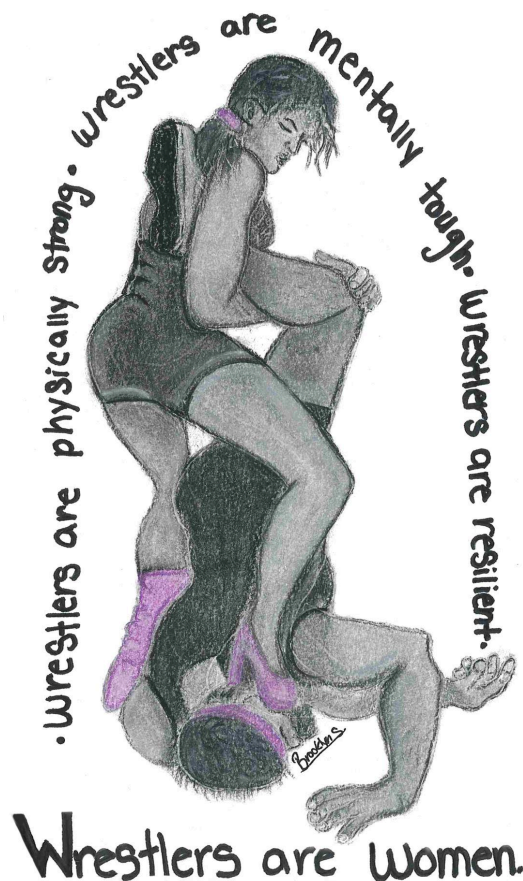


Brooklyn Santifer--Editorial Cartoon
Artist Statement

After reading the accompanying editorial, the image of a woman standing, a heel on one foot and her normal wrestling shoe on the other, entered my head. I chose to do black and white with a pop of purple to draw the viewers' eyes where I wanted. I debated on what and how to do the text on the drawing. I eventually landed on the phrases “Wrestlers are physically strong,” “Wrestlers are mentally tough,” “Wrestlers are resilient,” and at the bottom, “Wrestlers are women.” Women face many challenges and prejudices in male-dominated fields, especially sports. I wanted to portray the image of women performing just as well as men. I chose the phrases because all wrestlers are physically strong and resilient, no matter their gender. I started with a sketch of the woman, trying to figure out the position and the stance. I then used a mix of chalk, charcoal, and graphite to shade the black areas first, and then slowly built up the shadows continuing out. I used purple chalk on the heel and the headband of the man to draw the eye to the bottom of the image. I chose to use Sharpie for the lettering in an arch around the image.



The Purple Pulse



Wrestling against the stereotypes

Last year Southern Valley added a new opportunity for female athletes: women's wrestling. In the wrestling room and around the school, there was plenty of talk going around about it, but not all that talk was positive. As with anything new, the unknown can be a bit scary and some athletes were nervous about the backlash they might get from their peers. There are many stereotypes surrounding the sport. As this is only Southern Valley's second year of having women's wrestling, the program is small. There aren't very many athletes open to trying it, but we need to make sure we are supportive of those that do.

Wrestling is not for the weak. Male wrestlers are praised for their strength, but it is something females are often looked down on among their peers. Female wrestlers are just athletes who are driven to be the best versions of themselves.

Not only is physical strength necessary in wrestling, but athletes also must be aggressive. Stereotypically women are supposed to be nurturing and loving. Although it's not all about being aggressive, it can be the drive to win that gives athletes enough strength to push through a tough match. For some women, being aggressive is what draws them to the sport.

Some students say that wrestling is a "gross sport," perhaps because they don't fully understand it. This can be a drawback for women athletes, not only for feeling gross and sweaty, but also for having others imply that it is nasty and that they are too for participating.

Aside from the stereotypes of wrestling, there are some students who degrade female wrestlers for participating.

They say that women wrestlers are just seeking attention and shouldn't be doing a male sport. There will always be people who will support women's wrestling and others who will only try to bring it down. As a student body, we need to support all our athletes regardless of personal views.

All wrestlers exhibit physical and mental endurance. It is something athletes have to build up. In wrestling, it's not only the pain of being thrown around on the mat but also the mentality of not giving up. Although there may not be as many women wrestlers at Southern Valley, they are just as driven to succeed as the male wrestlers.

Women wrestlers face stereotypes, and it is not fair. As a student body let's make sure their toughest opponents are on the mat, not in the halls or in our classrooms. Let's be supportive of these tough athletes. Don't assume things about female wrestlers. They are individuals like everyone else. This season, let's all help redefine what it means to be a female wrestler.

