

# Ending the Beginning

## 1994 - 1995

On June 10, 1995, Harrison High School saw the graduation of its first four-year senior class. The theme "Ending the Beginning" defined this class as some of its established traditions fell away and new traditions replaced them.

Out of the class of 1996, Harrison selected five students to represent the high school and Kennesaw community through the 1994-1995 Cobb Youth Leaders program for the first time. This program, sponsored by the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, provided high school juniors with a means of interacting with community leaders and developing leadership skills necessary for success in life.

In 1995, Harrison gained recognition on the national and international level for athletic excellence. Since its opening, Sean Hage has been recognized as one of the greatest wrestlers to walk the halls of Harrison High School. At the National Championships on July 23-30, Sean placed first in both the Freestyle and Greco-Roman Championships in the 189-poundweight division. After competing in the Freestyle competition on August 10-11 in Budapest, Hungary, Sean became the eleventh American and the first Georgian to win the Junior World Championship. In 2010, Sean was inducted into the Harrison High School Hoya Hall of Fame for his athletic success and leadership.

The Hoya varsity cheerleading squad, although only beginning its fifth season, proved to be a team of excellence by placing second at the ICA Grand Championship held during the summer. Separately, Harrison student-athletes Kari Velasco and Giovanni Pipia received first team recognition for the All County team honors in cross country by the Marietta Daily Journal. During the Hoya swim and dive season, the men's swim team, led by all-American caliber diver and number one diver in the metro area Kevin Hyland, placed in the top three teams at the Cobb Relay Carnival and the Emory Invitational. In softball, Audra Thomas received the awards of team MVP, team batting champion, All County First team, Cobb Player of the Year, and first team All State, and was honored as the only high school player in Georgia to try out for the Olympic softball team. Audra, in addition to Sean Hage, was inducted into the Hoya Hall of Fame in 2010 for her athletic contributions.

Harrison's fine arts department saw tremendous growth and success during the 1994 - 1995 school year in a variety of areas. In the visual art division, Harrison students Jean Bendik and Elizabeth Heron created sculptures that were accepted to the Georgia Art Symposium, one of which received the Juror's Choice Award. The drama department saw similar success through their one-act play which won first place in the region and third place in the state for *An Actor's Nightmare*.

In addition to academics, extracurricular activities played a significant role in the lives of students at Harrison. Extracurricular activities such as Dutch Club and Debate Team were offered during this school year in order to teach students and raise their awareness about global issues. Both Beta Club and Drama Club proved to be the two most participated in clubs and grew to include over 200 members.

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While this school year marked the end of high school for many seniors, it also marked the beginning for many incoming students. The theme "Ending the Beginning" captured the spirit of Harrison's "new start" by encouraging students not only to look back in appreciation at past school years but also to look forward to the years to come.

*Story by Grant Wills, Class of 2011*