

# JV Cheer finishes in top two back-to-back years

Anderson Shows, sports editor

After starting the program just last year, the OHS Junior Varsity Cheer team has finished top two in the state of Mississippi both years. This year, the team placed second in the state after finishing first in the state last year.

“Over the last year, the leadership has changed a lot,” sophomore Maci Weeks said. “Last year, it was the first year of the program and we didn’t really know what we were doing and how to handle having two cheer teams. Going into this year we had a lot more insight on what our season was supposed to look like so we got to fulfill it a lot better.”

Although the state competition occurs in December, preparation begins many months before with practices before and after school.

“Building up to the state competition, there was a lot of stress and practice,” Weeks said. “Having to share the mat with the varsity team caused us to have to do a lot of work outside of practice which has really helped make us a better team. Whether it was talking to each other or watching videos, we really tried to take advantage of the time that we got.”

Since the squad is composed of only freshman and sophomores, many members begin their cheerleading journey on the team.

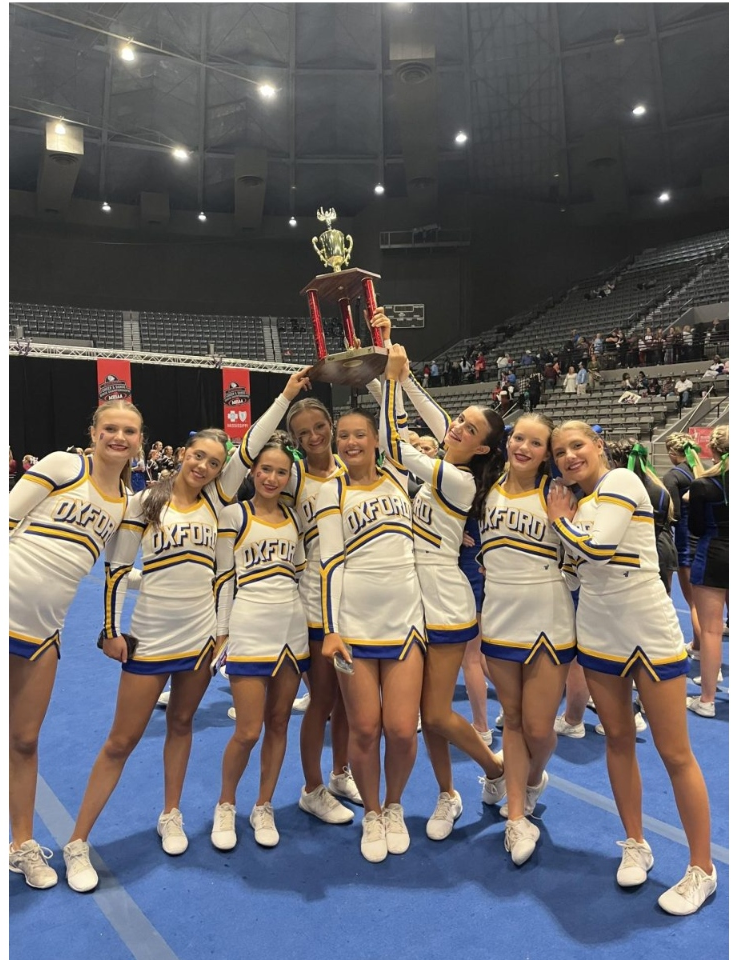
“While this was my first year as a cheerleader, I had to learn all of the sidelines, stunting, and all the other aspects of cheer which was difficult at times, freshman Luly Beauchamp said. “Thankfully, my teammates were there to help me each step of the way, and I think we all got better throughout the process.”

Although the team prioritizes getting better for their competitions, the many hours of working together allow the team members to build strong relationships with each other.

“Having the opportunity to become closer with my teammates, who were people I hadn’t really been close with before, has been one of my favorite parts about cheer,” sophomore Paisley Columns said. “Without this team, I probably wouldn’t have these close relationships that I was able to build with my teammates this season.”

Even though the team was able to be successful this season, they were faced with a big challenge from the start that they had to overcome.

“It’s very challenging being an eight person team competing against teams with more people than us, but I think we were able to do the best that we could with what we had,” Weeks said.



As their season progressed, leadership was extremely important as many sophomores helped guide the team to success.

“The sophomores this year have been amazing leaders and they are all so talented,” Beauchamp said. “They have encouraged me to work hard, be the best I can be and to never give up. I am so thankful for them and all of the leadership they have given me throughout the year.”

Before the state competition, the JV squad competed in the Charger Classic and the Regional competition placing first in both.

“I think we did great this competition season bringing home two first place trophies and winning second in the state,” Beauchamp said. “Being able to compete alongside my teammates was a really fun experience for me and I’m really proud of what we were able to accomplish.”

The team attributes their success to the the team dynamic and bond between the girls. “I feel like all the sophomores and I have all worked together really well and had the team’s best interest at heart,” Weeks said.