

## 2024 International Handball Tournament

The history of Handball at Sterne started back in 2016 when Sean McManis and Craig Brewer introduced the sport to the school and started a team and partnered with the CalHeat, a local semi-professional team. The sport did not get much attention or attraction because not many people at Sterne knew about handball, however, there was a handball league going on in the Bay Area. This league contained 4-5 other schools that also competed.

Handball is a game that consists of two thirty-minute halves with an intermission, and players wear no protective equipment. The ball can be moved by passing, dribbling, throwing, or hitting it with any part of the body above the knee and the goalkeeper is the only one to kick the ball. The team cannot keep the ball in their hands without attempting to strike. The team that wins the coin toss at the start is awarded the ball. A match begins with both teams in their own half. Plus, a goal can be scored from any type of throw.

Over the summer, a few Sterne athletes went on separate trips to separate tournaments from what the school would hold during league play, and during the season. The two tournaments were held in Europe. One was the Granollers Cup in Spain and the other one was the Partille Cup in Sweden. These are two big tournaments that happen every year in Europe. Even though they were not affiliated with the school's league, it was worth it for the athletes to get some really good competitive handball experience.

Five Sterne students participated in the tournament. One was Jayden Corado-Rosales, who was a senior and the goalie for the team. There were two juniors on the team named Jack Kunze and Ewan McBride. There were two other juniors on the team named Bakari Thompson and Smith Trimble. The results of the tournaments were members of the Sterne high school team qualifying for the playoffs in the Partille Cup. This team was put together by the CalHeat and some of the players in the CalHeat were Sterne students but not all of them were.

The Sterne students said that they had really great experiences playing handball and what was also great was the level of handball. What they have also appreciated and liked about the trip is that they were getting really high levels of competition against players who are really skilled and they were learning this sport from players who were playing it naturally. So, a lot of the time, they would be using their basketball skills and applying that to handball or using their soccer skills and applying that to handball. The other thing that they really enjoyed was the opportunity to meet new people all around the world and have this really unique experience of playing and competing for their own country because they were the only American team in the tournament.

Despite all of the highlights, there were a few negative aspects to the tournaments. One thing is that the students have been getting into fights against players who have been playing this sport at a really young age and are really skilled and talented. Another lowlight about the trip was the 11 hour flights to and away from Europe.

The short term for the future of Handball at Sterne is to get interested in the sport even if no one knows about it. However, the idea is to continue to have a team that competes against both the middle school and high school for the small Bay Area league Sterne have and to grow the league. Sterne has done well reaching it to middle school programs but it is tough introducing the sport to high school programs. The long term for the future of Handball at Sterne is to be a successful participant in a league and introduce the sport to the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). CIF schedules athletic high school competition for baseball, football, basketball, and football. If handball were to be a CIF sport, a lot of schools would get interested in it and the sport would grow throughout the country.

How interested students sign up for handball is to fill out a consent form, get physicals done by doctors, and talk to Sean McManis or Coach Delfino, who coaches the middle school team. Sterne is always looking for new players and is always happy to recruit any student from middle school to high school and get in. Once players join the team, they go to a few practices, and go to a clinic that happens at the beginning of every school year out in Fremont with all of the teams

in the Bay Area. Whether they are learning the sport or developing their skills, however, the important thing is to encourage any individual who is new to the sport to other individuals who have had experience from the sport because they played handball in middle school for a few years to come out and give it a shot.

**Proofread/Edited by Chris Myers & Samuel Underwood**

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