

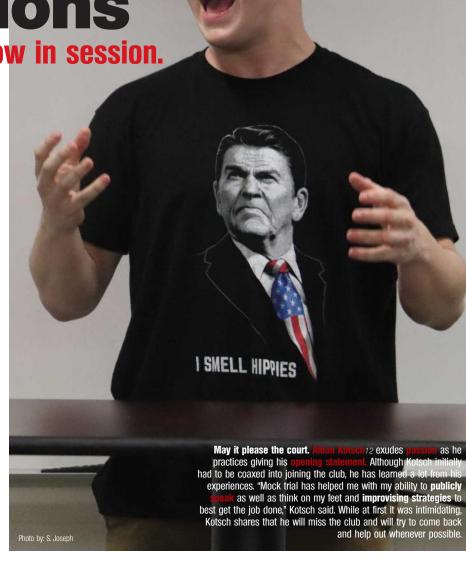
Mock Trial has been a staple at the high school for many years and recently the team has formed into a fierce competitor against all the schools in Berks County. Trials were held in zoom format. Along with a handful of technical difficulties, this allowed **redistricting** as it was now easier to compete against schools in **farther locations**.

During the preseason, the team took part in **two** tournaments held by LaSalle University and the University of Pennsylvania. As the season continued, the team won the Berks County **Championships**, a title they have held for the last seven years. Due to the newly formed districts, they had to face Daniel Boone to win a wild card spot to be one of the top four teams advancing to regionals. After beating Daniel Boone, they earned **3rd place in the district competion.** Mock Trial continued to the **regional quarter-finals**, where they lost to Nazareth by a difference of **three points**.

Throughout the virtual trials, the team branched out and tried new ideas. Casandra Batz 10 played a character witness and peaked the interest of the judges with a faux British accent. "It all started as a joke, but then it came naturally to me when the trial started and I just flipped a switch to be British in my brain. Other teams and jurors thought the accent was real and were confused when we revealed it was not," Batz said.

Coach Mrs. Molly Sherman sums the season up in a word, "Bendy, I've lost track of many ways the kids had to adapt and bend around the virtual world this year, but each time they found ways to creatively solve problems. Plus, they bent around each other. This year I thought the team was especially supportive and worked hard to make sure everyoné felt valued," Sherman said.

Story by: S. Joseph







Sacha Joseph<sub>12</sub>, Natalie Slusser11, and Casandra **Batz**10 congregate around their teacher's computer outside the school's front entrance to hear the judge's post-trial comments. The team was competing in the **Ben** Franklin Invitational, a weekend long tournament put on by the University of Pennsylvania. On the last night, students had to rapidly pack up and race out of the library seconds after Joseph finished her closing statement because the school's alarm was about to be set. "I remember the custodian pulling up and setting it [the alarm] as we were shivering out on the porch," Mrs. Molly Sherman said. Many people left after a long day of intensive trials beginning at 7:30 a.m., yet a few stayed behind and bundled up to learn from the jury advice.

Litigation in new locations

Motivating mentor. Mrs. Molly **Sherman** has been the Mock Trial advisor since 2012. Over this time she has become fluent ready to keep the group on track "She is an amazing mentor and just an inspiring amount of effort the group wants to put forth and works with it, no matter how many it takes. Along with countless mock trial hours, she will help you through any other aspirations you have. I've been with her for four years and her consistent positive attitude and constructive mindset has changed my life," Sacha



I plead the fifth. After winning points for their team during an activity to learn objections and mock trial rules, Natalie Slusser 11 and Casandra Batz<sub>10</sub> celebrate, cheering on the next group. At practices before the case file dropped, the team focused on **perfecting the basic elements** of a trial through interactive learning exercises. "At practices we work hard, but we also play hard. There is a lot to get done, but we always have fun together," Batz said.

**Objection overruled. Izzy Funari**9 reads over a witness statement to practice. Funari's older sister spent four years in the club and would tell her all about it, so as a freshman, Funari was excited to join. "It was somewhat different. I knew it was a lot of work, but it turned out to be more than I expected," Funari said. Although it was not exactly what she imagined, Funari enjoyed her first year, learning a great deal about the court

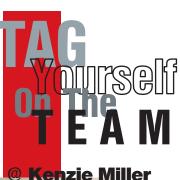




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You are under oath. Maddie Ammon 10 checks her setup before a virtual trial. At the start of the season all witnesses zoomed in from home, but as it became more competitive, everyone competed from the school with quality lighting and backdrop. While she thought virtual trials felt impersonable. Ammon still prepped the same way and made the best of the season, "Beforehand, I reread my statement dozens of times. You never know what you're going to get hit with on cross so you have to be super prepared," Ammon said.





-Leaves early every practice

-Barely reads her statement

-Comes to court knowing everything

## Sam Mitten



-Knows every rule of evidence in the book

-Consistently scores 10s on an opening statement

-Un-ironically makes trial jokes outside

of the

courtroom -Extremely stressed, vet extremely put

together

011

## **Natalie Slusser**



## Sacha Joseph



-Writes ten minute cross examinations

-Will destroy the other team with a glance