



**SOPHIA LI AND EVA CHEN  
NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK  
BADMINTON PROGRAM**

*The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athletes of this week, badminton player SOPHIA LI and EVA CHEN. Coach Valente decided to nominate these two seniors because of their commitment to the team, their high character and dedication to everything they do, not only on the court, but outside as well. The coach could not have picked one without the other, for they have been playing as doubles, and won the championship for doubles. They also represent, as captains, the entire team, that has brought home their second State championship!*

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Why badminton?*

**Eva:** The most appealing aspect of badminton would probably be its complexity. Despite the fact that badminton obviously does require a good amount of practice and training, a significant part of badminton is the mental endurance needed to make it through each game, and I really do like the fact that badminton involves so much quick thinking and also helps me to develop this mental endurance off the court as well.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Have you ever questioned your commitment to it?*

**Sophia:** This season really made me question it (and I'm sure Eva as well) because we sacrificed a lot: prom, field trips, and a lot of time. But at the end we realized it was all worth it thanks to another state championship and the time we spent bonding with the team.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *So, would you recommend competitive sports to other students? What would you tell them?*

**Eva:** Do it! Who knows, maybe you'll find a new hobby that you'll absolutely love! And regardless of what kind of team you join, you're immediately given an opportunity to get to know a group of people you otherwise may not ever be able to encounter, and the relationships that come out of it will likely stick with you for a really long time.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What do you know now that would have helped you a lot had you known it when you were just starting?*

**Eva:** I really wish that when I first started badminton, I was able to recognize my potential to play well. Especially my freshman year, I always had a lot of doubts about my own abilities and often even accepting losses because in my head, I was still nowhere close to all of the other great players. But once I started training more and working harder last year in the off-season, I started to see better results, which I honestly wasn't used to at first. Long story short, the moment I realized that I had the potential to be a good player, I saw greater growth in both my confidence in myself as well as my skills as a player.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What makes each of you unique to the team?*

**Eva:** I try to be a mediator on the team, especially in moments where there may be some tension. I really like to make sure that even when there may be hard feelings and everyone may not be getting along completely, we can choose to focus more on the things that build up the relationships that we have, rather than what drives us apart and creates antagonism.

**Sophia:** The team likes to call me 'team mom' because I'm usually there whenever somebody needs my help and I take care of many of the logistical aspects as well.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What does playing in a team mean to you?*

**Sophia:** Overall, badminton is honestly more of an individual sport unless you're playing doubles. Despite that, we definitely still support each other and help each other grow, and I think that's what it means to play on a team.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *How do you think players complement each other?*

**Eva:** Everyone has different strengths that they bring to the table, and a team of such a diverse group of people really allows for each of the players to not only grow further in their strengths, but also to be able to learn how to improve upon their weaknesses from each other. And I think

that's one of the most valuable parts of being in a team with your peers, to be able to recognize your own weaknesses and be willing to learn from other people your age.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Where are you going to College? What do you intend to study? Will you continue to play badminton?*

**Eva:** I will be attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, and I plan on studying political science. Hopefully! I'd love to continue playing it, even just for fun.

**Sophia:** I'm going to be at the University of Michigan studying nursing. Same here; it's a great sport and I've met many new friends because of it and I hope to continue to do so.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Do you have a favorite quote, a motto, a verse, which inspires you when things get hard?*

**Eva:** I always try to remind myself that even if the situation seems hopeless in the moment, things will always work themselves out for the best, regardless of whether or not it's what I may want or expect.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Who is your role model? Why?*

**Sophia:** Eva is honestly a role model of mine. We've known each other since kindergarten and she's inspired me ever since. She stands up for herself, works hard, is hilarious, and a fantastic friend who I look up to.