necessary for a functional society.

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**Men's soccer ranked No. 10 after upsetting Akron**

**Andy Fleming reaches 100-win milestone in victory over Eastern Illinois**

**By Joe Clark**

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In a national ranking that focused on Xavier men's soccer, Andy Fleming leads Xavier to a 10-0-1 record this season, reaching 100 wins in his career at Xavier. Fleming's victory over Eastern Illinois this weekend was the 100th win of his career. Fleming's Xavier men's soccer team ranked 10th in the country by Top Drawer Soccer.com.

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**Women's soccer battles Dayton, Mizzou**

Xavier women's soccer battled Dayton during their season opener last Friday night as the Musketeers faced off against the reigning National Championship runner-up. The Musketeers led early in the match, but they faced heavy pressure from Akron in the second half, as the Zips tallied twelve shots that went wide. However, they were unable to score, as redshirt junior goalkeeper Matthew Rosenberg tallied six total saves, including five in the second half to shut down the Zips. It was Rosenberg's first career start for Xavier and the eighth clean-sheet of his collegiate career, as he registered seven clean-sheets while at the University of Central Florida.

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**Sports**

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**Volleyball**

Xavier's women's volleyball team won the Queen City Invitational with an overall title by a large margin, taking the first two matches against Kentucky University last Saturday. She won the women's individual title and posted 40 overall kills during the tournament. Xavier remained on the road this week, as they take on Kent State on Friday afternoon in Akron. Xavier's next home match is Thursday, Sept. 12 at 7 p.m., when they'll battle Northern Kentucky.

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**Cross Country**

Junior Anna Kostarellis headlined Xavier's season-opening Queen City Invitational hosted by Northern Kentucky University Saturday. She won the women's individual title and posted a school-record breaking time of 17:07.80 in the 5k. The women's team won the overall team title by a large margin — the third meet championship in the last seven years.
Breaking down the three biggest storylines heading into 2019

BY WILL PEMBROKE
Guest Writer

Let’s set the stage. It’s a relatively mild Saturday evening of NFL preseason action. Which week of the tune-up games traditionally showcases an extended run for starters on both sides of the ball, this year has proven to be the exact opposite. NFL teams have decided they want to do all they can during the preseason to eliminate injury risk. No team wants a situation like the Houston Texans now have with star running back Lamar Miller out for the year with a knee injury. A particularly interesting case of this had been Indianapolis Colts star quarterback Andrew Luck.

A lower leg injury had hampered him throughout training camp, leaving him off the practice field with no timetable for a return. During the team’s third preseason game against the Chicago Bears, Luck broke his silence about his retirement.

As he jogged off the field into the locker room, Luck was asked what a series of boos from fans who were disgruntled to learn that the promise of a potential playoff berth was now likely gone. An emotional press conference ensued, which brought Luck to tears. It left the NFL community in shock about what had just taken place.

Throughout his career, Luck endured several challenging injuries. These injuries include a lacerated kidney, torn rib cartilage, a concussion and a shoulder injury, the extent of which is still unknown. Luck endured all of these on top of years of punishment while taking hits behind a poorly constructed offensive line that left him in harm’s way.

Despite the positive approach he took to the pressure he faced by consistently complementing opposing players for laying down a nice hit on him, the scars of battle had formed. In his press conference Luck said that he was no longer able to enjoy the game of football.

On an emotional level, he could no longer prepare himself to be the best player he could be.

Luck is not the first star NFL player in his prime to retire from football. Former New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski retired this past offseason for many of the same reasons as Luck. Calvin Johnson, Barry Sanders, Jim Brown, Tiki Barber, Marvin Harrison and several other NFL legends can also be included in the “retired too early” category.

Historically we have not seen a consistent pattern of players from one single era retire early. Instead, a somewhat random assortment of stars scattered across a myriad of generations have fallen into the category.

Concerns have been a hot topic issue in the NFL for some time now, but new questions have arisen outside of just head injuries.

How many surgeries are too many? What age should people start playing football? Are the NFL, and other major football leagues doing enough for player safety? Are humans even meant to play football?

Some argue that maybe it’s time for American sports media to stop arguing over whether to allow a player to retire or not. Instead, they should continue the discussion on better ways for us to grow our youth football talent in a healthy manner.

As we close the decade of the 2010s, are guys like Andrew Luck and Rob Gronkowski the tip of the iceberg for NFL players retiring amid their prime for the next decade? Only time will tell.

NFL preview: The Cincinnati Bengals

Breaking down the three biggest storylines heading into 2019

BY JAKE GEIGER
Guest Writer

After a disappointing 6-10 season, the Cincinnati Bengals look to bounce back with new head coach Zac Taylor and a rejuvenated offense.

Here are the biggest storylines to expect for the Bengals’ 2019 season.

Can Andy Dalton be the QB of the future?

With a 21:11 touchdown to interception ratio in 2018, Andy Dalton looks to have a more productive season under Taylor’s new offensive scheme.

Taylor’s offense has a plethora of options to offer enough firepower to do some damage. However, Dalton has always struggled when the pressure arrives, especially blitz packages.

Can Dalton be better under the pressure this season? Personally, I think he has the tools to have a better season, but is it enough to keep him around? For the Bengals, it’s time to let Dalton go, they only lose about $2.4 million. Dalton may need to have a career year to keep his job in the Queen City.

Joe Mixon will rush for 1,600 yards

Mixon is heading into his third season in the NFL and is poised to continue his stellar production after rushing for 1,105 yards and eight touchdowns last season. Like Dalton, Mixon is in Taylor’s new offensive scheme, which is reliant on the run.

Taylor made this a priority in this year’s draft, as the Bengals selected left tackle Jonah Williams from Alabama and tight end Drew Sample from Washington, who is known for his run blocking.

However, Williams is facing a season-ending labrum injury, and with an already depleted line, he is the biggest loss so far for the Bengals.

The Bengals do have some productive players returning, such as two-time first team All-Pro Geno Atkins, Carlos Dunlap, Jessie Bates and Preston Brown. That said, too many questions remain can improve.

Defense will be the Bengals’ Achilles’ Heel

First-year defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo faces many challenges in Cincinnati. An inexperienced and inconsistent secondary and linebackers core and an injury-riddled defensive line are just some of the issues this Cincinnati team suffered last year.

The Bengals do have some productive players returning, such as two-time first team All-Pro Geno Atkins, Carlos Dunlap, Jessie Bates and Preston Brown. That said, too many questions remain can improve.

With this team. For example, who will replace Vontaze Burfict in the middle? Burfict had some off the field and injury problems the past few seasons, but he was a great leader and productive when healthy.

Who will step up at the cornerback position? Darqueze Dennard, William Jackson, and BW Webb lead the pack, but there is still a huge gap in terms of consistency and being able to guard star receivers.

Do they think this defense will have its moments of success this season, but problems may arise because of injury, inconsistencies and have to face star-studded offenses throughout the division, such as the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Cleveland Browns.

Season wrap-up

I think this team will have its moments, but it simply needs more talent. Getting back to winning football is a long process, and Cincinnati will need to draft well, acquire effective free agents and bring back the winning culture.

This may be a down year for Cincinnati, and wins may be hard to come by.

I think the Bengals win five games this season under first-year head coach Zac Taylor. They’ll have some bright spots but also some glaring holes that need to be addressed.

The return of Captain Luck?

While Andrew Luck has decided to retire from the NFL, that doesn’t mean he’s stopping to stop working. Luck has previously expressed interest in being a high school history teacher after football.

Can’t miss the first game!

Liberty University Head Coach Hugh Freeze didn’t let severe back pain stop him from coaching the Flames’ first game last Saturday. He coached from the coaches’ box in his hospital bed.

Trademark Tuesday

Chances are you’ve seen that LeBron James shared his infamous “Taco Tuesday” social media videos. Now, he’s trying to trademark the common phrase. Someone should tell Anthony Davis to run away.

Da Bears!

The Bears and Packers open up NFL action on Thursday. Chicago fans can watch the game at O’Toole’s, the name of a bar from an X&Z ski
Swift’s newest album Lover shines

BY JOSEPH COTTON
Staff Writer

Two years removed from her last album, Reputation, and 13 years removed from her debut, the prolific Taylor Swift is back with her seventh comprehensive studio album, Lover. As an ode to love in all its messy forms, the album shines as a butter smooth, euphorically care-free reflection on her love for life.

With this release, it feels like Swift has finally found the confidence in her sound and voice she has struggled with since switching from a young country artist to a legitmate pop superstar. Unlike her album 1989, Lover seems less like an album that chases the trendiest sounds.

In contrast, Lover has more of a Taylor Swift-inspired style while still maintaining the sleek aesthetic of mid-2010's indie-pop. Lover is also a return to form for Taylor Swift when compared to the melodramatic mess of the album Reputation. The unbearable moodiness of her last album is nowhere to be found on this one.

“The Man” stands out as a high point on the record. The song is a feminist anthem at its core but unlike many other top-40 songs on similar topics, it comes off as reflective and questioning instead of preachy. I appreciate how Swift reflects upon and deconstructs the double standards that women face. Despite its reflective tone, the song still has the abrasive energy of a huntress in the woods looking for her kill. The song’s mantra, “I’m so sick of running as fast I can, wondering if I’d get there faster if I was a man” perfectly captures the feeling that many women and minorities have while going through life.

“False God” is a slower yet equally beautiful jam. The purely drums cut through the soft synth atmosphere and the sexy saxophone riffs all while Ms. Swift’s voice floats effortlessly on top. The wordplay is poignant as Swift equates love to a false religion. The line “make confessions, and we’re begging for forgiveness / got the wine for you” is an example of the ingenious lines sprinkled throughout the record.

Another one of my favorite songs was “ME!” featuring Brendon Urie of Panic! at the Disco fame. The song is bright and fun as it features soaring harmonies and an energetic snare drum groove. It also has my favorite line on the entire record as Urie says, “you can’t spell AWESOME without ME?” The lyric is absolutely hilarious and made me laugh out loud while I was listening to it for the first time.

Other highlights included “Cruel Summer,” “Paper Rings” and “London Boy.” The one thing that really holds Lover back from being undisputedly her best work or one of the most essential albums of the decade is its long hour-and-six-minute run time. This album could easily be cut down to about 14 minutes of the best songs. The songs “Archer,” “I Think He Knows,” Miss Americana and the Heartbreak Prince,” “Afterglow,” and “Daylight” could all be cut and the album would be better for it. It’s not that these songs are inherently awful, but they are redundant and boring. I don’t think that Taylor Swift is versatile enough to warrant such a long run time.

In short, Lover is a shimmeringly fun, but long-wind-ed album with sharp lyricism and songwriting that represents a little of what is best in the album. The album is perfect for long car rides or chilling in your dorm room with friends. So grab that guy you’ve been crushing over and a few gallons of gas and plan a spontaneous road trip to Columbus soundtracked to Taylor Swift’s newest album.

At long last, Tool fulfills promises of new album

BY ELLEN SHIEKE
Copy Editor

For 15 years, Tool fans waited. And waited. And waited. They got excited by suggestions of a new album, only to be let down. Memes piled up and tensions rose as side projects, legal issues and tour dates surfaced once again. Tool creation seemed to indicate a shape? A critique of a society trying to stay in battle-ready form. An aging soldier, desperately struggling to remain conscience-focused on soundbites and edutainment? You tell me.

On this album, however, because the music relies so much on “Chocolate Chip Trip,” a conglomeration of drums, computer noises and ’80s dance music, I pretty sure it’s Carey’s interpretation of an acid trip. As soon as the song ends, “tempest” places the lid right back in Tool-land, confusing you all the more.

The oxymoronic change from earlier albums is the role of instrumentation. Instrumental-heavy tracks, complete with an abundance of keyboard, do the heavy lifting, creating that raw feel normal-ly accepted by MIJ’s screams. On this album, however, because the music relies so much on the instrumentation, the vocals don’t have much to back them up. In fact, I cannot recall a single scream on any of the tracks.

Overall, this 86-minute album is permed to demonstrate more than on “Chocolate Chip Trips,” a conglomeration of drums, computer noises and ’80s dance music. I pretty sure it’s Carey’s interpretation of an acid trip. As soon as the song ends, “tempest” places the lid right back in Tool-land, confusing you all the more.

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Burning Man sets the world aflame

BY ALEYA JUSTISON
Guest Writer

In its last weekend of exhibition, I ventured down to the Cincinnati Art Museum to witness firsthand some of the magic from the notorious Burning Man. When I first walked in, I felt like I had stepped into another realm. Big, illuminated mushroom sculptures opened and closed their caps above me like a living, breathing forest. However, they were far from being alive. Constructed out of panels of corrugated plastic, steel and neon lights, these art pieces were one of many featured in this past year’s Burning Man Festival, themed “No Spectators.” Like many readers, I am sure, I had little background knowledge on exactly what took place at the Cincinnati Art Museum concluded their exhibit on the Burning Man Festival, “No Spectators,” which dazzled their pieces be interactive. In addition to the construction of the “Man,” a team also builds what is called “the Temple” each year, giving a deeply spiritual aspect to the festival. Here, the ruckus of the festival is softened into contemplative silence. Burners are invited to write letters to their past selves, names of loved ones they have lost or worries that they are unable to let go. On the last night of the festival, a more serene ceremony occurs: the burning of the Temple. People gather in respect for each other, honoring their losses and letting go. Described as a very cathartic experience, I believe the emotional care that Burning Man offers is what entreats newcomers and retains the existing population of Burners. A large wall entitled “Before I Die, I want to...” concludes the exhibit and invites guests to write their responses in chalk. As I glanced over the overlapping responses, I had to hold back tears. “I want to be the man my wife married,” one person had written while others said they wanted to travel or live without fear. The mission of Burning Man that I had been trying to grasp all afternoon had finally set in; I understood how experiences can transform one's life. In that instance, I felt as if I were truly a part of something greater, like the way one feels close to the ocean when they hold a conch shell to their ear and close their eyes, or perhaps, like a fire was burning inside me.

Categorical on Travis Scott proves intriguing

BY GUS NATIONS
Guest Writer

As an avid music listener, there are very few artists that keep me up half the night upon release days waiting for their new project. On Aug. 8, 2018, I stayed up all night as the long awaited Astroworld was finally slated to be released. I was not disappointed, and neither were the rest of Scott’s fans. Fast forward one year and the hype for the album has not died down. I don’t think there is much debate when I say that 2018-2019 was the year of Travis Scott: countless sold out shows, a child, many music features on some of the hottest songs of the year and several Grammy nominations have all solidified the man as one of the most influential artists of this generation. And that was all before he released a documentary...
The Anti-Smoking Defamation League, America’s largest tobacco control organization, recently launched its latest anti-vape campaign titled “Stop Testing on Humans.” The campaign focuses on the lack of information available regarding the long-term health effects of vaping. The League is absolutely correct: we should not allow ourselves to become vape industry lab rats. That important job must be left to government agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration. The government claims that problems linking vaping to health issues result from a lack of both test subjects and voluntary reporting. Considering that the majority of our generation is already addicted to nicotine and has no viable path towards quitting, we would be remiss to not capitalize on the population of test subjects.

Therefore, I propose legally requiring that every person living in the United States begin vaping and attending mandatory health screenings. We have too many unanswered questions about vaping. Maybe it causes cancer, maybe it leads to infertility or maybe it makes your toes fall off — but without testing, we simply won’t know.

The only way to find answers to these questions is to require every man, woman and child to begin sucking on the matte black sticks we all so dearly Think back to the cigarette epidemic in the mid twentieth century. How much quicker would we have been able to link smoking to cancer had everyone been required to light up a pack of Marlboros? How many lives would have been saved? It stands to reason that we wouldn’t even be faced with the vaping epidemic we are now grappling with.

Sadly, we cannot change the past, only the future. So do the responsible thing: Put down your Juul, call your lawmaker and urge them to pass legislation requiring the entirety of the population to vape; Then pick that black stick back up and keep ripping… for science.