



# The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

## New season, new coach for Vineyarders football

BY NICHOLAS CARPENTER AND CAMDEN TOWNES

It's football season at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), and the boys are gearing up for their Homecoming game against rival island Nantucket. But the freshmen aren't the only new additions to the team. Tony Mottola has taken over as head coach, following Donald Herman's retirement from the program after 28 seasons.

So far, Coach Mottola has made a positive impression on his players.

"I really like him," said senior T.J. Lett. "He has a positive attitude, is always looking to improve, and he has great football knowledge."

"I was put on the board to pick the new coach, so I felt like I had a good opportunity to meet with him before," said junior Heyttor Nunes. "He says to play the

game we know how to play. So we're always thinking about that, and just trying to make him proud."

"He tells us to do our jobs," said junior Aiden Conley. "And it sticks with us because it gives us the motivation to do the little things that make the plays work out."

The Vineyarders have had some tough competition so far this season, leaving their current record at 1-6.

"We've had some unfortunate injuries this season," said Aiden. "But everyone cares for one another, and we have a great relationship as a team and with our coaches."

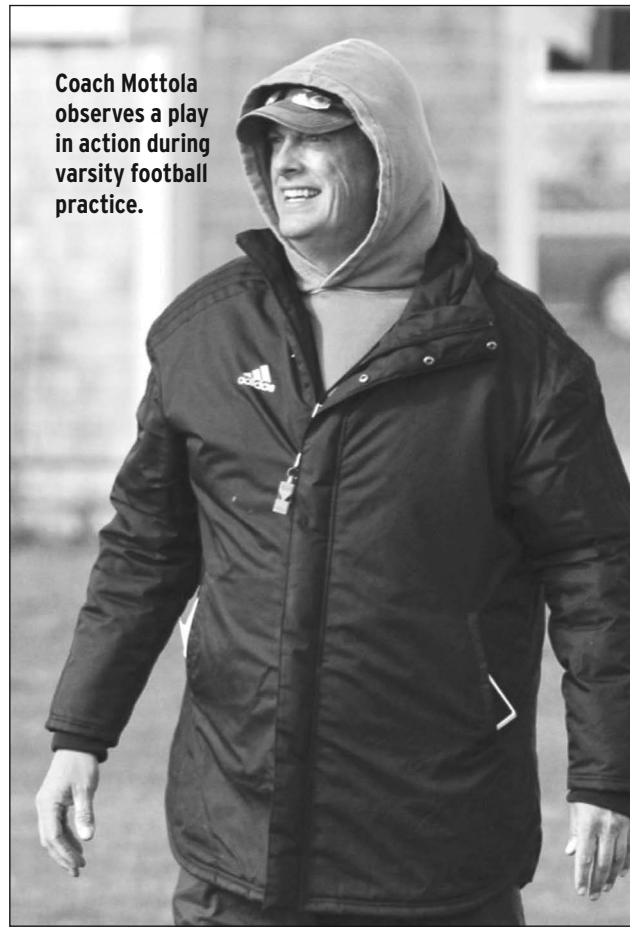
Coach Mottola's interest in football began when he was young. His father was a football coach and athletic director at Maine Maritime Academy. "I used to just love the interactions that he had with his players," Mottola said. "By 6 years old, I

knew exactly what I wanted to do."

His passion for football brought him to a coaching position early on at Northern Valley Regional High School in New Jersey for a number of years, but most noteworthy on his résumé is his time spent in the NFL on the coaching staff for the Las Vegas Raiders.

Coach Mottola credits his current teaching skills to working in the league. "It was pretty fantastic," he said. "I learned a ton of football while I was out there, things that I still carry to this day."

When asked about his strategy for this season, he said, "It's more of just building the relationship that we need to be successful between myself and the players, and amongst the players. We're hoping that at this point in the season, we are better than we were in August, and when we get



Coach Mottola observes a play in action during varsity football practice.

PARKER BRADLEE

to November, that will be better than where we are right now."

The Vineyarders play Nantucket in the Island Cup this Saturday, and have been hard at work in preparation.

T.J. says confidence and a competitive mindset are the most important things that the team will need to take on Nantucket. "In this competition, it's trying to best the person on the other side," he said.

"It's my first go-around with the Island Cup, and the vibe is already unbelievable out on the Island," said Coach Mottola. "I am excited to dive into game planning against Nantucket, and am really looking forward to this Saturday at 3 o'clock."

The players are feeling the same way.

"We've been looking at Nantucket the entire season," Heyttor said. "Every game matters. But to us, it's really all about that Cup game." **HSV**

## Teen Truth normalizes mental health struggles

BY JULIA SAYRE, CAMILLE BRAND, & AVERY MULVEY

Last Friday, sophomores at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) gathered in the Performing Arts Center (PAC) for an assembly on mental health, presented by Teen Truth, an organization that works with students to normalize mental health challenges and prevent teen suicide.

Former NFL linebacker Caleb Campbell was the spokesman and presenter for Teen Truth, sharing his personal story battling with suicidal thoughts and actions.

Sophomore Annabelle

Metell was inspired by Campbell's words. "I have severe mental health issues, and his speech motivated me," she said. "I will start to own my truth and not be embarrassed to talk about anxiety and depression."

After speaking to him on the phone, wellness coordinator and school adjustment counselor Amy Lilavois felt that Campbell was the perfect fit to speak on the topic.

"Research shows rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health challenges are on the rise, and to see a former NFL linebacker, West Point Army officer, talk about how he feels and what he's experienced in his life, opened up the doors for kids

to feel like it's an OK thing to do," she said.

Campbell's core points involved normalizing struggles, walking through fear together, and preventing it from controlling you.

"It's OK to talk about what you're struggling with," Lilavois said. "It can be really scary to be vulnerable, but more often than not, you're going to end up getting the help that you need. Caleb's story was a perfect example of that."

"His words were very encouraging for people to make a change in their lives," she said. "I think [the assembly] will inspire many, since there are many out there who struggle with

the same thing I do."

Campbell asked students to stand up if they have personal experience with living in fear, a mental health challenge, or a secret no one else knows. This challenged students to take a risk and open up. At first only a few people stood, and shortly after, more joined them. Within moments, a large number of students were standing.

"Sometimes a lot of teenagers feel like they're the only ones who feel this way, and so they have to put on that front, they have to wear that mask," school adjustment counselor Matt Malowski said. "Those students standing shows that you're not

alone. This is real."

Sophomore Renny Smith gained a new perspective on his fellow students. "This assembly showed me that more of my peers are upset with their lives than I originally believed," he said. "Now I will definitely check in with my friends and make sure they're doing all right."

Campbell asked students to raise their hands and share what they took away from his presentation. Hands shot up in the air. One student said they won't assume someone is OK, even if they look OK. Another student said that they'll stop gossiping.

Starting in November, sophomores will begin a six-week teen mental health

first aid course in their physical education and health classes. The assembly prefaced what students will learn from the curriculum.

"We start slowly talking about what a mental health challenge is, and then we get into the more heavy things, like suicide, self-injury, substance use and addiction, and how to help yourself and help a friend," Lilavois said.

Malowski hopes what students heard at the assembly will stick with them. "I really hope somebody like [Caleb] is able to drop a few seeds in brains out there that eventually germinate, whether it's now or in a couple of years," he said. **HSV**

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