

Students catch Rays baseball fever

Loyal Tampa Bay fans celebrate as underdog team battles for World Series title

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Braden River Middle student Cameron Pearcey has been following the Tampa Bay Rays for as long as he can remember. He isn't a transplant who goes to Rays games and roots for the Red Sox or Yankees — he's a die-hard Rays fan who has been rooting for the Rays since the team's inception in 1998, even during the seasons when the team finished in last place, which was all but one.

Pearcey even stays up late to cheer his team on to victory. But it isn't affecting his studies, he said. Pearcey is a perfect student and gets his inspiration from his father, a Vanderbilt University graduate, which happens to be the same alma mater as Rays rookie sensation David Price.

"I get tired staying up late watching the Rays, especially on the night they clinched the playoffs, but it's been fun and I can always wake up the next day. I won't miss any of the World Series," he said.

He isn't the only student at Braden River Middle that is rooting for the Rays. Lately, Rays results have been broadcast over the school news announcements, receiving cheers from the students. Rayhawks are allowed as long as they are not out of control and don't become a distraction to the students. Many students sported Rays gear this week, and the mood at the school reflected a feeling of Rays spirit.

"I've been following the Rays for about five years but really started this year when they got good," Trey Minarich said.

"Scott Kazmir is the best, but I like all the Rays. Sometimes I feel like I am staying up all night watching them, but as long as I am ready for school the next day, I am OK."

Alyssa Page said she has been watching the Rays with her father for the past three years as kind of a father-daughter experience. She can't pick out a favorite player and said she likes all of them.

Last year, the students said they were teased sometimes for rooting for a last-place team, but they never gave up and never stopped wearing their Rays gear.

"We all got goofed on," Minarich said. "Now we get to goof on them. They are the home team, and we need to support them. [There are] people who still don't think the Rays are any good, but we don't care because we are in the World Series and they aren't."

Some of the Braden River students said they had to deal with Red Sox fans last week when the two teams met in the American League Championship Series.

"I have a neighbor who is a Red Sox fan, and he was taunting me," Pearcey said. "I am getting even now. In Boston when Manny Ramirez got traded, I got the newspaper and stuck it in his mailbox when we got home. We can get even now."

Ramirez was a slugger for the Red Sox who was traded to the Los Angeles Dodgers in August, mostly because his own teammates said he was a distraction.

Alisse Palmer said she has been following the Rays all year even though she wasn't really a baseball fan until now.



JEFF BERLINICKE/Manatee River News

Braden River Middle School students, from left, **Cameron Pearcey**, **Alyssa Page**, **Alisse Parker** and **Trey Minarich** are excited about the Tampa Bay Rays shocking run to the World Series and aren't afraid to show it.

"It's hard not to follow them now," she said. "Every week we hear about the results on the school newscast. Now everyone's watching the Rays."

With tickets in the triple-digit price range, it's tough to pay for a family of four. Pearcey had Game Two tickets for Thursday and said he attends at least 25 games each year. His family has season tickets, and they are big baseball fans. He has visited five different stadiums this

season alone, including Yankee Stadium, Fenway Park and the Camden Yards.

Minarich said he and his family get to about eight games each year, and Page said she made it to one game this year.

This time last year, with autumn in the air and football on the brain, no one could have believed the Tampa Bay Rays would overshadow the Tampa Bay Bucs. At least at Braden River Middle School, the Rays rock.

Science News

Western diet has 35 percent greater risk of heart attack

In the Journal of the American Heart Association this month, a new study is published showing that a Western diet consisting of fried foods, salty snacks and meat, accounts for approximately 30 percent of all heart attack risks around the world. The study looked at dietary patterns in 52 countries and discovered three main diets:

- Oriental: higher intake of tofu, soy and other sauces;
- Prudent: higher intake of fruits and vegetables; and
- Western: higher intake of fried foods, salty snacks, eggs and meat.

According to the researchers, the Prudent diet was associated with a lower heart attack risk than the Oriental or the Western. Previous studies have reached similar conclusions about the Prudent and Western diet in the United States and Europe. This particular study elaborates

those findings by identifying a unique dietary pattern that researchers labeled Oriental, or food that was typical of an Oriental diet. Researchers analyzed what they termed the 'Interheart' study, which documents the association of several risk factors and the risk of heart attack in about 16,000 participants in 52 countries. The researchers also analyzed 5,761 heart attack cases and compared them to 10,646 people without known heart disease (controls).

The researchers created a dietary risk score questionnaire for heart attack patients, based on 19 food groups and adjusted it for dietary preferences for each country. Trained medical personnel interviewed the heart attack patients and the control group. The questionnaires included healthy food items and unhealthy food items.

After adjusting for known risk factors, researchers found that individuals who consumed the Prudent diet consisting of fruits and vegetables had a 30 percent

lower risk of heart attack compared to people who ate little or no fruits and vegetables. Individuals who consumed the Western diet had a 35 percent greater risk of having a heart attack compared to people who consumed little or no fried foods and meat.

The Oriental pattern showed no relationship with heart attack risk. The researchers hypothesize that although some components of the Oriental diet may be protective, others such as the high sodium content of soy sauces may increase cardiovascular risk, neutralizing any relationship.

New computer battery may last 20 hours

Panasonic has been working on reducing the size and improving the efficiency of its previously introduced fuel cell — otherwise known as a reusable battery — for its computer laptops.

The new methanol fuel cell is the size of

a laptop battery and weighs approximately 11.29 ounces, delivering an average of 10-watts of power with a maximum output of 20-watts. According to Panasonic, the new methanol fuel cell battery has the unique advantage of being able to run 20 hours utilizing 200cc methanol. When the fuel cell runs low on methanol, it can be refueled in only a few minutes. Unlike lithium ion batteries, methanol fuel cells are viewed as more environmentally friendly. The only byproduct is water and a slight amount of carbon dioxide.

Panasonic does not currently have plans to commercially distribute the methanol fuel cell for laptops and other electronic devices. Panasonic estimates that the new methanol fuel cell may be available to the commercial market by 2012. Critics of the methanol fuel cell are concerned about the initial cost and maintenance, although so soon in the development stage, Panasonic has not stated what the methanol fuel cell will cost.

FCATs, from page 1

they know. We want them focused on academics year round, not just on the FCATs."

It might not be as much fun without the parties, but the Braden River way seems to work.

"If I knew the secrets, I would write a book," Petrilla said. "It's all about effort on the part of the kids and on the part of the teachers. We stay focused on the curriculum the whole time, and that makes the kids more prepared and more relaxed when FCATs come around."

Petrilla also said the school receives 'A' rankings because of the Manatee County School District.

"Our kids have been preparing for these tests since they started school," he said.

As for the faulty test results, Petrilla said it was simply an error that had to be corrected. He and the school cooperated with the state to see that the results were corrected as promptly as possible.

Petrilla said an announcement was made over the public address speaker once the 'A' mark was awarded, and students, faculty and staff celebrated. Petrilla also said the school was also notified that it had made adequate progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The school's 'A' mark means that 26 of the 50 schools in Manatee County received an 'A' in 2008.

Football, from page 1

overtime loss to Southeast.

Braden River also dealt with Homecoming distractions. But Coach Josh Hunter said the distractions didn't affect his team in the least as they celebrated with a 37-0 crushing of North Port. The win gives the Pirates a serious bit of momentum for the home stretch in hopes of sealing their first playoff spot in school history.

The Pirates end a four-game homestand tonight against Wauchula Hardee in the biggest game of the season for the Pirates. Hardee is on top of the district and won 57-51 in overtime against Sebring last week. A loss against Hardee could put

playoff hopes in serious jeopardy for Braden River.

Jujuan Bell, who has carried the Braden River offense on his back all season, ran for 206 yards and a career-high five touchdowns. Hunter said he liked what he saw.

"That was the best first half of football we have played all year," Hunter said. "We challenged them this week, and they were ready."

Something to note: North Port was coming off a 14-13 win over Lakewood Ranch last week for its first win of the season, while Braden River barely got past Lakewood Ranch in the season opener. Lakewood Ranch takes on Port Charlotte tonight at home.