

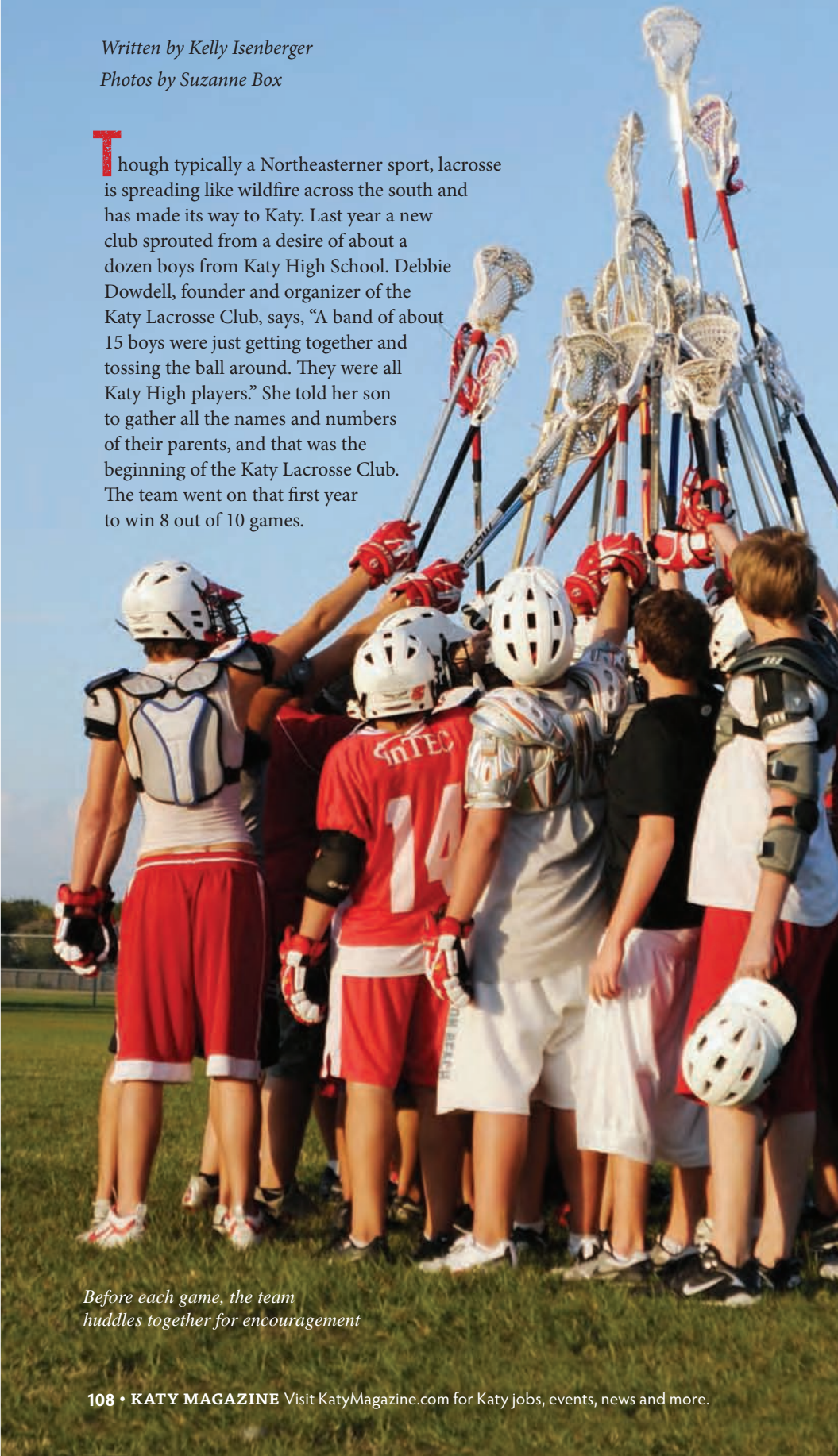
LACROSSE IN

THE NEW SPORTS TREND IN TOWN

Written by Kelly Isenberger

Photos by Suzanne Box

Though typically a Northeasterner sport, lacrosse is spreading like wildfire across the south and has made its way to Katy. Last year a new club sprouted from a desire of about a dozen boys from Katy High School. Debbie Dowdell, founder and organizer of the Katy Lacrosse Club, says, "A band of about 15 boys were just getting together and tossing the ball around. They were all Katy High players." She told her son to gather all the names and numbers of their parents, and that was the beginning of the Katy Lacrosse Club. The team went on that first year to win 8 out of 10 games.



Before each game, the team huddles together for encouragement

KATY



Catching the ball



Lacrosse combines skills from soccer, hockey, and basketball



Good sportsmanship is strongly encouraged in Lacrosse

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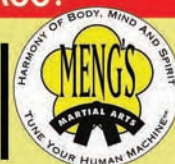
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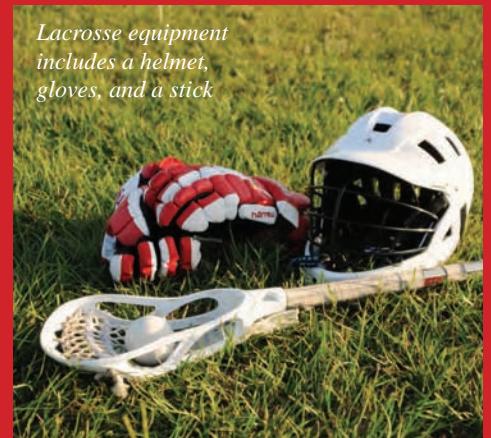
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A SPORT LIKE NO OTHER

Lacrosse is a different sport than all others for many reasons. Athletically, it combines a number of skills from sports such as soccer, hockey and basketball, producing well-rounded athletes. Grant Fielding, who plays attack for Katy Lacrosse was attracted to the sport for that reason. His mom, Elaine, says, "Lacrosse pulls in aspects of other sports into one exciting game." Lacrosse also offers something else - playtime. In a region where football is so popular, players may find themselves sitting on the bench more than they're playing on the field. The Dowdell family found that their son was able to play most of the game, which meant that he did not have to watch from the sidelines. Another attraction of lacrosse, especially for the parents, is that even though lacrosse is a very aggressive sport, sportsmanship is extremely important. The game is meant to be played with high integrity. In fact, the sport originated in a Native American religion and was played to resolve conflicts, heal the sick, and build strong men.

Lacrosse equipment includes a helmet, gloves, and a stick



INTERESTED IN LACROSSE?

Visit these websites to get more information about your local team.

★ Cinco Ranch Lacrosse Club
eteamz.com/CincoRanchLacrosse

★ Katy Lacrosse Club
lacrosseatkaty.com

★ Taylor Lacrosse Club
taylorlacrosse.com

★ Texas High School Lacrosse League
thsl.org

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The Katy Lacrosse Club won 8 out of 10 games their first season

LACROSSE LINGO

Before you head out to join the local team, be sure to read up on these common Lacrosse terms.

ATTACK The player position in the game that is stationed in the offensive end and is responsible for offense

CHECK An attempt to dislodge the ball from another player's stick by poking or slapping their stick or arms with either end of your stick, though most often the head

COOKIE Slang for the ball

CROSSE Proper name for a stick.

DEFENDER A player at the defense position

GUMBALL A shot that goes directly into the keeper's stick

ON THE HOP Common lacrosse term used to signify that players are to move into huddles and drills with at least a brisk jog; no walking!

PASS Throwing the ball with the stick to another player

RIP (Take a rip) Slang for a shot attempt on the goal

SQUIB To kick the ball or knock the ball away from a huge pile of people to one of your teammates

WALK THE DOG When a player runs down the field carrying the ball in their stick way out in front of them in one hand with their arm extended, and holding the bottom of the shaft.

A DEDICATED COACH

Coach Matt Spears is the volunteer coach for the Katy Lacrosse Club. He is a player of lacrosse himself and loves the game. He says, "The game is fast paced, aggressive, and is exciting to play and watch." His step-son, Keaton, was part of the original group of boys that wanted to form the Katy club. The players needed a coach, and they asked Matt to volunteer. He only committed for one year, but says, "Now both my step-sons are playing, and the first year was so rewarding, I have agreed to coach for this year and probably many more. The boys are very enthusiastic about the sport and are eager to learn and play. I have to end practice after three hours and they want to keep going. It is much more rewarding than I ever thought it would be, and the kids are great!"

FIND YOUR TEAM

Because the Katy Lacrosse Club is established through the Texas High School Lacrosse League, a player must play with the team that they are zoned to. Katy Lacrosse Club accepts players that are zoned to go to Katy High School and also accepts home school and private school students. Their practice season begins in August and runs through January. Game season starts in February and runs through mid-April. There are two other lacrosse clubs in the Katy Area - Taylor and Cinco Ranch. If you're not sure what club you're zoned to, then contact the THSLL at thsll.org to find your team.

Dowdell says of lacrosse, "It's not an easy sport. It is demanding, but it's also a lot of fun and boys just seem to love the heck out of it! I think it goes back to their younger years when they ran around with sticks, only now they are aluminum with nets and a very hard ball!" KM

KELLY ISENBERGER is a Katy resident and mother of two. She enjoys running and getting together with friends.