

Darien Ninth Grader Talks at New Canaan Country School Sports Assembly

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New Canaan Country School ninth grader and Darien resident Alex Byrne, captain of the school boys' varsity lacrosse team, recently told a school assembly that one important aspect of playing sports can be overlooked: "just to have fun."

Alex was one of two student-athletes selected to offer reflections at the end-of-term Upper School sports assembly, held on campus May 31.

— *an announcement from* [New Canaan Country School](#)

"We all know sports are important because they teach you teamwork, respect, determination, resilience, work ethic and the importance of being a part of something bigger than yourself," he said, "but I think one of the most underrated aspects of sports is to just have fun."

"The last two lacrosse seasons have both been amazing. Not only did we go undefeated both years, we had so much fun being successful," said Alex, who also shared highlights and memories of the just-concluded 12-0 season.

"Moving the ball, getting defensive stops, making the plays that needed to be made, and having so much chemistry with your teammates makes all of it more enjoyable."

Alex attributes the success to the team being hardworking, focused when it needed to be, well-coached and

well-led by its four captains.

“Our team is different than those we played against because we are an actual team,” he said. “Many of the teams we went up against had just a few talented guys trying to carry all of the load. We spend every practice working on *all* of the jobs, not just offensive plays.”

“Alex’s quick feet and positioning helped anchor the defense,” said Upper School Teacher and Head Coach Charles Khuen. “I have been impressed with this team’s ability to come together as a united front and deliver some truly high-caliber lacrosse. We had leaders on both sides of the ball.”

The 2018 season statistics bear this out with 116 goals scored versus just 39 allowed.

Alex has some experience with winning teams. In addition to his back-to-back undefeated varsity lacrosse seasons, he was also a member of the Winter Club of New Canaan’s 2018 State Championship Bantam A ice hockey team.

He also competed on the school’s varsity soccer and basketball teams, the latter for the sheer enjoyment of playing basketball with friends.

“I had been playing hockey at Country School since fifth grade, and I played on this other hockey team after school as well. So I thought, wouldn’t it be fun to take a risk and try something new? I had never played on an organized basketball team before and it was an absolute blast.”

Alex, who will next attend Berkshire School, is philosophical when reflecting upon his athletic career at Country School. “This is my advice. Show up, do your job. If the win happens, that’s awesome. If not, you are playing something you love with friends, which is still a lot of fun.”