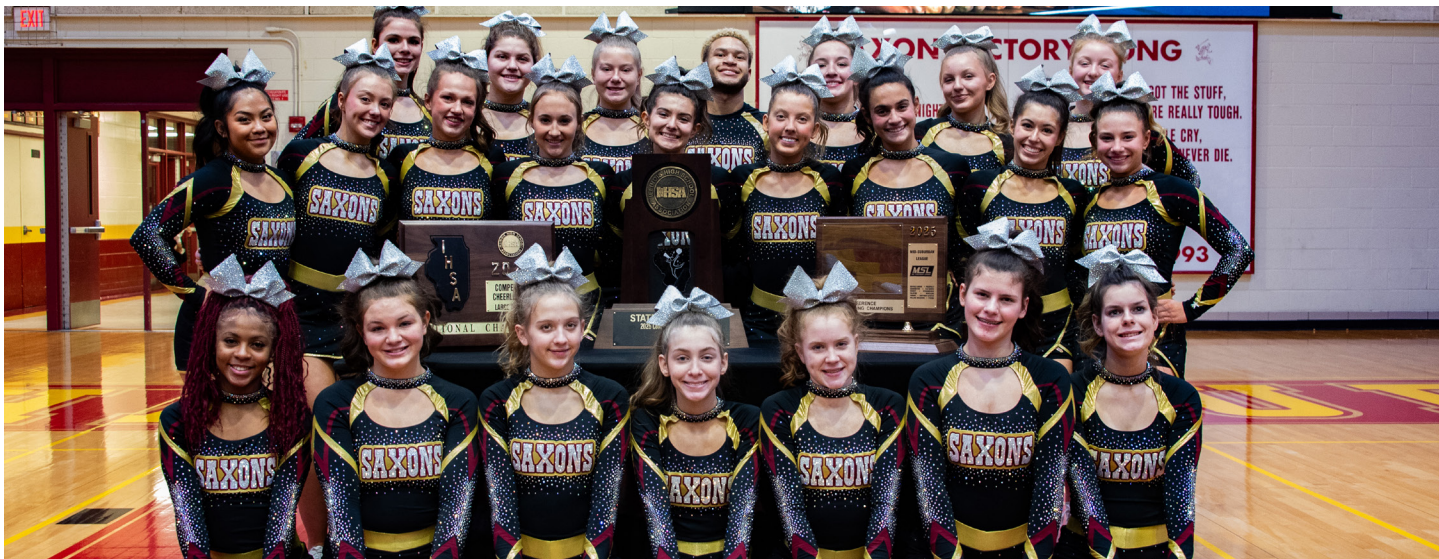


Schaumburg Cheers State Runner-Up



Story and photos by Patrick J. DeGeorge
District 211 Public Relations

February 10, 2025

Students at Schaumburg High School started the week celebrating the Saxon Competitive Cheer Team's second place state finish over the weekend.

It was the first time the school has ever placed in cheer at State.

The assembly opened with a performance of the team's routine, followed by the presentation of the official runner-up trophy to principal Brian Harlan.

"We're very proud as a school in all the athletes on this cheer team," he said. "It's been a very fun year," Harlan said. "One thing I said to them as they left for the State competition was that this year feels different."

Senior Alyssa DiVincenzo said she has been doing competitive cheer for a decade, but that the State competition was her final performance.



"The feeling of taking second was surreal," she said. "It was, by far, the best experience. Since I am not cheering in college, I am happy I finished the way that I did; on the podium."

Fellow senior Gracie Heydecker echoed Divincenzo's thoughts on the experience.

"I feel like we are on our highest high," Heydecker said. "We worked so hard from the summer through February. We are so grateful we made it there."

Natalie Belcaster has coached competitive cheer at SHS for the past six years. She said she thought it was the attitude of her athletes that made the performance stand out to judges.

“We like to surprise people and give it a little sass,” Belcaster said. “Our kids are just so passionate about this sport, and the judges can tell by the looks on their faces that they love this.”

Looking forward to the 2025-2026 season, Belcaster had one projection.

“We’ll be back next year,” she said.