A Brief Guide of FIFA 23 Ultimate Team

by

Matas Meskys

Have you always wanted to make your dream team in soccer? Turns out, FIFA 23 Ultimate Team is the way to go!

To start, you download the game and open it so it shows the main page. After that, you click on Ultimate Team and go to the “Play” section. In the “Play” section, you can choose Squad Battles, Division Rivals, and Ultimate Draft. In Squad battles you play against teams controlled by AI and get points after every game. At the end of the week (depending on how much points you got), you get a reward. Next, you have Division Rivals. Division Rivals is the same thing as Squad Battles except that you play online against real people. Finally, there is Ultimate Draft. In Ultimate Draft you pick a position, pick a player out of the five that you got, and play a maximum of four games to get a reward (the reward will be higher the more games you win).

Next to the “Play” section you have the “Home” section. In the “Home" section you can choose Transfers, Store, and Objectives. In Transfers you can sell and purchase players and other perks. In the Store you can buy packs (which are bundles containing players, contracts, and other items) and FIFA Points (which is a type of currency that is able to buy packs). Lastly, you have Objectives. In Objectives, you complete tasks for which you get XP. With XP you can unlock rewards in Season Progress.

To conclude, FIFA 23 Ultimate Team is the best way to make your soccer dream team. It also is the best game to play with your dream team against other teams and collect rewards.

An Experience I Will Never Forget

Noah McCullough

It was the year of 2022, when I decided to play tackle football for the first time. I was excited to showcase my skills for the East Lake Eagles. Of course, I thought it would all be fun and games until we were getting blown out game after game and lost a significant number of players. It was time for the playoffs and there were just twelve players left on the team. We were facing off with the Trinity Mustangs. We lost even though we had some past Mustang players on our team. We got blown out to cap off our winless season. A sport that I thought would be easy going has made me realize that football is a game of perseverance and grit. During this experience I thought about quitting the team, but I kept my hopes high that we were going to win at least one game. This year I am playing for the same team (East Lake Eagles) and we won six games. I learned some important skills from an experience that I will never forget.

Baseball

Tommy Oddo

Baseball is a sport that has been around for hundreds of years. If you don’t know what this sport is, there are about twelve people on the field at a time… one batter, nine fielders, and two umpires. To play this sport you need a baseball bat, a glove, and practice. To score you need to hit a homerun or you need to make it home. But there are ways you can get out. You can get picked off or you can get struck out. To win you need to be the team with the most runs. Did you know that there are baseball teams? My favorite is the Tampa Bay Rays. In ever baseball game there is nine innings and three outs per team in each inning. Now let’s talk about positions. The pitcher and catcher are involved in ever play. The mid fielders back up the pitcher and throw the ball to first base. Outfielders throws it to second base or third base. Now you know all about baseball and now you can watch it with your friends and family. Have fun! Go Rays!

CRUISING FOR A CONCH SHELL

CHASE HOWELL

‘’Clank’’ The anchor splashes into the water and sinks into the deep water. The Carnival of the Seas cruise ship has docked on a beautiful island called the Grand Turk. My family and I were stoked to get off that crowded cruise ship. We were walking on the old, crowded walkway that led to the beach! We stepped of the walkway and then our feet were sinking into the sand. The sand was white as and the water was clear as ice! Mt family and I were looking for a noncrowded area. And after 30 minutes of walking… we found it! The perfect spot! I dove straight into the Crystal-clear water and started looking. You may be wondering what I was looking for, I was looking for a shell… not just any shell a conch shell! Conch shells are massive shells and I really wanted one, so I said to myself I would not get out of the water until I found that shell, so I picked up a chunk of coral and there It was, a conch shell! I felt like it was sitting there just for me! I took it home and I bleached it and now every time I look at that shell it reminds me of this very fun trip to the Grand Turk.

DOGS

Colton Scruggs

Have you ever wondered who man’s best friend is? It has s is always oft ears, and this animal always comforts you. It is always on your side. It is a dog. Dogs always need to be taken care of. If there is no food or water, you need to fill their bowls. When your dog is acting crazy, you should refill their water and food or take your dog out. When you are taking your dog on a walk make sure to do a long walk to spend time with your furry animal. If your dog is snapping at you or biting you, you should take them to a training class. You should take your dog out three times a day and refill the food and water two times a day. Sometimes if there is a cat make sure to keep it away if your dog is aggressive. If there are guest that are coming to visit put your dog in a cage or in a different room. Dogs can get really dirty, so you should give them a bath at least once a month. You should also show your dog a lot of love by petting them and scratching their head and neck. Don’t forget to take your dog to the vet for a checkups to make sure they are healthy. This is how you should take care of your furry friend.

A Trip to El Yunque

Amanda Garcia

Rain! Pouring rain! Going to El Yunque thinking it would be fun but all we can do is stay indoors in the visitors' center. Bored. At least I have an excuse to use my phone and take photos. I ask my mom if we can go eat. I’m starving. While we eat in the tiniest place possible, the rain stops. Driving up the mountain, I’m so happy I could burst! We stop at a tower so high, you can see everything in the forest. (As long as it’s not covered by trees) We slide back down the tower with the help of the rain puddles. As we go down, there are medium sized windows just big enough for me to stick my head in. We drive higher and higher up the mountain for fifteen minutes, bored the whole way, but it was worth it because we get to see a beautiful waterfall for only a five minute walk. As I take photos, my brother finds a steep, rocky, and muddy path. While he climbs, I start to follow him, but I feel bad about leaving my mom behind, so I go and get her to climb up with me. After slipping a few times and almost falling to our death, we find my brother at the top. After we got even more dirty than before because of the mud, we go to the lake under the waterfall to wash the mud off ourselves and when we step in, we find unexpected 3-foot ditches. When I step in get soaked from my toes to my chest. Even though my dad yells at me for getting the seat wet, the only thing I say is “Can we come back next year?”

Gorilla Tag

by

Philip Svrdlin

If you ever get a V.R I would recommend getting the game Gorilla Tag. Gorilla Tag is a fun competitive based game, and it is full of things to do. You can enable voice chat to talk to other players. There are tons of maps to play on like forests, canyons, caves, city, and much more. Another bonus is that the game is completely free, so you don’t need to worry about paying. In Gorilla Tag you can play in 4 different modes and those modes are casual, infection, hunt, and paintball. Most people either play casual or infection. Some people will play hunt or paintball. In casual you can just hang out and talk to friends or other people. In infection there is one tagger called a Lava Monkey and the Lava Monkey has to try to tag the other players. If the lava monkey tags a player, both are lava monkeys, and it keeps going until everyone is tagged. Now that you have information about Gorilla Tag, I hope you look into it and if you purchase it, I hope you enjoy it.

Learning the Anatomy and How to Ride a Horse

by Sophia Smith

Picture this, you walk to a pasture, and you see an animal starting to canter towards you. This creature has fuzzy ears, four to five gaits, and a big personality. This is a horse. A horse has many parts to it. In the upper part of its body, there is the forelock and the mane which is its hair. Located in its mouth is huge teeth which are used to chomp hard foods like carrots. Located in the mouth is a long, pink tongue that is bigger than the horse’s brain! Horses are very smart animals so them having an even longer tongue is unbelievable! In the lower part of the horse’s body there is the cannon bone, hoof, and knee which helps it to move. Besides having a lot of body parts, there are different ways that you can ride them. First and foremost, you can ride English saddle-seat which is more formal than the other ways that you can ride. You need to reverse to the outside, keep your hands up, and keep your horse’s head up and near your face. Another way that you can ride is hunt-seat. In this style of riding, you must keep your hands down, keep your horse’s head down, and you reverse to the inside. The last way that you can ride is western. When you ride western, you put your reins in one hand and you jog and not trot (a jog is a slow trot). These are the different ways that you can show. If you are not showing you can ride bareback. This is when you ride without a saddle and where you keep your hands on the horse. Overall, there are many ways that you can ride a horse and many parts to them. Horses are amazing animals!

Family Farm Visit

by

Madelyn Falkenbach

Vroom! Vroom! Off we go to North Carolina where my family farm sits and my dad’s side of the family work, The most important being my great grandmother Mamaw, the last time I saw her was like a thousand years ago. We are also meeting my cousins there. That would be fun and who can forget my youngest cousin he is crazy and full of surprises just like a monkey looks nice but can potentially be really crazy and yes, he is. As soon as we got there I so all of my family members. I leaped out of the car like a frog would when they see their prey. It was a warm welcome and it felt good seeing everyone again. My great grandmother is pretty old, but she definitely has some years left in her. Once I finished saying hi to everybody, I turned around and faced this beautiful land I have all this land and all of these animals to hang out with for two days so I will spend it wisely. The first thing I saw was the chickens in their coop and it’s like it was calling my name. Cluck! Cluck! There they are…. The birds that can’t fly but only flutter. Once I finally caught one in my hands, I had smelt something that reminded me of dirty laundry. It was really bad, but it made since once I saw that it was the pigs. Then my great grandma came out and offered me to feed them, but I kindly passed and told her it smelt to bad, and I wasn’t looking forward to barfing on my first day here. It was getting late and so we decided to eat dinner my uncle had made his homemade steak that he called heaven. When I took a bite, I stared realizing why he calls it heaven it really did taste like heaven I’ve never tried anything like it, it was like I was actually tasting heaven. He has definitely worked on it from the last time I was there because now it’s even better. Then we went to bed and woke up the next morning. We only had a couple hours until we had to go, so I tried waking up as early as I could. My great grandmother asked me to get some eggs from the chicken coop so she can make some scrambled eggs. I went over to the coop and grabbed as many eggs as I could see, Than I ran back to the house and handed the eggs to my great grandmother. She started making the scrambled eggs along with sausage and bacon. Time had flown by so fast. Soon it was time to head back home so I hopped in the car ready for the five-hour car ride home. I loved the time I has spent at my family farm with all my family that I hadn’t seen in forever and I will even miss the smelly pigs, the extremely fast chickens that on shocked me, and the cows, horses, and more and I can’t wait to come back to visit as soon as possible this was one of my favorite visits ever.

Fortnite Time

Brycen Wilder

Have you ever heard of Fortnite? Fortnite is a fun battle royale you can play with your friends. You can win by eliminating everybody in the lobby. To eliminate other players, you have to collect guns and fire at them. If you miss, they might eliminate you if you’re not careful. If your shot hits the enemy multiple times, they will be out of the game. Fortnite is a multiplayer game that one to sixteen people can join your lobby. There are squads, trios, duos and solos. You can build and edit anything you want. For example, walls to protect you from enemy fire and ramps that help you climb higher if the enemy builds walls as well. If you get a high rank, you can qualify for FNCS which is REALLY hard! You can buy Fortnite on a console. If you are low on health, you can use bandages, floppers and a med kit. To get your shield back you must drink shield pots or flow berry fizz. Fortnite is a five star game in my opinion. If you get a chance to play it, you might understand why.

My First NBA Game

Djordje Piperski

In February of 2024, I flew to Colorado. My first day there involved my first NBA game. Me and my family drove to Denver, Colorado and entered the Ball Arena to meet our friends. Then we walked to the actual stadium and saw our wonderful seats with a perfect view in that huge stadium! The game started and the two teams walked out of the openings. There were flashing, bright lights everywhere with colors scattered across the stadium with loud encouraging music for the home team. The great Denver Nuggets versus the good-this-season Sacramento Kings. When the first whistle blew the two teams charged at each other, but the Nuggets passed the ball and got a 2-pointer in the basket. The teams fought for the ball for two solid hours. I had a blast with my family and friends. After the two hours, at the last ten seconds, the Kings got a 3-pointer and won the game with a score of 102 to 98. But that didn’t make me sad because I still had a lot of fun. After the intensity of the game, we put our jackets back on and walked for what felt like thirty minutes in below freezing temperatures back to our Dodge, which was a rented car. When we unlocked and got in the car, we drove an hour back to Boulder where our hotel was. When we parked in the garage, we got out of the car, ran back to our hotel room, changed into our pajamas, and got into bed, ready for the next day.

Football With Family

Annabelle Friedley

Ever since I was 3 years old I have always loved football. All of my family members used to throw the football to me. For example, my dad Dennis, would run plays with me and my brother Easton, would defend me. This is why I was so excited to join my team the Miami Dolphins when I turned 8. At first my teammates thought I was not good but when we played our first game I scored 3 touchdowns and 3 interceptions! Its all because I trained hard with my dad and brother coaching. Every day after school we practiced before games. My dad taught me to catch the harder throws so the easier ones would be a snap. Now everyone in the league is talking about how good I play. I think this is because my dad throws crazy passes that are hard to catch. My dad, the coach, says we are the second best team in the league. He is training us to run and throw crisp patterns. He has fun with the team by throwing deep bombs to me and my teammates. The kids all have fun with my family coaching us to be the number one team. Dad is pushing us to be the best. Either way, we have a great time.

Golden Retrievers

Gianna Beane

My favorite animals are dogs, specifically Golden Retrievers. Golden Retrievers are known for their golden fur, LOTS OF ENERGY, and cute smile when they look at you. Golden Retrievers are also really friendly. They have a lot of energy. Some people do not like how much energy they have, but I love dogs with energy. Golden Retrievers usually have yellow to goldish fur. They typically sleep around 12-14 hours a day. Golden Retrievers do not typically get too big. They’re usually around normal size. Golden Retrievers are usually more on the nicer side. When they are babies, they don’t have much fur but a really thin coat. As they get older, they start to grow more and more hair. Golden Retrievers when they are fully grown weigh about 50 - 80 pounds. The average age for a Golden Retriever is 10-12 years before they die. They are also really good with other dogs. A Golden Retriever should stay outside for 60-120 minutes a day. Golden Retrievers are the best dogs to have if you are interested in getting a dog. They are friendly, energetic, and great with other people as well as other dogs. My family will be getting one very soon.

Good Times with My Dad

Colton Beauregard

Ever since I was born, I have loved playing with my dad. We would play hide and seek, play baseball in the backyard. And since my dad is the head baseball coach of a college. I would go in the dugout, sometimes even being bat boy, going on the tracker and cleaning the field every time. Even sometimes after games he and I hit in the cages for 1 hour, and then both of us would be so tired, we would go home, eat, and then go to bed, because by then it would be late. My dad was so funny when I was little and we played Fortnite, and I lost, I would scream at my dad and throw my controller. He would say “bro calm down I will get you,” but really when he is trying to get me, he loses. It is so fun playing with him, because even if I rage or get mad, he will always try to make me laugh or make me feel better. When it was Christmas, and we were all done decorating the tree, my dad would pick me up so I could put the star on top of the tree. All I want to do is just go back in time, relive all the cool memories, and just do it all over again. I love my dad.

Great Pyrenees

Nora Kate Filipovitz

Do you want a dog that can be very protective yet great with kids? You’re going to want a Great Pyrenees! Great Pyrenees are so playful but super calm at the same time. Everyone loves them! Also, they are very cute and fluffy! For example, I personally have a Great Pyrenees, and she is the most hysterical little fluff ball ever! Her name is Blue. Whenever she’s hungry she’ll grab her food bowl and lay down with it while looking miserable. This breed also makes OUTSTANDING guard dogs. They will do whatever they can to get you out of a pickle. Great Pyrenees are also known as “Magicians” because they are highly intelligent animals. If you’re wanting a dog that is very smart, helps as much as he/she can, is playful yet calm and will be your next best friend, buy one as soon as possible if these characteristics fit what you are looking for.

Street Hockey Tournament

Zachary Taylor

Did you know that schools around the world have street hockey tournaments every year?? This year I participated in one. It was the most fun I have ever had in a long while. My team won the first two games against Oldsmar and St. Pete. The next game against Cypress Woods was not as easy as the first two were. We were fighting back and forth to score a goal with thirty seconds left. Whoosh!!! My friend Grady scored. Then we ran to the goalie who was my best friend Roy and celebrated because we had won the championship. Our parents were excited and screaming with joy. They were so proud of how well we played. Coach Broome and Mrs. Gerber helped us through the games by giving us instructions and it worked. Mr. Hodges and Ms. Watt were super excited and proud of our team. We shook hands with the other teams to pay our respect. I will never forget this amazing experience!

Hunting with Jason

David Krajacic

My dad, my friend Jason and I went to a hunting lodge. We drove up that morning and got on the highway for two hours going north. On the way we stopped at Chipotle and got food. After that we kept driving on the highway until we got to a dirt road. On the dirt road we saw pigs, buffalo, deer and many more animals. Then we stopped at the lodge got out and unpacked. Inside the house we were watching football in the movie theater room. I sat on the top because that’s where all the snacks were, and it was better seating. Then we went to the gun range to practice before hunting. After that we went back to the lodge and had dinner. We had steak, potatoes, and green beans. Dinner was delicious because we had a chef come and make it for us all. After that we went to bed in our soft beds. The next morning we got up at 4 am. We got on the buggy and drove to the hunting stand. There were already pigs there eating corn. Then I tried to shoot one, but I missed. Then we got back into the buggy and went to the lodge. We went to bed. The next morning we got up, drove to the hunting stand, and I tried to shoot one again, but I missed. We got on the buggy and drove to the lodge, packed up and drove home.

Keiko

Hailey Rosen

Keiko! Keiko! That is the name of my bird. Keiko can say her name and many more things. We got her when Covid had started. I got home to a large cage in front of the door. I thought we were getting a hamster because not too long back my hamster had passed away. When I asked, my dad showed me a picture of a tiny green bird on his shoulder. A week later Keiko was ready to come home. Keiko brought the joy to the house (she still does). Keiko can say lots of words like boop, Keiko, kiss give me kiss, thank you, pretty bird, and she is learning to say, “I love you” and “hello.” When she wants attention, she will push this little wooden swing into a large window behind her cage. It will make a loud bang. When you hear that bang you will know she wants attention, or she will yell as loud as possible. Sometimes she will fly around when we are not home. When we get home, she is back on her cage, and she will start yelling because we are now home acting like nothing had happened. Keiko must be careful because of our dog Tucker, Tucker is a dachshund and a hunting dog, so he sometimes goes after the bird. Keiko’s cage is tall, and Tucker is quite small so he cannot reach her. Right now, Keiko is four years old. She loves fruit and her favorite is bananas. She will go crazy if she sees you holding a banana and not giving her any. She may try to fly to you if her wings grow out enough to fly. Every few months we get Keiko’s nails and wings clipped. It does not hurt her, but she does not like the feeling. Keiko knows when she is going to get her nails and wings clipped. Her nails will get sharp and caught on things. She knows when she is going to get her wings clipped when she can fly. Keiko loves car rides, but she knows where we are going as soon as we get in the car… the pet shop. Keiko knows why she goes to the pet shop It is to cut her nails and wings or to get her food. Every time we let her see the other birds, she loves to see the birds tap on the glass and play with her. Sometimes Keiko takes baths in one of her two dishes. When she takes a bath, she will splash with her wings to throw water up in the air. She may also take baths in our kitchen sink. When we wash the dishes or our hands, she will try to hop in by climbing down our arms into the water. Keiko will run up our arms and onto our neck, then she will run her face on our neck and our head. Sometimes if we try to give Keiko a bath when she does not want one, she will try to jump out. Keiko is a sweet bird who brightens up our house, and who loves to put on a show.

Mix it up Monday!

Emory Ulrich

Mondays can be boring but mix it up Mondays are extreme! Mix it up Mondays is a type of tournament in Fortnite. They give prizes out for placement and points can be earned by eliminations. The mechanism is awesome, because you can get a pickaxe back accessory and skins if you place high enough! Mix it up Mondays can be delightful! It has old weapons from the old Fortnite! Some people even make money from tournaments like this. I think it is exciting for me, but that is my opinion. You should try it. Maybe you would like it. Now it is fun writing about my favorite game, and I want to play but I am having more fun doing this! I know that games can be hard and frustrating but being determined, never giving up, and keeping a great mindset could get you farther than anyone else! So, give Mix it up Monday a try if you play Fortnite.

Marvelous Manatees

By Adelina Bodak

Crystal clear water, bright green seaweed, and gentle gray giants munching on seagrass. A calf swims up behind the mother, affectionately nudging past Mom, reaching for some food. A few minutes later, the whole family is chowing down. This is an average day for a manatee. Their diet consists of mostly undersea greens like different varieties of seaweed. Manatees are nicknamed, “Cows of the Sea” or sometimes, “Sea cows” because manatees eat a lot, like cows. Most manatees graze near shallow areas. Marine conversationalists have planted signs shouting, “No Wake!” which simply means, “Go Slow, Manatee Area!” to boaters... although some people completely ignore the warnings and plow through those specific areas. Sometimes the manatees get struck by the boat propellers. These strikes can badly hurt the manatees or can be fatal. Other dangers include orphaned calves, disease, and overfishing. Now some fun facts! Did you know that manatees maintain their buoyance by farting? According to Guiness World Records: Animal Edition, they hold it in to rise, and let it rip to sink! Manatees can also eat up to 55% of their body weight, if they have an appetite! As you can see, manatees sure eat a lot! This passionate creature deserves to be protected and admired by everyone... even irresponsible boaters!

My Milestone Birthday

Shreya Giridhar

Kissimmee, Orlando, Florida. There lies my birthday destination, “The most magical place on earth.” Disney World. On the first day, just when we arrived, our first park was Animal Kingdom. First my family and I met Mickey and Minnie. It was a two hour wait in line but still, we took the risk. Once I met Mickey and Minnie, they were sooo happy to see me. Then for lunch, we went to a restaurant where I had salty fries and crisp chicken nuggets. My parents brought food from home. (I was sad. But they brought food that I did not like). Then after a few rides, I got hungry, so we went to Starbucks in the park. I wanted two butter croissants heated up. At the end of the day, we checked in the Art of Animation Resort. Our theme of the room was Pixar’s Cars. The next day was Magic Kingdom. We had to go in a metro train. First, I went to visit Mickey Mouse. For breakfast I ate sugary Mickey Mouse head waffles. Then I wanted to see Minnie Mouse followed by Daisy Duck, Donald Duck, and Goofy. My eyes had shimmer and shine once I saw the Mickey Mouse bubble wand. Before the fireworks were going to burst, we took some pictures in front of the Disney castle. Fireworks time. The fireworks were bursting behind the castle with bright, vivid, glamorous colors. Projecting on the castle were all the Disney characters, like Judy Hopps (Zootopia), Moana and Maui (Moana), Tiana (The Princess and the Frog) and Mirabel (Encanto), and Mickey Mouse. The last day of my visit was Hollywood Studios. There were sky gliders to go to the park. In the morning, we started packing and putting our suitcases in our 2011 silver Honda Accord. Afterwards, we hopped into the Mickey and Minnie skyglider and flew over the land to get to the park. In my mind I heard this ride called Mickey’s Runaway Railway. I’ve always wanted to go there. One we reached, I ran straight to the ride, but my mom pulled me by the ear and said, “We’re going to have breakfast first!” So, we ate with the Disney Junior characters (Fancy Nancy, Vamprina, Goofy etc.) I had a buttery croissant and two sweet Mickey Waffles. Disney also got me a cupcake with a chocolate Mickey head topper, because the trip was scheduled for my birthday. Afterwards, we went the Runaway Railway ride. I also went to the Frozen sing-along. Then we went to the Mickey’s trip to Disney. It is a ten-minute episode with the Mickey shorts font and pictures. The day was almost ending, and we were about to leave. I was sad, but when I looked at my mom’s photo album on her phone, there were tons of photos. Plus we also bought a Minnie Mouse sunhat and a rainbow Minnie Mouse headband with a rainbow veil. Then we ate dinner at Woodlands Indian Restaurant. We left Orlando and arrived home at midnight.

BEST TENTH BIRTHDAY EVER!!!!!!!

My Friend Cricket

Ryne Roper

Chirp, Chirp. That is the sound of a cricket sitting on my front porch. He was always there just sleeping or relaxing. Once he even let me pet him. Then one day I came out to say hi, but he was not there. I would walk by my porch every day to see if he was back, but he was not. He was gone for a whole week! Then one sunny Friday morning, I was playing in the front yard when I heard the noise, I have heard many times before. Then I thought for a second, WAIT… is that CRICKET? I ran to the porch, and I saw not one, not two, BUT three crickets. He must have gone in the woods and found some friends, or they were his brothers. I would feed them, hang out with them, go in the woods with them, but then after about six months the fun had to stop. They were getting older and sleepier and didn’t want to play with me anymore. One day I had to say my goodbyes and they left to start a new life somewhere else. I was sad but I am still happy that I got to meet them. I will miss them.

Twix

Asha Boudi

Twix is my dog, my puppy, and super cute, amazing dog. You also might wonder “Is Twix a candy bar?’’ No, she is not a candy bar, but she does look like it and that’s how we got her name. Another fun fact is that her birthday is on Valentine’s Day! That’s why her favorite thing to do is give kisses. Twix also loves to play outside and play fetch. She runs as fast as a cheetah and while she is running, she looks like a bunny. A funny thing that she does is that she follows my mom around the house. Another thing is that Twix chases after my cats, but do not worry…no body gets hurt. My cats Sweetie and Stormy out run her, and they get away. My family got Twix during Covid-19 and she was born almost four hours away from my old house in Northwest Indiana. She also has lots of colors of fur for example, dark brown, light brown, black, blonde, and gray. I love her unique colors because she doesn’t have just one color of fur. Twix is an Australian labradoodle mix. Another thing is before we got Twix, her mom’s owner said that ‘’Twix loves little kids’’ like my age at the time. We got her in 2020 and at that time I was only 8 years old. I love Twix because she is cute, silly, playful, fast, and of course the best dog that gives kisses.

My Vacation to St. John

Trent Kulvinskas

My family and I traveled to a warm Caribbean Island called St. John. It is to the east of Cuba. When we arrived at the house we were staying at, my sister and I ran in the house as fast as cheetahs. We immediately looked at the rooms. When we came down to the kitchen there was a gift basket. It had food and sweets, but my parents said we could not eat any. We went to the back patio where there was a huge infinity pool looking over a bay. On the first day my family and I went to a beach called Trunk Bay. The water shimmered like diamonds. We went scuba diving. I saw so many fish. They were all sorts of colors. I even saw a rainbow fish. I saw colorful reefs too. I saw a huge fish that was about 3 feet long and it also had razor sharp teeth. The next day we went to a beach called Cinnamon Bay. The water was not as clear as Trunk Bay, but it was more popular, and it had food drinks and it was free to go to unlike Trunk Bay. My sister and I were playing in the water and splashing each other. We were also playing on the floor is lava on rock near the water. To add on we went to eat near the beach. I got a cherry Fanta. I did not know cherry Fanta was a thing. When we left the beach, we went to the house we were staying at. When my sister and I were about to go to bed, we went swimming in the pool. It was fun. On the third day we went to trunk bay again because we liked that beach a lot. We went scuba diving again. My dad and I went around the island. It got tiring after a while but when we got back, I played in the sand for the rest of the time. On the fourth day we hired a boat driver to take us to islands you cannot drive to. We even went to the island where they filmed a Coors light commercial. The island was so tiny there were rock statues that people made. We even went to the border of the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean. When we crossed the Atlantic Ocean, it got a lot rougher. We went off the coast of an island and we went scuba diving. But when we were scuba diving my sister goy burned by fire coral. On the fifth day we went to watermelon Bay. We went scuba diving again and I saw the most colorful reefs in the world. When I was scuba diving a saw a huge shark. It was about 10 feet long. I almost had a heart attack. Last night I stayed up late. On the sixth day we went to truck Bay again. I did not go scuba diving because I was too tired. Last night I stayed up late. On the plane ride home, I mostly played on my iPad. By far this is my favorite vacation I have ever been on.

Visiting Uncle Bruce

William Fulmer

Every 4th of July we would drive to North Carolina to see my Uncle Bruce. My Uncle Bruce makes the tastiest ribs, and I eat so much I feel sick afterwards. My Uncle Bruce buys the largest fireworks. Every year it gets bigger and bigger! Also, every year he pulls out his BB guns and I shoot cans. My Uncle Bruce also owns a huge piece of land, so we go hiking for hours every day. I never get bored of it! There are many trees on his property like pine trees and oak trees. The grass there grows tall and its light green. When we walk through the grass my legs are itchy afterwards. My favorite part of the hike is when we get to see animals like deer, birds, and fish. We usually hike at night with flashlights which is a lot of fun! In the end we have to go home, but I’m happy for the memories!

My Visit to LegoLand Hotel

Emmett Bowen

I had so much fun at Legoland, but my favorite part was the pirate themed hotel. First my parents signed in. The room was gigantic, and the reception desk was pretty big also. I was so excited! Then me and my sister Molly ran through a big and long hallway past many awesome pirate themed builds. There was a jail room that we passed, as well as a big Lego platform that kids were building on. Then we got to our room and there was a scavenger hunt, a Lego platform in our room, and a bunkbed! The first thing we did was complete the scavenger hunt. After we completed the scavenger hunt, we got a Lego packet and a grape flavored juice box. In the Lego packet was a Lego minifigure. Then we built on that platform for a while, and then went to sleep. The next morning, we got an amazing breakfast that consisted of scrambled eggs and crispy bacon. We found out that a kid got stuck in a hole in that Lego jail from earlier! Some workers from the hotel were able to pull him out, and he was okay. I had so much fun at the LegoLand hotel. It is my favorite birthday I have ever had, and I got a birthday pin that I still have today!

My Wonderful Brother Morgan

Roy Shell

Bang! Bang! Bullets are flying across the air under a military man named Morgan. You might think who is he? He is a hero to me. For the past four years he has been in the military serving our country. During Morgan’s time in the military, he broke his ankle when he stepped in a deep hole with five pounds of concrete on his back. He fell backwards and heard a crack. At first, he thought he was okay. As soon as he got up, he screamed. They rushed him to the nurse’s clinic, and he found out he had broken his ankle. It took twelve months for Morgan to heal. The day after his ankle healed, we went to the beach to celebrate. At the beach, we were joking around and playing with a surfboard. We took turns on the surfboard and when it was my turn I fell over, and the surfboard landed on top of me. Morgan sprinted to the surfboard and tossed it away. He then took me out of the water and gave me CPR and lots of water came out of my mouth. He saved my life. Ever since this happened, he has been my best friend. To this day, I feel safe with him.

Roblox

Gavin Lo

Welcome to Roblox, the imaginary platform where people have fun! Roblox may sound like a game, but it is actually a platform with games. The games have genres. The genres are what is recommended for you. The most popular games are horror, role-playing, and your favorites. Some of the most popular games are Blox Fruits, Adopt me, and Jailbreak. Horror games are Doors, The Mimic, and Rainbow Friends. Role-playing games are Brookhaven and Meep City. Now, to have a favorite game, you must have a Roblox account. Well, not like a real account like a bank account… a Roblox account like players. To favorite a game, you need to click (if you have a mouse) or tap (if you are on mobile) on a game and click the star. Roblox in the past was different from Roblox now. Roblox was not even called Roblox, it was called Roogle. Roblox was born in 2004 and changed a lot in the future. Nothing really changed in 2004-2007, but in 2008, Roogle officially changed their name to what we see today, Roblox. When their name was changed, their whole entire website changed from a search engine to a gaming platform. Roblox did not have many games back then, they just had boring games. Roblox still has the old Lego look. Once in 2011, the website was hacked. Roblox (the owner) could not do anything because they did not have a secure system yet, so the hackers messed around with the website. This made history, but the hackers were banned and were never seen again. A few years later (2019), Roblox had more games and changed again. Roblox had a new marketplace change, and that is when I started playing the game. Roblox also added something called “Rthro.” Rthro is an avatar, but a little more realistic. Now, Roblox is more realistic, but it looks uncanny. Even though it looks disturbing, it is overall still a good game. I would recommend you play Roblox. It is fun, entertaining, and awesome!

Roblox

Trinity Truss

Have you ever heard of Roblox? If you have then you know that Roblox has many mini games that vary on what you want to play that day. The most popular games that kids like to play are Tycoons, Simulators, Prove mom/dad wrong, Role plays, Experiences, and some horror games. You can play Roblox on your phone, tablet, computer, and your television. Roblox is a worldwide game that kids can have fun on. They can play with their friends, and they can add or make new friends on Roblox. You can have as many friends as you want. There are many, many things you can do with your avatar. You can buy hair, clothes, shoes, pants, accessories, and a lot more if you have lots of robux. Even if you don’t have a lot of robux you can still dress up your avatar because some of the accessories are free. Sometimes when you don’t feel like playing with others, you can get a private server instead of a public server. Some of the private servers’ cost robux. My favorite game is Berry Avenue. Berry Avenue is a Roleplay game that you can build houses, buy cars, and pretend that you are an adult. You can get robux to buy the nicer houses and cars if your parents buy the premium pass. Roblox is a fun game and I recommend for kids ages five to sixteen.

Siesta Key

Marasella Madore

In summer 2022, my family and I went to a breathtaking island called Siesta Key in the south area of Florida. We drove two and a half hours to get there and the ride to get there was amazing! We saw the beach and so many palm trees! When we arrived, my dad parked our truck. He then got out and made his way to a small shack-like building and went inside. After 15 minutes or so, he came out and got back in the truck and drove us to another building where we got our bags and suitcases out of the car. We rolled them down a pretty, old stone pathway until we got to a door that had a number on it. My dad got a small card out of his pocket and swiped it swiftly across the metal plate on the door and the little black square turned green and the door opened with a CHA-CLICK! After unpacking my suitcase, I decided to explore with my baby brother (he’s definitely not a baby now.) We decided to explore the bathroom first. When we went into the bathroom, we saw a shower, a nice sink, and a toilet (of course.) Next, we explored the kitchen and there was a beautiful countertop, a small fridge, an oven, a microwave, and a toaster. Then we tested the beds… “so comfortable!” I thought. After a while, my family and I drove around town a bit and we saw a pizza place not too far from the hotel room. We decided to go there later for dinner. That evening we went to the pizza place, “WOW!” I thought. “This pizza is so good!” After we finished our delicious dinner, we headed back to the hotel room and lay down to sleep. That night was rough. I heard booming thunder all night long. The next day, we walked to the shops and saw one that was very pretty and really cool. We went inside and I saw lifeguard shirts! Of course, I had to have one! When we got home, we looked at all the cool Siesta Key merch we had gotten. A couple of days later our trip sadly came to an end, we packed all of our suitcases and bags and left. At least the ride home was lovely!

Why The New York Jets Are Not Good

Nohah Canizio

“Are you kidding me?” That’s Aaron Rodgers after he tears his Achillies tendon to end his season with the New York Jets. Then the next thing you know, Zach Wilson leads the Jets to a loss the very next game. One word. Quarterback. That is why the Jets can’t find their rhythm. You would know even if you weren’t a Jets fan that Zach Wilson isn’t an accurate quarterback. When the 2023/2024 NFL season started Aaron Rodgers was doing great but, unfortunately, he tore his Achilles, and his season was over. Zach Wilson took over and turned possession to the Buffalo Bills. The last time the Jets made it to the playoffs was twelve years ago with a top twenty quarterback. They do have a good defense, including Ahmad “Sauce” Gardener, Jordan Whitehead, and Jermaine Johnson, but they still need a reliable, quality, quarterback if they hope to make it to the Super Bowl one day.

Skiing at Beaver Creek

Eva Skotarenko

After a long day of skiing, my brother and I would take a ski trail down to the main area. While our parents kept skiing, we turned in our skis and trotted up the stairs to the hotel. In the hotel room we were waiting for it to hit 3 o’clock. It felt like years! In the meantime, we threw pillows around, played tag, and jumped on the bed. At three o’clock, excitedly we both walked down to the main plaza. There were chefs there with trays of cookies! The most you could grab is two, so we each got two. I chose gooey, chocolate chip cookies still warm from the oven. Kyryl chose the same thing. We took a moment to enjoy the delicious smell then ate them quickly. Thirty minutes later our parents were done skiing. We went down to a family style steak house for dinner that evening. I was so hungry that I devoured my steak. After we ate, we walked to a crepe truck, and I got an Oreo crepe. We walked back to the hotel and relaxed. I was ready to repeat all this the next day. Beaver Creek was a place I would never forget.

Softball Fun

Mackenzie Mees

Crack! A big softball flies out to right field. It soars over the infield. It looks like it’s going all the way to the fence. The right fielder sprints to go catch it. The ball lands in her glove. The crowd starts to cheer. The batter is out. Softball is a fun and exciting sport. There are nine different positions. The pitcher is in the center of every play. The pitcher pitches a special way. She pitches toward the batter. The batter tries to hit the ball with their bat. If they hit the ball, they run to first base. If the fielders don’t get the ball in, you can go to second and third base. If you run as fast as a cheetah, then you could make it back to home plate. The out field and infield have an important job. They field the ball and throw it to the closest base to get the batter or runners out. Once your team gets three outs than your team gets to bat. Every teammate gives it a whirl. The goal of the game is to get more runs than the other team and then you win. There are pitches called balls and strikes. Strikes are pitches that go right down the middle of home plate. Balls are pitches that are too high, too low, too far away from you, or too close to you. You always want to try to hit a strike. If you get three strikes that means you’re out. To get more runs you have to have a hit and a runner has to run around the bases to home plate. Getting more runs means you win. Softball is a fun sport to try.

Sweet Coco

By: Alexandra Nomikos

My dog Coco is a beautiful, blue, brindle French bulldog with big yellow eyes and big ears. Coco is a playful Frenchie, but she’s also very lazy. If you let her, she’ll sleep all day on your lap. Although she’s very lazy, she’s also very playful. Coco LOVES car rides. Whenever you put her in a car, she always looks out the window at the beautiful blue sky. Coco always follows me around the house in the mornings when I’m getting ready to go to school. Whenever there’s food around, Coco wants it, even if its not dog food. Coco does love every food but her most favorite two foods are bacon treats and pig ears. Although Coco is a little fat, she’s one fast puppy. Coco HATES cats and squirrels. Once when my dad was walking her, she saw a squirrel and LAUNCHED at it, but she didn’t manage to get it. Coco is super strong because her old owners use to feed her a lot of protein. Coco has a whole wardrobe full of just her clothes! She loves wearing a fuzzy red sweater. I love my sweet Coco!

The Best ALMOST Player in Baseball

By Reid Roper

Bases loaded… two outs, sixth inning against my rival. 3-2 is the score and Reid Roper is up … the best almost player in baseball. He hits a shot to center field. This might be it! But the center fielder makes a spectacular catch! Ballgame over! The best almost player in baseball strikes again. Sixth inning and your team can walk it off with a homerun, but as we all know, the best almost player in baseball is up and hits a tank off the fence instead. It was a single, inches from winning the game! But at least the team still won. The best almost player in baseball had a great tournament and got second place in MVP voting. He was five points off. Fast forward two years later, he is in the same situation and gets second place in MVP voting again by the same amount of points. They were playing on bigger fields than usual, and he would have hit two homeruns! But of course, the fences were one hundred feet larger, so they were doubles. So that is why Reid Roper is the best almost player in baseball.

Path to a New Road

By Elora Johnson

My heart performed a stunt, jumping of the heart cords, although we walked like slugs;

Today was the day we would ride like stars, in an advertisement bus, shiny and brand new.

After the ride, we would be dropped off, stride into the theater, and listen to the lesson music will teach us, and music we will learn.

The music notes would take us away, into a daze, between reality and a different world.

For now, we must ride this machine, and dream about what soon, we will see.

Where the thought began, it was in my seat, not shared by anyone, just me.

Then a cool breeze hit my skin, and the reaction was for my sweatshirt to slip over my head and cover my legs, for warmth to keep in.

My seat was alone, yet full of me, how petals and leaves cover the bare stem on any plant or tree.

Bump onto my back and the motion stirred; ride, may it begin, the long with brief time.

Now, yes, I was alone, but my friends sat behind, and another new kid sat on one seat to my side where the cube of colors was a twist.

Some time passed by, now a fourth through the ride, some kid fell to his side, onto the new peer.

He raised his hand, due to the discomfort of this event, and asked to sit elsewhere, hoping for space to be alive.

The only empty seat was right next to me and had easy access to quickly leave the aisle.

As he sat down, a question popped into my mind, to ask him where he was from.

After a quick pause, I got a reply: he said he was from Italy, and boy, I should have known that was a lie.

Yet, I am gullible enough to believe this fib, although no accent was heard nearby.

He proceeded to laugh at the ‘funny joke,’ but then revealed he was gullible too.

Now with more wonder stirring up in our minds, we played the game, question by question, soon to discover more of each other's lives.

All the wondering just stopped, now with nothing to talk about, and silence overcame, creating a wall of darkness between us, like the quietest voice.

Then, a melody, he started singing, something All My Life I could relate to.

Visiting California

Jason Jallo

I take a trip to California almost every year. It is a special time of the year for me and my family because we get to see my grandparents who live there. We share a house with them. It is so much fun. But that’s not all. I have lots of cousins that live there. I get to hang out with my family that I haven’t seen in a year! I have so many cousins in California so I can visit each family and it never ends. Another big part of going to California is getting to pick up In-N-Out. It is a fast-food restaurant that is not in Florida. I love it so much. It is my favorite fast-food restaurant. I always order a hamburger with crunchy lettuce, tomato and salty pickles. A side of crispy fries covered in their special sauce makes this meal mouthwatering. When my cousins come over, we always hang out. Our favorite game to play is hide and seek around the house. I am never the seeker because no one can find me. This is because I have the best spot. This secret spot is a bucket in the closet. Now you know why I love going to California.

Visting Columbia

Daniel Gettings

I am walking down from an airplane, filled head to toe with excitement. I race ahead of my mom eagerly urging her to move quicker. So far, I’ve gone to Columbia once a year to visit family, but little did I know this was going to be a much longer visit. Once we got to my grandparents’ house, I ran to their front door and started to knock on it not knowing the long story that awaited me.

2 Months Later

It has been such a long month! When will I get back home! When? When? When? These thoughts race through my mind while I’m sitting in class, bed, school etc.…. These past few months have been a confusing, complexed and long month for me because I’ve had to go to a whole new school which had a whole different culture and language.

3 Months Later

I am jittery with excitement when I figure out, I’d be going back to the U.S. soon. I had been excited going AND leaving Columbia that year. I hadn’t liked that visit because I had to learn how to read and write in a whole different language to even begin to learn at my new school. It was also hard to make new friends and socialize because they had been raised in a different culture and with a different language. There was also a pro to the visit which was visiting and having fun with family. Overall, my visit to Columbia that year was like a rollercoaster ride with emotions.