



# 2021 Parent/Player Packet

## General Information:

Team Website: <https://bearcat-soccer.com/>

Facebook Group Name: HAHS Boys Soccer

Twitter Account Name: HAHSMenSoccer

Band App: soccer <https://band.us/band/84219123>

Huntingdon Athletics General <https://band.us/band/81776412>

## Remind Instructions:

1. Go to "new message" on your phone.
2. Type in "81010" in your "to" field.
3. In the message box, type "@hahsoc" for the senior high Remind Class or "@96akh3" for the junior high Remind Class.
4. Hit "send".
5. You should all join the Huntingdon High AD Remind Classroom as well as "sign up" via the AD google document. For the AD Remind class room, do the following: Text the message @7d8dka to the phone number 81010. Fill out the google form to sign up with the Athletic office by following the instructions at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbIqBXrNjBopIB-r\\_ePCmVi3nFC30-v-tMhrkVWKb1p\\_eOGw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbIqBXrNjBopIB-r_ePCmVi3nFC30-v-tMhrkVWKb1p_eOGw/viewform)

**Coaching Staff:**

Head Coach: Jason Morris

Cell Phone: 814-386-1929

Email: [huntingdonbearcatsoccer@gmail.com](mailto:huntingdonbearcatsoccer@gmail.com) or [jdm28@psu.edu](mailto:jdm28@psu.edu)

Home Address: 4861 McAlevy's Fort Rd, Petersburg, Pa 16669

Assistance Coach (JV): Jim Roney, 814-599-7617 (Cell), 814-667-4479 (Home),  
[roney@juniata.edu](mailto:roney@juniata.edu)

Volunteer Assistant Coaches: Neil Pelkey ([PELKEY@juniata.edu](mailto:PELKEY@juniata.edu)), Dave Philips ([davidphi555@gmail.com](mailto:davidphi555@gmail.com)), Brady Hawkins([bch5342@psu.edu](mailto:bch5342@psu.edu)), Phil Hawkins ([pdh2@psu.edu](mailto:pdh2@psu.edu))

**Required screenings and paperwork to participate:**

1. Physicals – REQUIRED before an athlete may participate in any practices/games. The date and time for the free physicals at the high school is posted on the website as well as here:

Physicals will be given at the HS in the nurse's office on the dates below. Please print out physical paperwork from the following link <http://huntsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Physical-Forms-HASD-1.pdf> and bring the completed forms with you to your scheduled time slot.

**TUESDAY, JULY 14th -**

9:45 Boys Soccer

10:15 Jr High Boys Soccer

**Make-ups** - All make-ups will take place on Thursday, July 30th, from 9-11 AM

You can elect to have your personal physician perform a physical for your son (after June 1) in which case the exact same paperwork is required. Section 6 of the form must be completed by the physician who performed the physical.

Please return all completed PIAA and Physical forms to the high school office!

2. Concussion screenings by Dan Chase the high school trainer are scheduled for those who need them soon after the pre-season practices start. All players in 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade in the Fall of 2020 will likely need to take this screening provided you did not have one last year, plus any players who have not had one done last year regardless of grade. Anyone who has had a concussion last year will also need a screening. It takes about 30 minutes and is done on a computer at the high school.

3. Pay to Play – There is a play to pay fee for each player for each sport. Please submit an envelope with the player name on the front to the school office. The fee will be determined at a future school board meeting and posted on the website and emailed to all addresses that we have. Checks should be made out to “Huntingdon Area High School”. Players involved in the free or reduced lunch program should consult the school office for a reduced or exemption for the fee.
4. HASD Parent Athlete Agreement (return to high school office) – Required completed signature page before the first practice. This is a page which is part of the PIAA physical forms mentioned in item 1 above. If the form is not in the packet of physical paperwork, then it may no longer be required.

### **5. Team Camp - Optional**

Complete the participation form included in this packet, so we have an anticipated number of players attending. This year camp will be held at the practice fields behind Standing Stone Elementary and next to the Middle School. Team Camp is scheduled for August 9th - 11th Junior High and Senior High 6:00-8:00 PM. Cost will be \$48 per player.

### **Pre-Season Practices – Mandatory – JUNIOR HIGH TBD**

Pre-season practices will take place at the Middle School Practice Field at the following times:

- August 16-20 and August 23-24 from 8-10 a.m. AND
- August 16-20 and August 23-24 which is the day before the first day of school from 5:30-8:00 p.m.

School starts on August 25th, so we will switch at that time to our normal practice schedule on all non-game days from 3:30-5:30 p.m.! We often end at 5:00 PM especially if we have a game the next day.

Players must have with them sneakers, cleats, USSF approved shin guards, filled water/beverage container, and proper soccer shorts and socks. Players needing an inhaler must bring that with them, too.

Players must attend ALL training sessions if they wish to play during the 2020 season, or have approved absences scheduled with Coach Hawkins. All PIAA physicals and paperwork must be turned in to the HAHS office prior to the first practice session on Monday 8/17/2020 in order for players to participate! The office will keep track of eligibility, so that is who I always ask first in determining what paperwork is still outstanding.

### Pre-season Tips:

BE IN GREAT PHYSICAL SHAPE! Train and play as much as possible in the offseason. I expect players to be able to drill with a ball continuously at varying paces for 25 minutes non-stop, be able to push themselves and complete a 12:00 minute run without laboring, and complete the BEEP test above a level 10. Off season training is recommended using [beastmodesoccer.com](http://beastmodesoccer.com), reviewing all links on the website to training.

I do not do fitness for the sake of fitness outside of a few testing opportunities in pre-season and to warm up. My practices are competitive situations with a ball on your feet, constant movement and decision making is required. I will be constantly evaluating you during all phases of training. If you are not in great shape, you likely will not get great evaluations. I expect that every player can do an appropriate number of ball juggles for their age. Ball juggling is an important gauge of technical ability with the ball, first touch especially. An incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grader should be able to do 25 juggles, 10<sup>th</sup> grader 30-40, 11<sup>th</sup> grader 50-80, and senior 80+ . Juggling is a skill that you can improve over time with individual off season work. It also promotes being relaxed under fitness stress.

1. Shin guards are required for every practice and game and must meet MOCSAE standards based on the height of the player. There will be a stamp on the shin guard to denote the approval and height.
2. Please review the following documents on the Web Site that have not previously been discussed:
  - a. Team Rules – pay particular attention to riding the bus
  - b. Lettering Policy
  - c. Player attributes
  - d. My Coach Hates Me article included with this packet.
  - e. Other technical information under documents
3. All practice sessions will be at the field adjacent to the middle school, behind Standing Stone Elementary School. Once school begins, practice is from 3:30-5:30. We often dismiss at 5:00 for varying reasons, and every attempt will be made to notify players the day before so they can arrange transportation from practice. It is the players' responsibility to know this information. Water and/or other favorite practice beverage is the responsibility of the player to bring to practice. I will have water jugs which can be filled at the high school, but it is the players' responsibility to do so.
4. COMMITMENT: Playing high school sports is not just a matter of showing up for practice and games. It involves a big commitment to be part of a team. This includes parental involvement in booster club activities including working in the food booth, fund

raisers, senior day preparations, banquet preparations, etc.. You MUST be 100% dedicated to this soccer season if you want to be successful. It must be your first extracurricular activity priority!

5. Disputes/Issues/Concerns/Questions:

You all must know that the coaching staff expects that at some point in the season, some players or parents may not be happy with our decisions as coaches. We cannot expect 100% agreement and content with 100% of the decisions we make. Typically, these issues result due to playing time disagreements, player status as one of the “starting 11”, or player discontent with the position being played or their identified role. Please do not let these emotions continue to grow and/or spread to others without coming to either myself or Coach Roney for a face to face discussion first as soon as possible. Please encourage your son to come and talk to us, but know that we are always approachable and happy to have conferences with players and/or parents, just not right after a game please. These issues can really expand and truly impact the team as a whole in the long run, so let’s have an open, honest, adult relationship between players, parents, and the coaching staff. We may not agree on everything, but we will all understand thoroughly the issues and concerns. There can and will be NO penalty for having these discussions! By the way, if you are happy with what we are doing, we would love to hear from you too! Positive reinforcement goes a long way to energizing those involved.

6. Points of emphasis:

- a. Body Language
- b. Leadership
- c. Energy, Enthusiasm, Emotion, Expression, Effort
- d. Positivity
- e. Team work
- f. Respect for team mates, coaches, trainers, school administration
- g. And of course skill, talent, fitness, mental, decision making etc...

7. All of our practices are “open door” events. Parents are welcome to come anytime and watch the practice sessions. All the coaches ask is that you do not distract the players while they are participating in the practice activities.

8. Captains: The coaches will select team captains. Captains will be chosen based on evaluation of the following character traits:

- a. Team Spirit
- b. Positive Attitude
- c. Respect for others
- d. Work Ethic

- e. Self-discipline
  - f. Leadership skills
  - g. Supporting the culture of constant improvement
  - h. T.H.I.N.K. True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind
9. Pictures – dates and times to be posted on the website
10. Uniforms – hand out date and time will be noted on website. Wash in COLD water, AIR dry
11. Warm Ups-Must be returned at seasons end, each warm up jacket and pants are assigned by a number on the garment to a player so we can expect the same jacket given to the player to be returned. There is a replacement cost for missing items. As the style of warm ups change rapidly, they cannot generally be replaced, so we expect the players to do a great job of keeping track of their warm ups, put them in their back pack when not in use.
12. Back Packs – required for all games. Store warm ups and extra uniform parts
13. Hazing/Bullying – ZERO Tolerance, Website document NFHS Hazing
14. Our Culture/Philosophy:
- Expectations of the coaching staff:
- You can expect that the coaching staff will be in attendance and prepared for all practices and games.
- You can expect that the coaching staff will communicate relative information using the website, the remind system, social media, and email through the booster club communications designee.
- You can expect that the coaching staff will do our very best to teach the game of soccer in a positive and encouraging manner stressing improvement and competitiveness.
- You can expect that coaches will be always willing to meet with players first and parents second on any area of interest.
- You can expect that the coaches will provide both positive and negative feedback to players and the team as a whole based on performance objectives with the goal being sustained improvement.
- You can expect the coaching staff to teach and emphasize the T.H.I.N.K. model for player behavior.
- You can expect a coach to discuss the player's performance at each substitution for the particular player.

#### Playing Time:

Each player has a role to play on this team. The player's age, size, name, previous club experience, or prior season performance do not determine playing time. Playing time is based on the most current evaluations of the player's attributes by the coaching staff, and the determination of the role they best fit for the team. The coaching staff will determine each player's position on the field which often dictates to some degree the role the player is expected to fill (ie. Keeper, defender, attacker, midfielder, defensive midfielder, etc.). While playing time is more equally distributed for the JV team to promote development in younger players, it is more competitive at the varsity level emphasizing tactical decision making with the expectation that there is already a good demonstration of technical skills required for varsity players. The coaching staff emphasizes placing players in game situations where they have the best chance of being successful.

We stress equal training time in order to promote development.

We want to be competitive and win games, and we want to be at our best at the end of the season having grown into a playoff contender. Team chemistry as well as individual talent are both requirements to meet this goal.

Most importantly, we want to teach life skills especially related to leadership and being part of a team.

## **For Parents:**

**NEW This Year: Please download the current budget from the website home page under “Downloads”! This has all the important budget information on where we spend money!**

### **Family Costs:**

- Food Booth – Working in the food booth and donating items to sell
- Payment for Away Game Meals (TBA) prepared for the team or make your own arrangements to send food
- Home Game Admission (2019 prices)
  - Per Game: \$5/adult, \$2/student
  - All Sports Pass: \$85/adult all sports, \$30/student, \$50/adult fall only
  - FREE Sr. Citizen Passes are available at the HS Office
- Varying admission fees are charged at away games
- HASD “Pay to Play” Fee (2019 \$30.00 per student per sport)
- Car Wash Fund Raisers are required that you sell 3 tickets for each one and also work one shift for each car wash, otherwise you can buy out.
- Team Camp – Cost pending possible fund raiser participation

### **Booster Club Fundraisers:**

- Food Booth
- Patrons for Game Program
- Car Washes at Team Chevrolet – note dates on website when available
- Hoss’s Night/Pizza Hut Night – CANCELLED This year
- Bearcat Soccer Merchandise Sale
- Winter Indoor Soccer Tournament – 2021 Tournament was cancelled

### **Booster Club Committees/Tasks – PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP:**

- Food Booth
- Away Game Meals
- Set Up Sound System/Announcers at Home Games
- Recycling at Home Games
- Game Photographers
- Senior Night
- Banquet
- Slide Show for Banquet

Contact Information for Booster Club Officers: <https://bearcat-soccer.com/booster-club>



## **Huntingdon Bearcat Boys' Soccer Team Camp**

The optional but highly recommended team camp this summer will be August 9th - 11th. The camp will run from 6:00PM – 8:00PM (This is will be for both Senior and Junior High.) from Mon. through Wed. The location of the camp is at practice field behind Standing Stone Elementary and beside the Middle School.

The camp will be run by coaches from the Penn United Soccer Academy.

Camp cost will \$48 per player.

Please indicate commitment to attending camp by completing the camp waiver on the website as soon as possible. We will collect payment at a later date.

We need to know final numbers 10 days prior to the start of camp, however registrations will be taken up to and including the first day of camp.

# “My Coach Hates Me”



Sitting on the bench is tough. It is tough for kids, tough for parents. The easy way to handle it is to shift the blame to the person in charge. The unhappy athlete will surely have the opportunity to do that, but they are passing up a real opportunity for growth. They will miss out on lessons that will serve them well later when things get more important. I have some advice for the athlete who is not happy with their playing time, as well as their parents.

As a baseball player, no one ever confused me with being ultra talented. I had average physical gifts, at best: below average arm, well below average speed, I was undersized, and not a great hitter. Somehow, I was in the starting lineup at the end of every season I played in at North Eugene High School, Lane Community College, and Western Oregon State College (now W.O.U.). I also think I have perspective that might be valuable as someone who coached many years at the high school and collegiate level.

I've put together a “how to” for working your way into the starting lineup, or at least more playing time. I can't promise you that it will work, but I can promise you it is your best plan to follow. So, if you are an athlete not satisfied with your role on the team, or you have a young athlete in your life not happy with their playing time, consider the following advice:

**1. BE THE HARDEST WORKER ON THE TEAM:** If you are not willing to do this, you really shouldn't waste any more time reading this. You either need to become the hardest worker, accept your current role on the team, or quit. If you don't, you lose all your right to complain. In my role as a teacher, I've talked to several young athletes who were unhappy about their playing time. I first ask them if they are the hardest worker on the team. Many times I get answers like: “Well....I work as hard as everyone else. ”

Nope....not good enough.

Being the hardest worker means being the first one to practice every day. You send your coaches a positive message about how important the team is to you when you do this. It means working your hardest during every single drill during every practice and every work out. It means being the hardest worker at any team relate event. Team fundraiser? Be the hardest worker at it. Study Hall? Be the hardest worker at it. Field prep/clean up day? Be the hardest worker at it. When your name pops into your coaches head, you don't want it to be "just like everyone else." You want to emerge as special. You want to be the first name that the coach thinks of when they are looking for a substitute or a lineup change.

**2. BE THE MOST COACHABLE PLAYER ON THE TEAM:** Coaches got into the long hours, little pay, and headaches of coaching because they like instructing athletes. They love the feeling of satisfaction that is gained by teaching someone, watching them try, implement, and achieve. Coaches are going to be drawn to those players who they really feel are trying to take their advice. When a coach gives you instruction and you don't even try to do what they say, they are going to take that as a personal affront, and probably not like you very much. Not accepting their coaching is viewed by them as disrespectful, because in their eyes they are only trying to help you succeed. Also, they are going to spend their practice time instructing someone who they feel is listening. When it comes time to give a player an opportunity in the game, they are much more likely to give it to the player who has proven to be coachable, period.

Whatever the coach tells you, own it. Don't become a "yabut." These are the players who always have an excuse, or some reason they can't do what the coach is asking. "Yabut...my club coach says to do this." "Yabut....I dropped it because it was a bad pass", "Yabut....I've always done it this way." When your coach instructs you: look them right in the eye, keep your mouth shut, accept the coaching, and then try your best to do what they are telling you. If you really have a problem or disagreement with what they are telling you to do, ask them for an appointment to talk about it. Hang out after practice and something like, "Hey coach, can I schedule a 10-15 time with you where we can talk about some things?" Take some time to practice how you are going to phrase it so it does not appear you are questioning the coach's intelligence or methods. Coaches have most likely invested decades of their lives thinking about their craft, smart players are careful about how they make suggestions. "Hey coach, I know you have been asking me to do it this way, and I know your way is best for most players. I feel like this way is best for me, and here is why. I was wondering if you would be willing to let me try doing it my way for awhile and giving me an opportunity to prove that I can help the team be successful that way." Try to keep your language about the team, and minimize the use of the word "I." It may or may not work, but your coach will gain respect for you because of the way you handle it.

**3. KNOW THE GAME BETTER THAN ANYONE ON THE TEAM:** Coaches love smart players and smart teams. Become a sponge for all the information you can. When the coach talks, make sure you are up in front, paying attention to everything that they say. When they are giving instruction to another player, get right up close and pretend they are talking to you. Chances are that you could benefit from whatever they are telling the other player. Watch the professional and college games on t.v. when you can. Talk the game with your teammates

and others who know it. Read books and watch videos. When a coach sees a player who doesn't know much about the game they are trying to play, they think to themselves, "How important is this to them? Not enough to learn!" Conversely, when they have a player that knows the game really well, it sends a message that you love the game and it is important to you. Coaches want to coach people who share a level of love and importance of the game and the team with them.

This also goes to signs, plays, formations, etc. As a coach nothing is more frustrating than a player who doesn't know them. It sends a message to the coach that this is not really important to you. Your opportunities in a game might be hard to come by, so you really need to capitalize when you get a chance. If you don't know the plays, and can't get to the right spot and do the right things, you have just taken your opportunity and gone backwards. This might require practicing with a teammate or family member on your spare time, or having a family member go over them with you at night. If playing more is really important to you, you will find the time.

#### **4. STOP TAKING THINGS PERSONAL AND QUIT WORRYING ABOUT JUSTICE:**

I've talked to hundreds of coaches over the years. They all have one thing in common: they want to win. When they think you provide the team with the best opportunity to win, you will play more. Sometimes they don't exactly love everyone they put in the lineup....but they play the people who will help them win. If they seem to criticize you a lot, take that as a good sign that they still care and think you have the potential to get better. Don't be scared by the sounds of a coach pushing you, be scared when they don't. Silence means they have given up on helping you to get better, and moved on to other players.

Stop telling people that you are not playing because "the coach hates me." It is most likely not true, and if it is true, YOU be the one to change that. Besides, you lose credibility with anyone who really knows sports as soon as you utter those words.

Stop worrying about justice, and don't say things like, "well, that other player makes the same mistakes or does the same things I did. I got yelled out or taken out of the game, they didn't." That is a waste of time. The coach may or may not be even aware they are doing this, or they may have reasons that you are not aware of for handling players differently. Every minute you spend worrying or complaining about this is a waste of the time and energy that could be focused on getting better. Sometimes, coaches make mistakes and play the wrong people. If you are patient, and continue to work hard, they will likely figure it out. Don't automatically assume the coach is making a mistake on purpose. Like every other walk of life, coaches aren't perfect. Maybe, just maybe you are right and the treatment is not totally level. Get over it, life isn't always fair.

#### **5. IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE SUCCESS OF THE TEAM:**

Visualize this scenario that is played out all over the country many times a day. A team just got a big win. Almost everyone on the team is happy and excited. Players smile and high five each other jubilantly. One player didn't get to play as much as they liked, so rather than celebrating and being joyful with the team, they pout. What message does this send to the coach and teammates? Selfish, not a team player. Not the type of person that the coach should be making an extra effort to provide opportunities for. Same thing goes for feeling sorry for yourself or

bitter during the game. Be positive and enthusiastic in supporting your teammates in games and in practice. Coaches love that.

Is personal disappointment okay? Definitely, but in private. Find a way to at least mask your feelings for long enough to enjoy hard earned victories by the team. If you feel the need to let negative emotions out, do it in private after you get home. Sometimes, acting is a part of life.

## **6. FIND A NICHE THAT ALLOWS YOU TO CONTRIBUTE:**

Playing multiple positions will create more opportunities. Sometimes you might just have the bad luck of playing the same position as a very talented player. Talk privately at an appropriate time with the coach about the possibility of you practicing at another position that would allow you a better chance to increase your playing time. Phrase it the right way like: “Hey coach, I was wondering if you could take a look at me at this other position. I really think I could help the team be more successful If I had a chance to try that position.” Coaches will like this, feeling that you are trying to be proactive and help the team.

There are important skills in every sport that coaches love, but not everyone can do well. In baseball, examples might be bunting or baserunning. In football it might be something you can find a way to do well on special teams, or in a special package. In soccer it might be throw ins, free kicks or corner kicks. In basketball it might mean becoming the best free throw shooter, so your coach feels confident putting you in at the end of the game when free throws will be very important in sealing the win. Find something you can do well that your team needs done. Doing it successfully makes it more likely that you will get further opportunity.

## **7. TREAT EACH PRACTICE LIKE A BIG GAME:**

Because for you, it is. Practice is the opportunity to show the coaches what you can do. If you are not currently getting much playing time, it might be your only opportunity. Show up for each practice the most focused person out there, and be ready to prove what you are capable of. The goal of each practice should be to put doubt in that coaches mind that they are making the right decisions regarding you.

## **8. FIND OUT WHAT THE COACH LIKES, AND DO IT:**

Coaches play favorites. So do bosses, so do teachers. That is a fact of life, accept it and learn how to work it to your advantage. Who do they usually favorite? Low maintenance hard workers who hustle, are coachable, and care about winning like they do. Individual coaches have other specific things they really like as well. Most basketball coaches love a player who is willing to take a charge, block out, set a hard pick, and scraps for loose balls. Find out the things your coach really appreciates, and do them. When you get a job, the boss is not going to change the company or their leadership style to fit your needs, it is up to you to adjust. The same is true for sports.

## **9. HANDLE YOUR OWN BUSINESS AND CONCERNS:**

If you have a problem or a question about playing time, whether or not you are starting, or anything else, ask the coach to schedule a meeting to talk about it. Make it away from practice or games in both time and space. If the coach is a teacher at your school, ask if you can come

talk to them on lunch or some time like it. Rehearse and practice what you are going to say. Let the coach know that you respect them and their philosophies, and you just want to clarify what you can be doing to improve your situation. Don't attack the coach, don't whine. If you do it right, the coach will respect you more for handling the situation the correct way. You may not get the answers you are looking for, but you will have a clearer understanding of the things you need to do.

Your parents may want to do this for you. They love you and they want you to be happy more than anything. If they feel you are getting an unfair deal, they want to protect you. Talk them out of this, as it usually doesn't work and often makes things worse. Tell them, "I know you are looking out for me, and I really appreciate that, but I need to handle this myself. It will be excellent practice that will help me greatly in the future." If you feel strongly that the meeting with the coach doesn't go well, only then should you consider a meeting with your coach and parents. You should attend that meeting, and do most of the talking for yourself. If your parents have to handle everything for you, this will not go far in earning the respect of your coach. In fact, it will probably have the opposite effects of what the meeting was hoping to achieve.

### **WHAT IF THIS DOESN'T WORK?**

This may or may not work. It is still the best plan to follow. If you failed to notice, nothing I mentioned above requires great physical talents or gifts. Everyone is capable of all of it. If your playing time situation doesn't improve, you will have the peace of mind that comes with knowing that you handled things the right way. Keep your positive attitude, and be a strong teammate for the rest of the season. Don't quit the team, don't become a cancer. The season is really not that long. You can make it. Let us just say you are right and the coach was wrong, you just proved to yourself that you can handle adversity. You will always be able to draw from that experience during future tough times. Don't quit. Fairly or unfairly, if you quit once you are going to get labeled a quitter, and that will be a tough label to shake. If it is really important to you to play more the next year, dedicate yourself in the off season to that goal. The off seasons are when you will have the most opportunity to gain on the people you are competing with. If you are going to play for the same coach next season, set up a meeting with them right away to talk about what you need to do to improve your standing in the program.

If it doesn't work out in the short term for this particular season or sport, understand that the actions I described above will help you in nearly every area of life further on up the road. Youth sports are all really just practice for the big games of life that will be played later in the schedule. Whether you choose to handle adversity in the right way or the wrong way, you will be on the path to creating habits and defining your character for years to come.