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Trevians tackling cheerleading

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Millie Barnett stretches with her team.



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The girls struggle with the splits



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The girls practice their jumps.



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Coach Nadrina McBride shows the girls a cheer.



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Under McBride's watchful eye, the girls learn a stunt.

As the Trevians take to the football field next month, the team will hear more than just the cheers of fans. For the first time, official Trevian cheerleaders will jump, clap and, of course, cheer for the team.

During the 2007 season, the coordinated cheers and pompoms were missing from the sidelines. The Glencoe Football Association is giving any girl who wants to be involved a chance to participate this season.

Dance and cheer coach Nadrina McBride said there will be two dance and cheer teams made up of 30 girls between the ages of 7 and 11. McBride, whose 8-year-old son plays for the Trevians, will be harnessing the girls' rambunctious energy, while keeping them focused on cheers and stunts.

At a recent practice, many of the other girls were away with family on vacation. But, the eight girls in attendance showed that they had an endless amount of pent-up energy. As a gymnastics teacher and former cheerleader, McBride is accustomed to the excitement the girls exhibited. She set out to teach them stretches, jumps, one cheer and one stunt during practice July 28.

"We will practice our behinds off this summer," she said. "We need to focus on getting cheers down. They need to train their minds to remember. Once they get the first cheer down, the second one will be easier."

The determined, yet energetic bunch appeared ready to get down to the basics.

Ellie Monieson, 8, like other girls on the team, has a brother playing on the Trevians and knows most of the other boys who play. She said she wanted to join cheerleading because she likes the cheers.

Then there are girls like Hunter Weil, 7, who said she has always wanted to be a cheerleader.

"I thought it was really cool to watch games and see the cheerleaders," she said. "I can't wait to cheer in a big game."

spare time. McBride advised them it's best to stick to stunts she teaches them and only during practice.

The girls enjoyed the pyramids McBride taught them during the second practice so much, they raced over to the football field to show the boys what they had learned.

McBride said all the girls are excited and catching on quickly. Though she wants them to have fun, they need to stay focused. At the end of the season, the teams will create a routine for the American Youth Football Dance Competition and have a chance to go to Nationals in Orlando.

"We're just athletes, just like the football players," McBride said. "I want the girls to have fun and have a positive attitude about cheering. I just want them to know cheerleaders can be as competitive as anybody else."

Glencoe Football Association President Mark Rice – whose daughter Sabrina is on the team -- points out that cheerleading is a college scholarship sport. He believes with the creation of the dance and cheer team, the association will help fill a void in the North Shore.

"This is the only cheerleading team in the North Shore, New Trier doesn't have a team," he said.

He and McBride hope that the girls involved will stick with cheering through the next season and possibly through high school.

The Trevian Cheer and Dance Team will cheer on Mighty Mites teams when games begin. To see a schedule or find out how you can get involved visit trevianfootball.com.

While cheers are on some of the girls' minds, more difficult tricks are a goal for others.

"I want to learn to do flips," Millie Barnett, 9, said.

She and best friend Sabrina Rice, 8, have already been practicing stunts in their