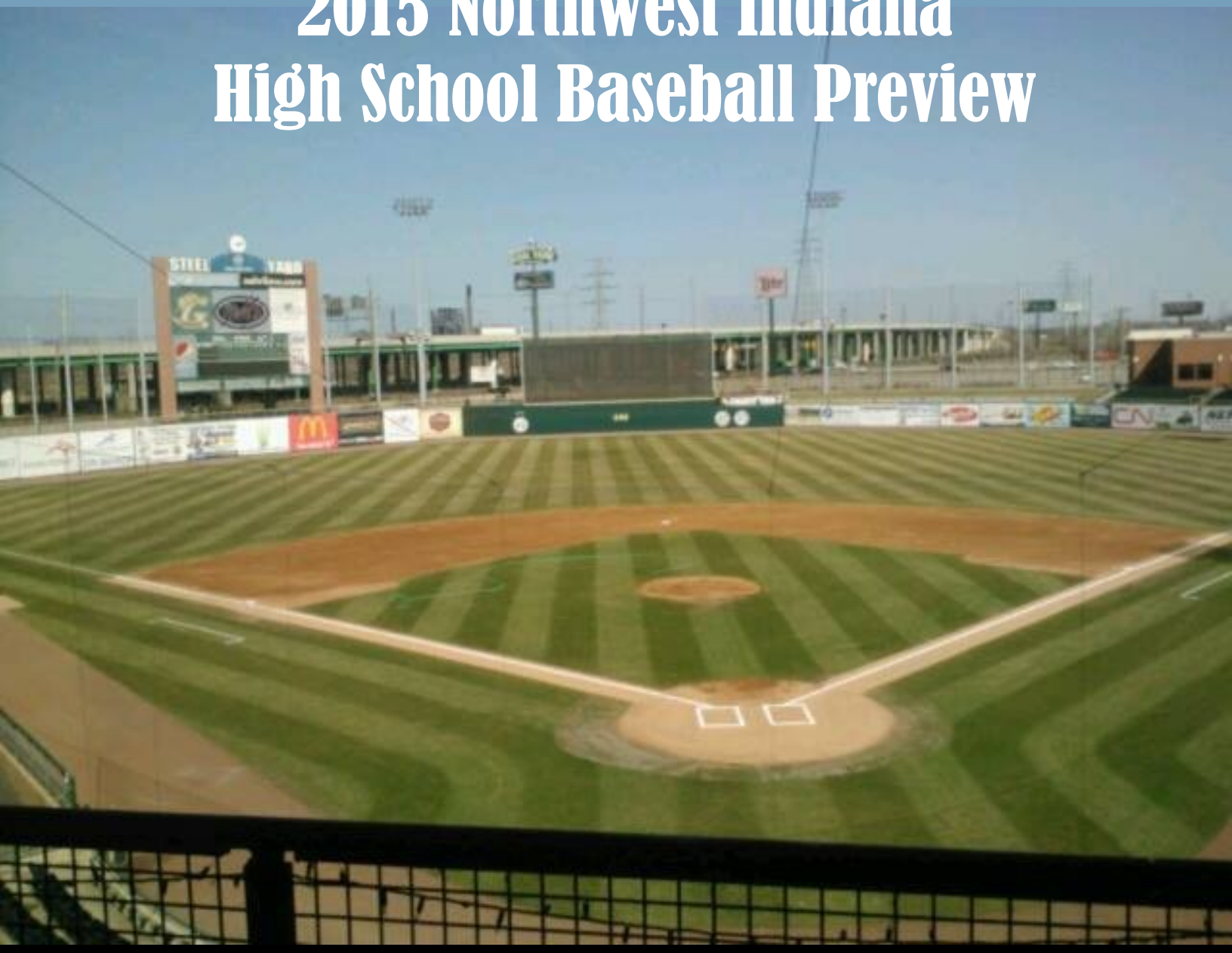
# MAB MONTHLY

April 2015 FREE

## 2015 Northwest Indiana High School Baseball Preview



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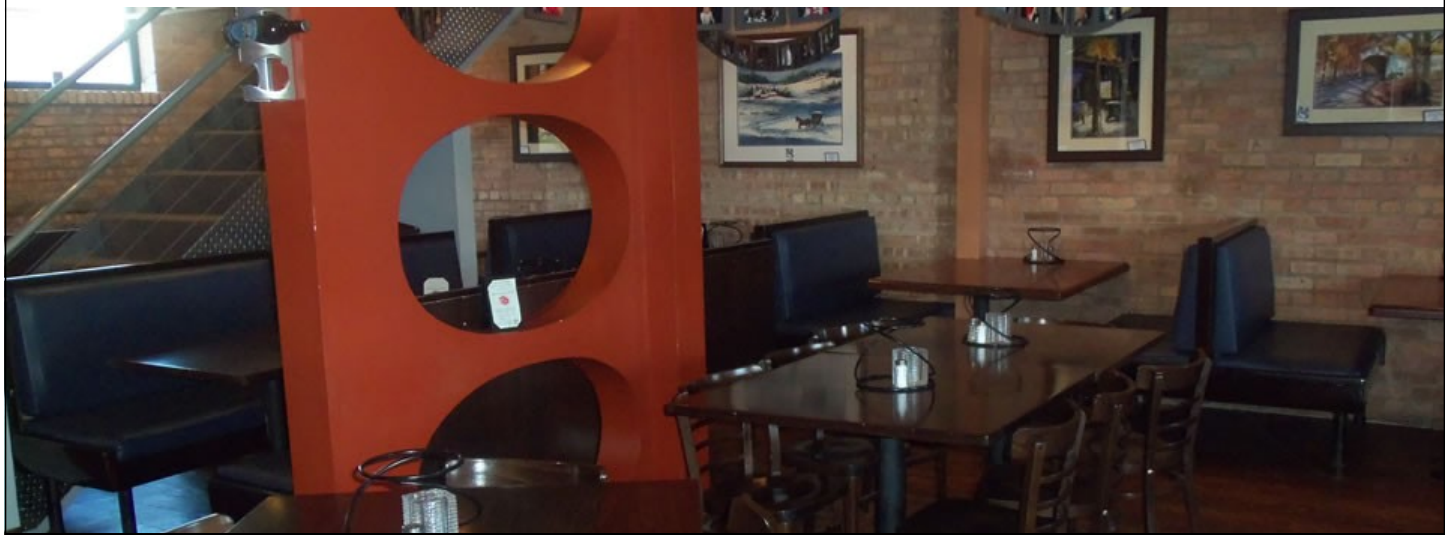

# *MAB ONLINE MAGAZINE*

As the weather finally warms up, thoughts turn back to the diamond. Baseball and softball fields at all levels start to come to life. The sound of the ball flying off of the bat, cheering fans and of players gentle taunts are all a part of what makes up the spring.

This year, as we always have, we will bring you several of the games from the RailCats High school Baseball Challenge in addition to various other baseball and softball games this year.

As always, we hope that you enjoy the magazine and the broadcasts!

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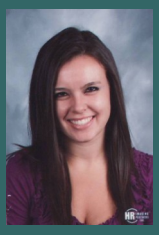

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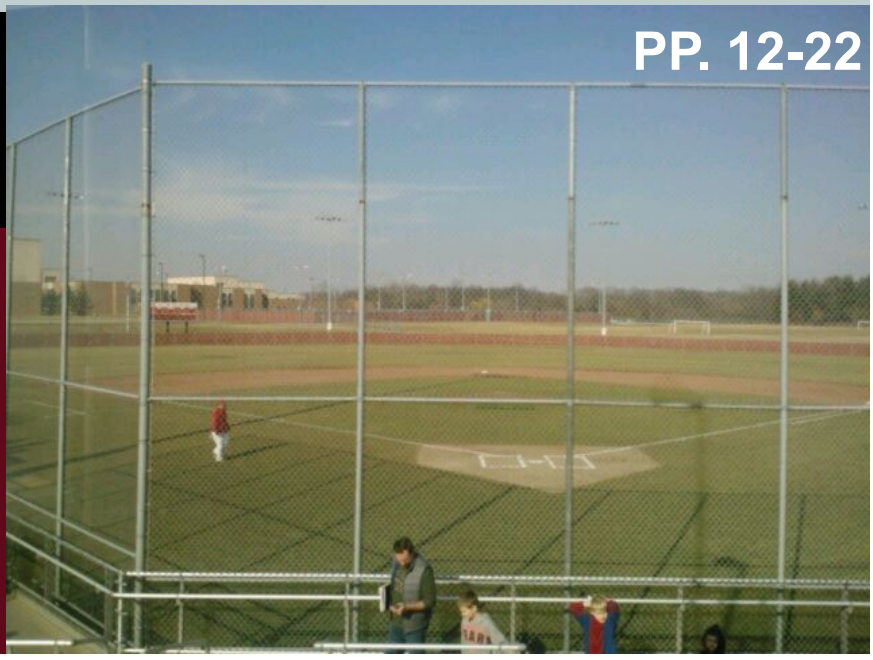

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# Athletes of the Month

**Written and Compiled by Andy Wielgus MAB Staff Writer**

## Drew Hackett Munster

Munster's UIC bound Drew Hackett scored 51 points and set a Sectional record in beating East Chicago Central 88-77. Munster moves on to play Crown Point at the Michigan City 4A Regional.

## Jadon Grundy South Bend Riley

South Bend Riley's Jadon Grundy scored 18 points vs Northridge and 17 vs Crown Point to help the Wildcats win the 4A Regional. Grundy hit 7 3pt shots and Riley became the 1st under .500 team at 12-14 to ever win a Regional.

## Rushelle Miller Valpo

Valpo's Rushelle Miller won the Floor Exercise as the Lady Vikings repeated as State Champions in Gymnastics. It is the 11th time Valpo has won the Gymnastics State Title.

## Matt Holba Guerin Catholic

Guerin Catholic's Matt Holba had 29 points,14 rebounds,and 4 blocks in the 3A Boys Basketball State Final win over Griffith 62-56.

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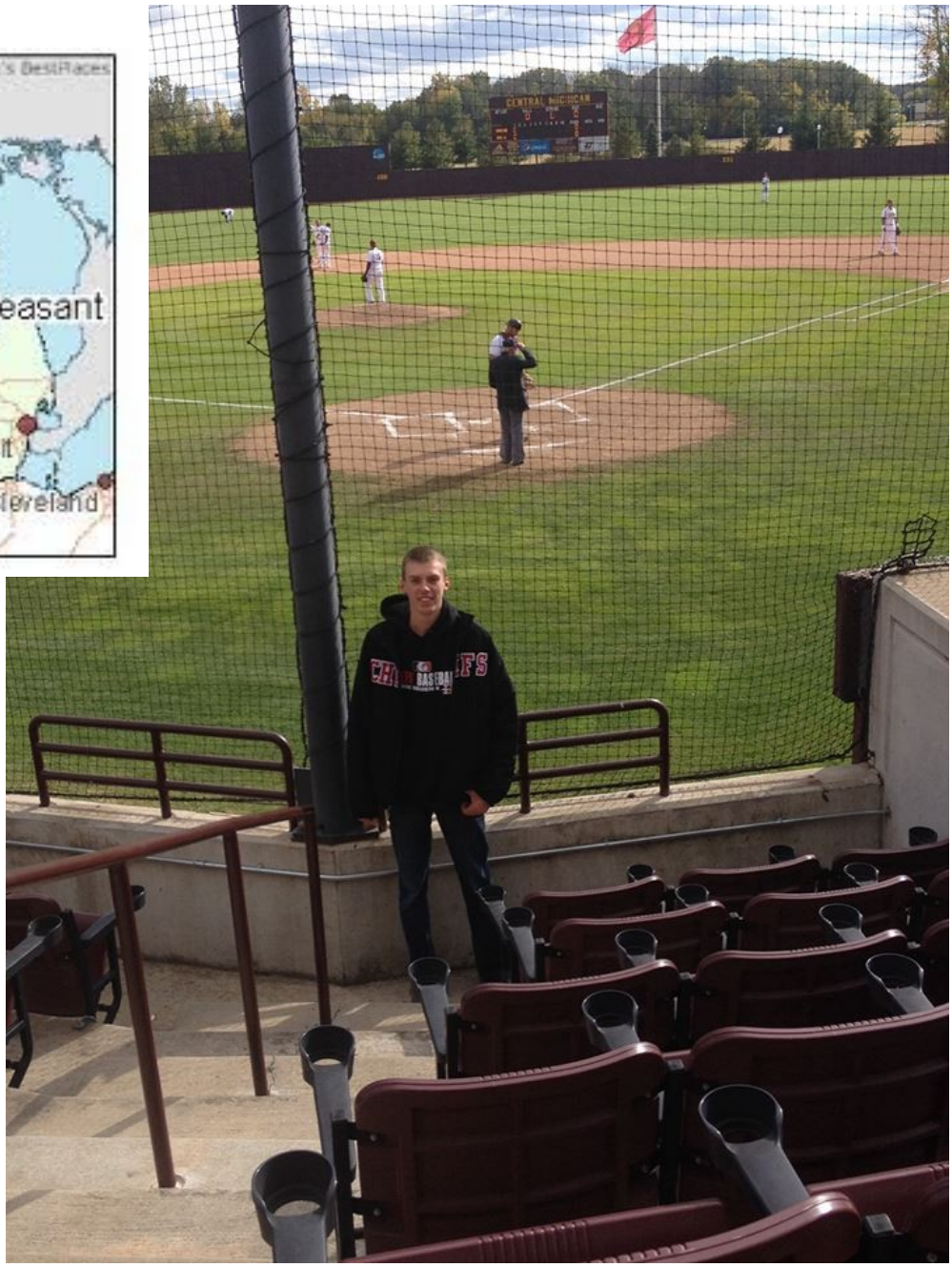
# Madura to Commit as Central Michigan Pitcher

By Trisha Madura
MAB Monthly Staff Writer



"Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard." This has been one of Mike Madura's favorite quotes to live by the past eleven years of playing baseball. As a current sophomore at Munster High School, Madura has committed to Central Michigan University as a pitcher for his college career. Fascinating enough, he is now the earliest baseball player in all of Munster High School history to commit to play college baseball.

Well, if Madura thought that Indiana received enough snow in the winter, just wait until he heads to Michigan in a few years! Central Michigan University is located in Mount Pleasant, just north of the center of "The Mitten." The Chippewas baseball team play in Division I, including competition as Michigan, Michigan State, Texas State, Norte Dame, and Miami of Ohio. They are currently 18-10 overall, with being 5

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-1 in their conference for the current 2015 season.

"I am extremely excited and proud to be playing Division I baseball in a few years," Madura says, eagerly. "This is what all of my hard work has been paying off for."

As Mike Madura waits to join the Chippewas in a few years, he will continue his love for baseball in the meantime. He is a current Varsity member of the Munster High School Baseball team, as well as playing for the Hammond Chiefs Baseball team, too. May the hard work continue to pay off!

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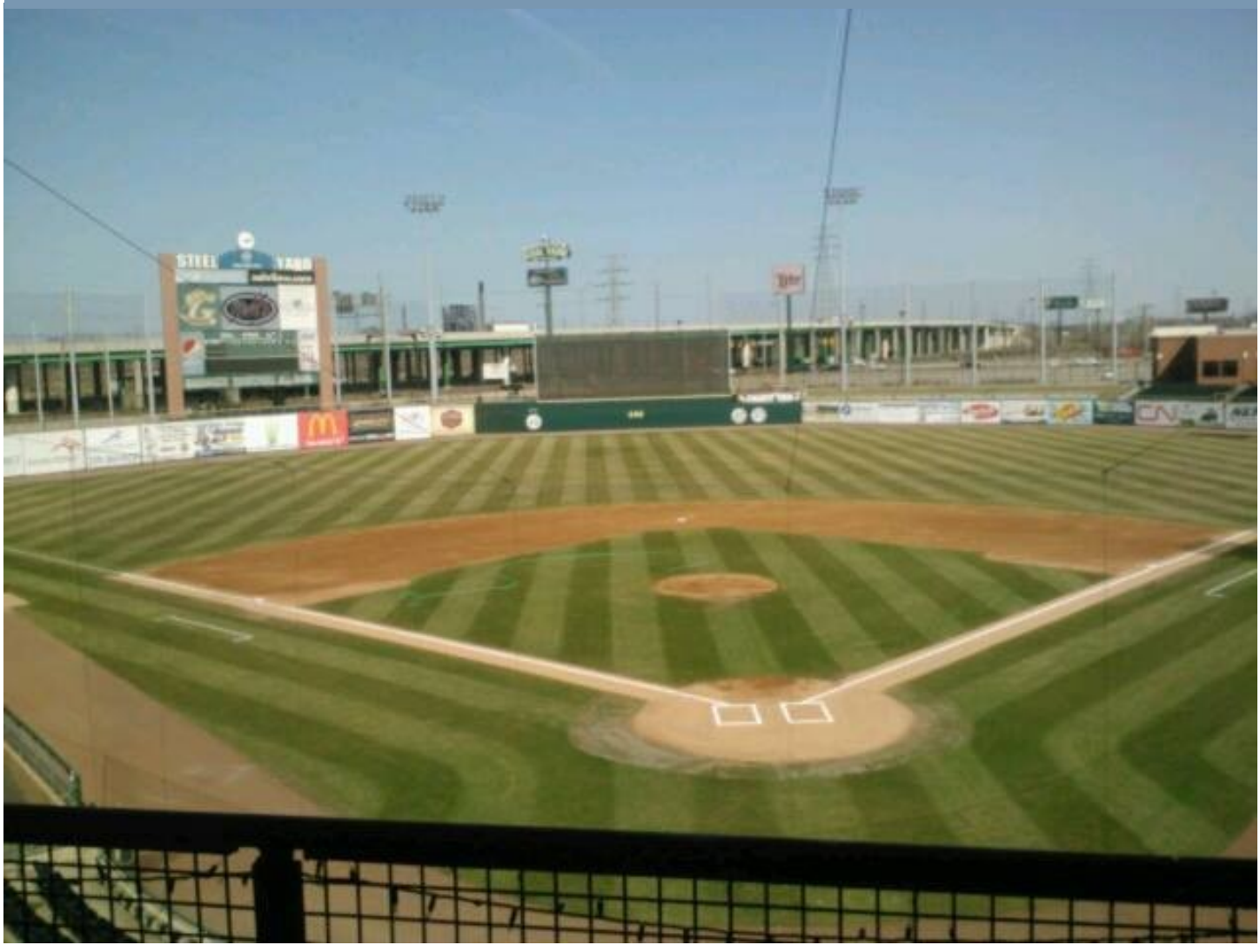
# Duneland Athletic Conference Preview

## By Andy Wielgus., MAB Monthly Staff Writer



The DAC this year is headed by two strong teams in Crown Point and Lake Central. Look for Portage, Valpo, LaPorte, and Chesterton to be in the hunt as well for the DAC title.

**Crown Point-** The Bulldogs under Coach Steve Strayer went 21-11 last year. They lost Glenn Hecht, Tyler Downing, and Jake Jenks off of last season's roster to graduation. But they do return Louisville Senior Pitching recruit Noah Burkholder. Look for junior standout Catcher/P/3B Mark Mazure to make an impact. Junior P/1B Mike Wathier should do the same on the mound as well, as Senior Pitcher Jon Dietrich, who started in Football as a DB. Also, Senior 1B Mitchell Kooi will play a key role along with the athletic Senior Centerfielder Thayne Bukowski off the Basketball team. Others that will contribute as well are: Senior Andrew Atchison C [Purdue Calumet recruit], Sr. Alex Basic P/IF/OF, Jr. Joey O'Keefe OF, Sr. Austin Thomas P/IF, Sr. Geoffrey Kozlowski IF, Sr. Corey Brown P/OF, Jr. Ceasar Lopez IF, Jr. Alex Ruiz P/OF, Soph. Brandon Haczynski P/IF, Jr. Tyler Schoonover IF, Jr. Nick Ricci 1B/C, Jr. Trevor Miller P/OF, Jr. Tommy Kitchen C, and Jr. Evan Frank P/IF/2B who is a standout on the Boys Tennis team. The Dogs opened their season with a 7-0 win at home over Warsaw. Mark Mazure was the winning pitcher in the game.CP has really toughened its schedule this year with scheduled games against Lincolnway-North, St. Rita, Noblesville, Mt. Carmel, Penn, and Hamilton Southeastern.

**LaPorte-** The Slicers last year went 17-12 under Coach Scott Upp. The Slicers lost IPFW recruit Evan Miller to graduation this year. Players that will lead the Slicers this year will include Junior OF/1B Travis Upp [IPFW recruit], Senior P/OF Jake Teets, Junior P Nick Willoughby, Sr. OF Cameron Watts, Sr. C Mark Pritz, and Junior P Jake Watterson. Look for IPFW recruit Upp and the pitching duo of Willoughby and Teets to be a key this year.

**Valpo** – The Vikings under Todd Evans will be led this year by Seniors Sam Miller C/IF, Tyler Ellrich OF/P, Alfonso Casaday IF/P, Justin Duty OF/P, Ryan Wexelberg IF, and Michael Jindra OF/P. Junior players that may contribute include Max Roberts 1B/P, Matt Mayes OF/P, Austin Ford OF/P, and Evan Walls IF/OF.

**Lake Central –** The Indians under Coach Jeff Sandor went 23-11 last year. And this year the Indians will look to Soph P/Utility player Matthew Litwicki[Indiana recruit], Sr. OF James Mays, Sr. 3B/P Alex Nisle, Sr. OF Jack Kuehner, Sr. SS/P Jorey Dimopolous, and Sr. P Bryan Vanderlee to lead the way. Other key underclassmen include Jr. Utility/P Ryan Ruthrauff, Jr. 2B Christian Mota, Jr. 2B Steven Meyer, Jr. C Ian Gifford, Soph. OF Ben Nisle, Soph C Jarrett Lopez, Jr. 1B/P Jake Wisniewski, Jr. 3B/LF/DH Zach Turnbough, Soph. P Joe Graziano, Jr. OF Collin Sluder, Soph. C Tyler Frank, and Jr. P Ethan Darter. Lake Central opens its season with a 5-0 win over Bishop Noll. Bryan Vanderlee was the winning pitcher.

**Portage-** The Indians last year went 20-11 under Head Coach Tim Pirowski and they lost 2 Division 1 Recruits to graduation in P Kevin Jones and OF Christopher Klenk. Junior P/OF Jacob Dickson returns along with

Jr. C Hunter Thorn, from the 20 win team from last year. Others to contribute include Sr. IF/P Jared Ford, Jr. SS Cody Simmons, and Sr. P Hunter Kraynak.

**Chesterton** - The Trojans under Lake Station Edison grad Jack Campbell went 15-12 last year and will be led by Senior P/IF Cameron O'Brien as well as Senior Matt Kubacki P/1B [Vincennes recruit]. Others to contribute include Sr. 2B Pat Tilden, Sr. P Zach Burris, Sr. C Max Benoit, Sr. SS Travis Brooks, and Sr. P Mike Jacobucci.

**Michigan City –** The Wolves under Head Coach David Ortiz will be led by the following Seniors Nathan Shepherd P/OF, Scott Thomas, Ryan Washington 3B/P, Chase Clarkson SS, Brian Leach-Hudson, Garrett McDaniel P/3B, Jay Hixon C, and Brad Pawlowski OF/P.

**Merrillville-** The Pirates under Head Coach Mark Schellinger will be led by Senior OF/P Ryan Brady, Sr. C Jon Streck, Sr. IF Mikey Ballard, Sr. OF Reece Gibson, Sr. 3B Terrance Grayson, and Sr. LF/P Thomas Butler. Juniors that will help the Bucs this year include IF/P Thomas Smith, IF/P James Sutherland, IF/C/P Omar Ramirez, C/1B Jonathan Sutherland, P Matt Meux, P Brendon Bistrican, and Soph. IF/P Darius Kendall. The Pirates started the season with a loss to Hobart.

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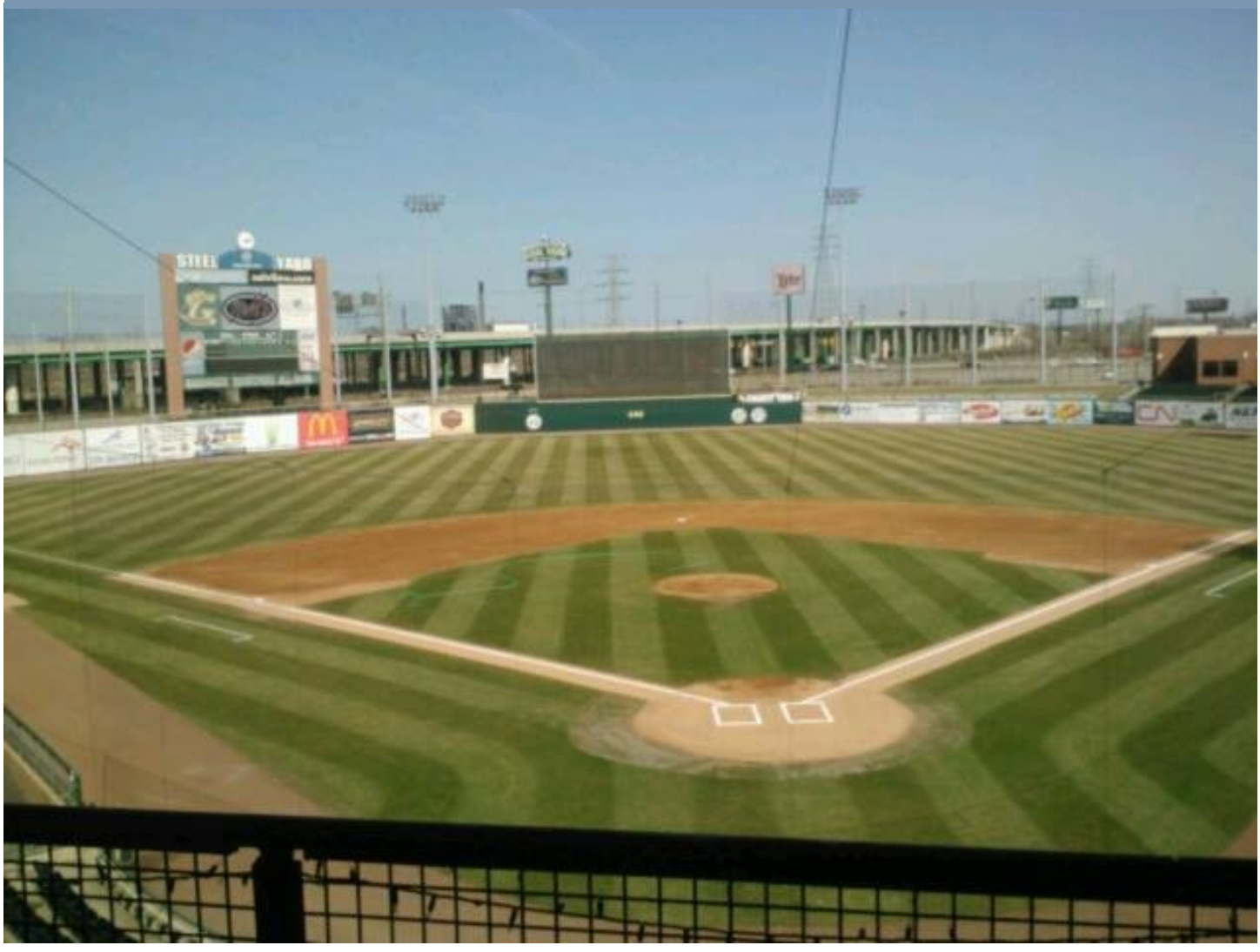
# Northwest Crossroads Conference Preview

## By Andy Wielgus., MAB Monthly Staff Writer



The NCC should be a strong league again this year and is led by three teams that could get to the Regional level and beyond in their respective classes – in Andrean, Munster, Griffith, and Hobart.

**Lowell-** The Red Devils under Head Coach Bobby Wong went 11-16 last season. They are led this year by the following senior players including Myles Sidentopf P/3B, P/OF Josh Arnold, IF/P Reed Holdeman, OF/IF Zach Bobos, and Junior OF Darion Hornickel.

**Griffith –** The Panthers under Head Coach Brian Jennings went 20-11 last year and were 6-6 in the NCC. They do return a number of talented starters this year again. They are led by State Basketball Finalist Senior Josh Terzarial P/OF [.420, 26rbi], Senior OF Robbie Hernandez, Senior 1B/P Brett Tauber, Tulane bound Junior SS Kody Hoese [.378, 26 rbi] Junior P/OF Amir Wright [.333, 20rbi], Junior 1B Anthony Quintero [.329, 25 rbi], Jr. P Troy Cullen, and Soph IF Joe Martoccia. Other seniors that may contribute include C Tristan Robertson and C Seth Shepard.

**Munster-** The Mustangs under Head Coach Bob Shinkan went 29-4 last season and will be led by strong pitching and catching again this year. Leaders include Senior Pitcher Grant Rademacher [DePauw recruit], Soph P and Basketball player Mike Madura[who is committed to Central Michigan].Also, Junior P/SS and Miami, Fla recruit Conner Manous who played on the Sectional Champion Basketball team, will lead the way as well. Others to contribute include Sr. 3B Tom DeCero, Sr. CF Patrick Burke, and Sr. OF Nick Fromm.

**Kankakee Valley-** The Kougars under Ryan Armstrong return strong pitching again this year and are led by the following Seniors that will contribute including : C/SS/P Anthony Clendenen OF/P Steve Ganzeveld, OF Riley Misch, and SS/P Chase Sizemore. Underclassmen that will help include Soph 1B Michael Popp and Jr. SS Greg Larzelere

**Highland-** The Trojans went 10-14 and 3-9 in the NCC under John Bogner and they enter 2015 with great hopes. They will lead by a strong returning core including the following Seniors SS Zach Syversten[.315], OF Mark Vargas, 3B/P Clay Keltner who has committed to Cornerstone, C Jeremy O' Donnell, Colorado Junior transfer P/OF Jordan Petty who has committed to Purdue Calumet and Junior 1B/P Kevin O' Donnell who has committed to Wabash. Others that will contribute include Jr. Andrew Kinley P, Soph OF Pat Manyek, Sr. CF Ryan Serna, Sr. 2B Nolan Petree, Sr. P Brandon Comer, Sr. Jack Gluth, Sr. Brett Sabo, Jr. Tyler Betusiak, Sr. Jason Korwacki, and Freshman C Nick Anderson.

**Hobart –** The Brickies went 26-6 and 9-3 in the NCC for Bob Glover Jr. and they do lose South Carolina Pitching Recruit Brandon Murray and 8 other graduating senior stalwarts. But returning to Hobart are Senior OF KJ Haluska and senior 3B/1B Donny Parlock. Junior P/IF Braden Niksich[[Illinois State recruit] should help as well as the following other Underclassmen players in Junior Alex Batistatos[.452], Junior SS/P Tyler Kenjic[.288], Junior C Josh Uhles, Lucas Watts, Luke Budzielek, Soph P/IF Mickey Wolfe, Fr. P Eli Passasko, Fr. P/IF Sam Ehlrich, and Fr. C Sam Hicks.

**Andrean –** The 3A State Champion Niners reload again this year under Head Coach Dave Pishkur. They went 31-4 and 10-2 in the NCC last year. Key performers this year will be the following players including Notre Dame bound Senior SS Nick Podkul[.411], Senior OF Jamie Johnson, Senior 1B Joe Rodish, Senior 2B Chase Dawson[.396], Senior Rose Hulman recruit Stone Brogan P, Junior P/OF Luke Jaksich, Junior C/1B/P Noah Davis, Junior OF/P Nick Perez, Soph C Kevin McCune[.367, 29rbi], Senior Parker Huttel[.452, 25rbi], Senior DH Alex Vode [.346, 21rbi], Soph C Evan Hylek, Soph P Sawyer Allen, and a core of Freshman Hurlers in Jake Sweeney, Clay Thompson, and Nick Fushi.

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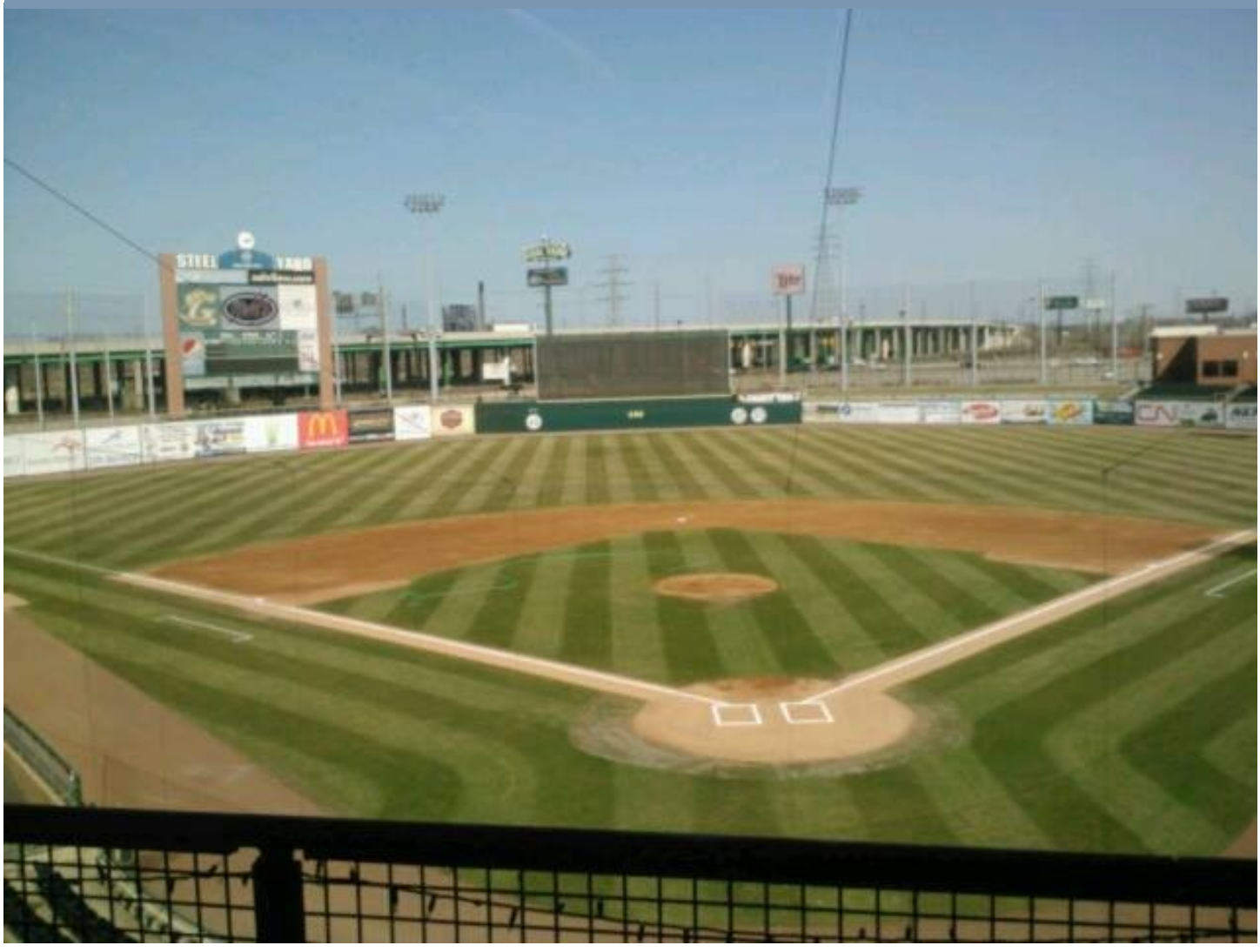
# Gary, Hammond, East Chicago Preview

## By Andy Wielgus., MAB Monthly Staff Writer



**East Chicago Central-** The Cardinals will be led this year again by Head Coach Jorge Ontiveros. And they return several standouts including Sr. OF/P Jordan Espino, Jr. 2B/P/SS Carlos Flores 10 RBI, Sr. 2B/P P Rey Colon[2.18 ERA 53 Strikeouts, .249], and Jr. 3B/1B Darion Edmond[24 rbi, 17 stolen bases]. Others contributing this year will be Sr. 2B/RF Mario Gomez, Jr. OF/John Alfaro, Jr. C/3B/1B Leonardo Eulloqui, Fr. SS/2B/P Jose Gonzalez, Sr. OF Kenneth Rodriguez, Soph. 1B/OF Edwin Rosado, Jr. 2B/3B/P Jaylen Robinson, Jr.P/3b Damien Davis, and Sr. 1B Alejandro Cruz.

**Hammond Gavit-** The Glads under Head Coach Tony Harris return Utility Player/SS Sr. Josh Lumberas who has been on the varsity since his freshman year, Jr. John Wilson 2B/P, Soph. Jorge Perez P/IF and Soph. Anthony Gibson Utility Player/P.

**Hammond Morton-** The Governors return for Head Coach Scott Lush several standouts off of a 15-10 season and they were 6-0 in the GLAC. And they include Sr. 2B Devontae Robinson, Sr. Pitcher/SS Cody Earl [.567], Jr. Util./P Tobin Mielenz, Sr. P/SS/OF Alex Tomaszewski, Sr.1B Sam Miller, Sr. C/DH Brandon Andres, and Sr. P/3B Patrick McCormick.

**Hammond Clark-** The Pioneers under Justin Ochall return Sr. Bailey Pennington , Sr. Rene Zamora 3B/P/C and Jr. P/C/1B Zach Bucsko this year.

**Hammond High –** The Wildcats return the following players for Coach Brian Demantes and they include: Seniors Eddie Green, Larenz Howard, 1B Joe Skalba, Jose Diaz, Nick York, and Soph. Jaylen Smith 3B/P.

**West Side –** Senior TeQuary Scott SS/P will headline the Cougar group this year.

**Hammond Academy –** Jr. SS/PCaden Bell lead the Hawks this year for Head Coach Justin Swart. Other players that will contribute include the following seniors: Andrew Olejnik C/1B, Devin Hatfield OF, Joshua Gomez OF, Kory Humphrey OF, and Jacob Rzepka IF. Jr. Jonathan Velazquez will play the utility role along with his fellow classmates Michael Godbolt P, Aaron Cook C/1B, and Tyler Reid CF.

**Gary Roosevelt-** .The Panthers will be led Junior Outfielders Tyshaun Mack and Tyree Bryant this year.

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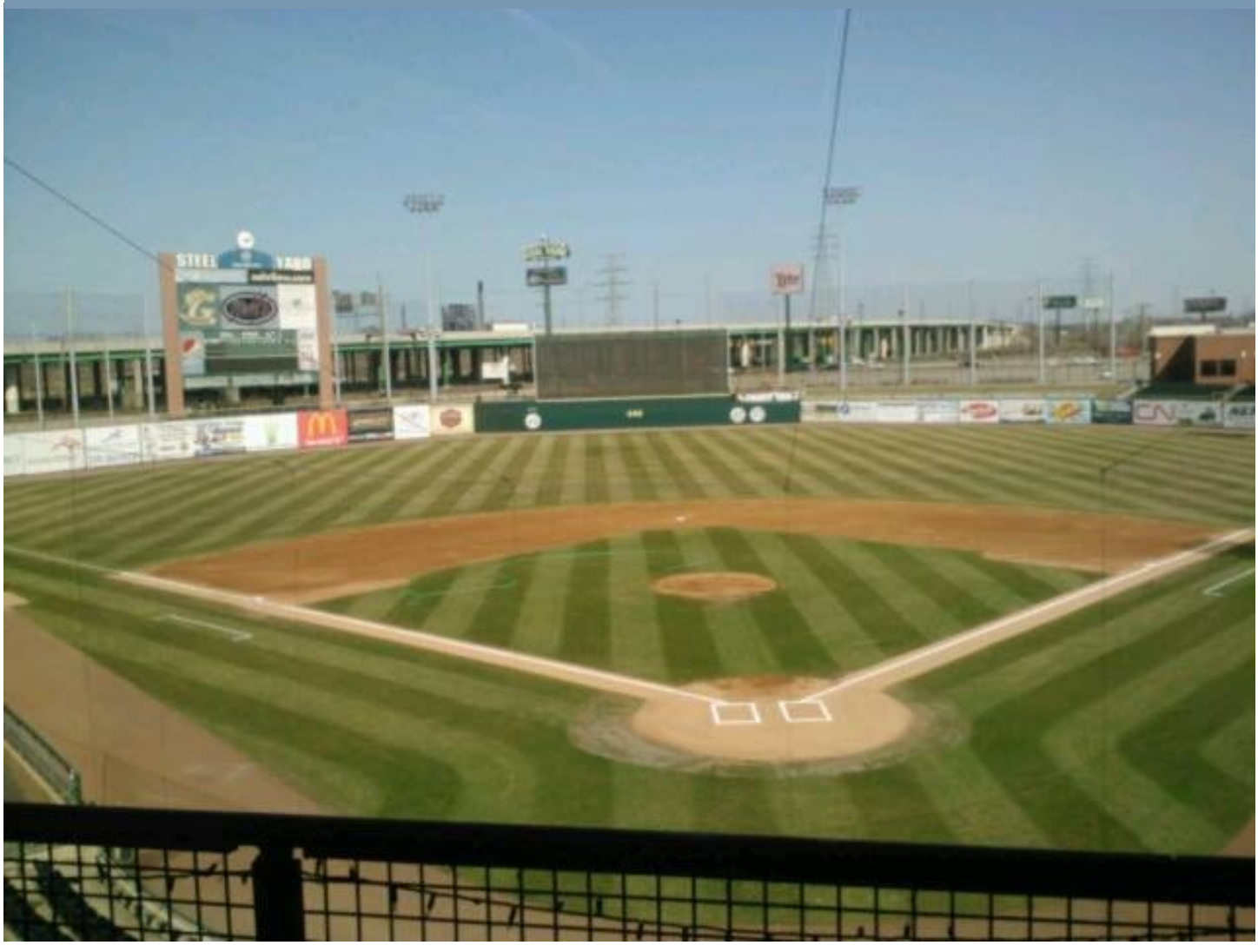
# Greater Southshore Conference Preview

## By Andy Wielgus., MAB Monthly Staff Writer



**Hanover Central** went 23-6 under Head Coach Doug Nelson last year and will be led by three Seniors this year, in Nebraska bound C Jesse Wilkening, P Riley Welch, and 2B/P Daniel Balich.Hanover is very highly regarded in the 3A rankings this year.

**Calumet** under Head Coach Brian Arthur will be led by 3 Seniors in OF/P TJ Thomas, LF Clinton Harris, and IF/P AJ Willis. Look for Jr. SS/P Desmond Rainey to help as well. Michigan City Marquette under Head Coach Joe Shinn will be led this season by Sr. IF/P Nathan Shinn and Soph. Croyer Moldenhauer.

**Lake Station Edison** under new Head Coach Mike Crussen will be led by several key Seniors this season in SS/P Cody Lemley Sr. Michael Luellman, Sr. Melvin Taylor, Jr. CF Nick Aguilar, Sr. 1B/OF Jose Sanchez, Soph. P Noah Lara and 3B/P Jose Silva.

**North Newton** went 19-9 last season and will be led this year by Sr. OF Blake Ramos, Jr. C Jono Bigger, Sr. 3B Kyle Mack, Sr. 1B Harry Klisiak, and Jr. P Charlie Betts.

**River Forest** under New Head Coach Mike Kosinski loses 4 year players in Christopher Lauderback and Geno Flores, but will be led this year by Sr. P/SS Ryan Slavey., Sr. Malachi Sala, Jr. IF Ivan Miranda, and Jr. 2B/OF Joey Medrano.

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**Wheeler** under Head Coach Kyle Becich will be led this season by Jr. SS/P Jake Lafever Sr. 3B Austin Whitaker, Sr. OF Keenan Miller, and Sr. CF/P Sam Bolla.

**Whiting** went 13-14 last year under Head Coach Kevin Lenz and will be led this year by Sr OF/P Manny Mckibbin, Sr. IF/C Austin Loehmann, OF Zach Szmuc, Sr. OF/P Andrew Navarro, Jr. IF/P Jon Alonso,and C/IF Kris Krzyston..

**Bishop Noll** went 22-8 last year and 14-2 in the GSSC.Andrew Ramker's club will be led by 6 Seniors this year in Nick Thrasher RF/P, Anthony Fudukian C, Tony Cobb SS, Evan Pierce P/OF, Mark Sullivan P/1B, and Cesar Montemayor P/IF. Others that will contribute include Jr. Eryk Jones OF/P, Soph. P/IF Austin McCollough, Soph. 2B Kaleb Causey, Soph. OF Zander Bechom, and Jr. Shawn Haugh OF/P.

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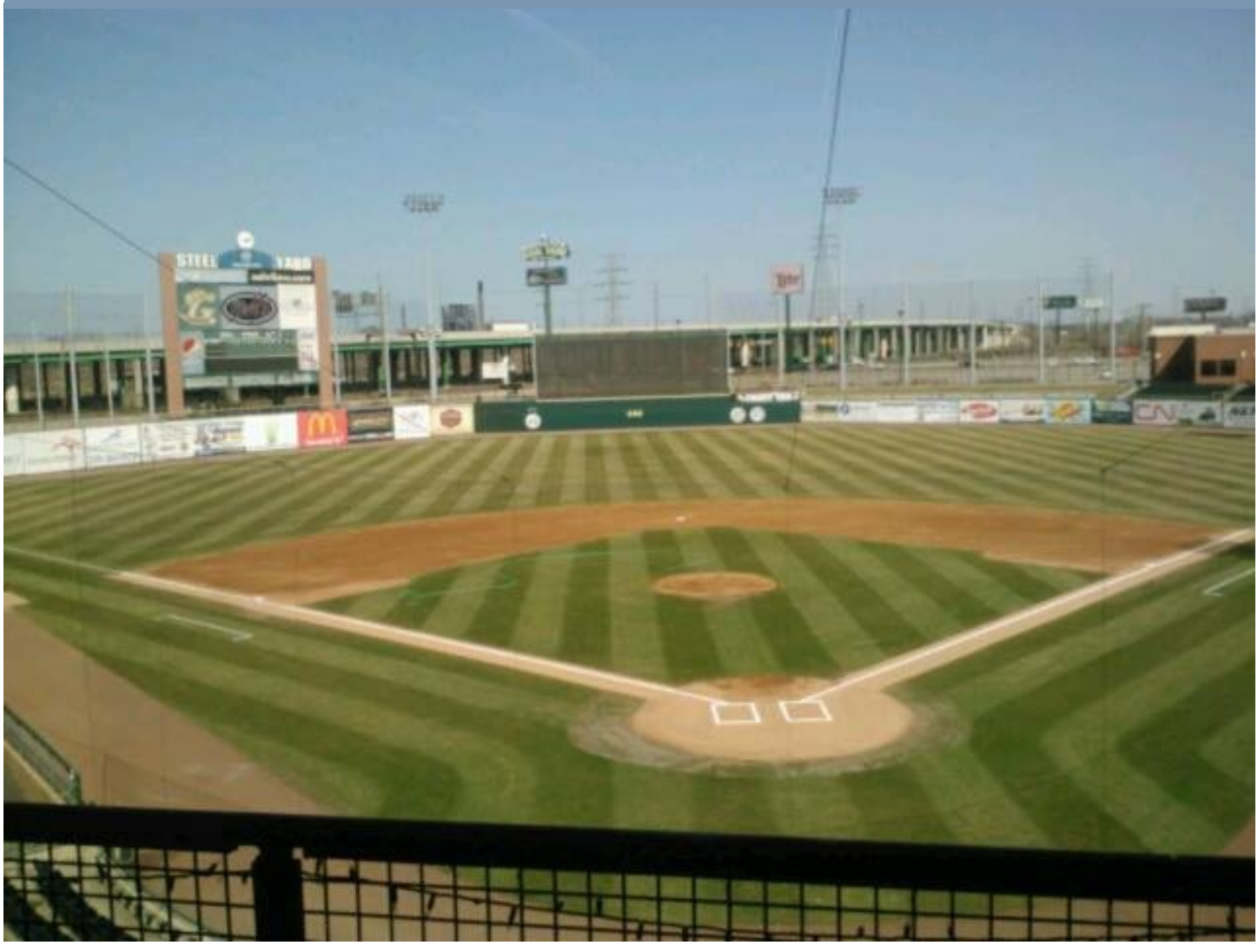
# Porter County Conference Preview

## By Andy Wielgus., MAB Monthly Staff Writer



**Hebron** went 15-11 and 6-1 in the PCC last year under Coach John Steinhilber. The Hawks will be led by 3 Seniors in CF Bryce Hanaway, P/1B Zac Hernandez[.479], and 3B Jarrett Majcher[.389]. Others contributing this year in Hebron are Jr. 2B Paul Miskus, Jr. C/OF Stephen Doelling[.337], Soph P Tyler Patrick[5-2], Sr SS Anthony Keilman, Fr. P/SS Logan Ryan, Soph. 1B/OF Hunter Ryan [.333], Sr. P Michael Hosington, and Jr. P/IF Donovan Friel.

**South Central** were 14-16 last year and will be led this year by Sr. P/OF Logan Lionberger, Jr. P/SS/OF Noah Eaton, Sr. IF Seth Carlson, Collin Froedge, and Jr. 1B/P Cooper Hussman.

**Westville** will be led this year under Coach Jeff Cuma will be led by Sr. P/IF Austin Swistek Sr. Caleb Mcmillian, Sr. Chandler Chasko, Sr. Jacob Kurth, Sr. Sean Kurth, Jr. Riley Cuma, Jr. EriC McClintock, and Jr. 3B Alex Quinn.

**Washington Township** went 21-9 under Coach Randy Roberts last year and will be led this year by Senior P Chase Peiffer Sr. Alex Lawson, Sr. Evan Muha, Sr. Luke Soliday, Sr. Jordan Williams, and Sr. P Troy Kwiatkowski.

**Morgan Township** under Coach Jason Dornhorst went 14-11 and 4-3 in the PCC last year. They will be led by Jr. Jake Koselke and Jr. SS Jacob Hernandez. Others that will contribute include Juniors Nick Conner and Connor Martin. Freshman Colin Mack will help as well.

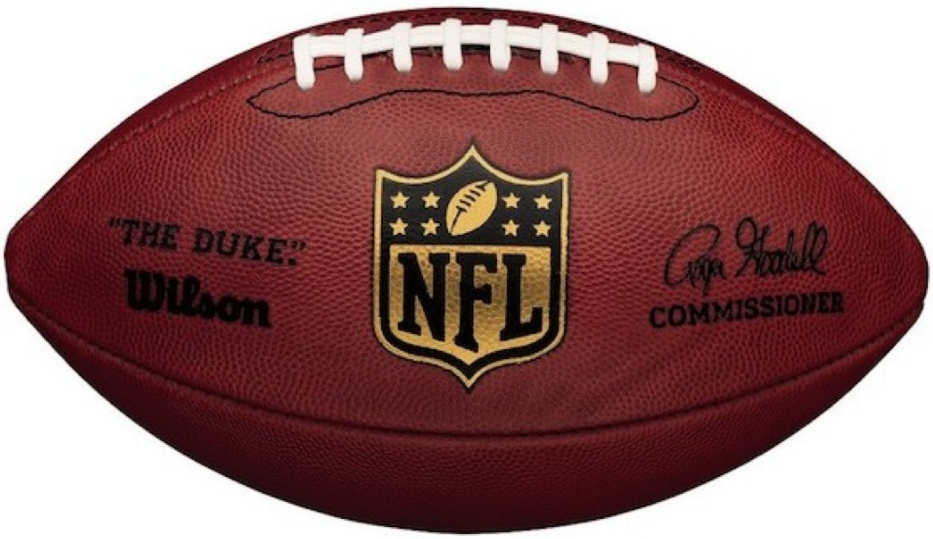
**Kouts** under Head Coach Matt Weston will be led by Sr. C/P Will Ward, Sr. OF Brian Knopp, Sr. C jake Hamman, and Sr. OF Mark Neary.

**LaCrosse** under Head Coach Marty Rasala will be led by Sr. Jake Santecaterina, Sr. IF Wylie Brown, Jr. 1B/P Boston Tucker, Soph. SS/P Jeremy Johnson, and Caleb Howell. Boone Grove under Coach Rollie Thill went 14-7 last year and will be led by Jr. P/IF Chase Kidda and Sr. P/IF Jake Morris.

# Indiana Players in The NFL

## By Rich Sapper, MAB Monthly Staff Writer

With the NFL Draft coming up this month, I thought that it might be fun to look back at Indiana players who have played in the league. To this point, there have been 382 players from the state who attended 172 different high schools according to pro-football-reference.com.




It may surprise many to learn that the leading school in terms of players is not Cathedral (although they are in the top 10), Warren Central or Ben Davis. It is Evansville Central with 16 players hailing from the Southwest Indiana school. Many of those Players were in the early stages of the NFL with most playing in 1921 or 1922 and none have played since DE Tim Monney played for the Eagles in '87.

Hammond High has not had an NFL player since the early 70's, but they are second on the list with 12. Of course, the Wildcats can boast greats like Irv Cross and Don Brumm.

Gary Emerson and South Bend Central are tied for third on the list with 10 NFL players each. Emerson, of course boasts the Karras brothers, Alex, Ted and Lou along with Ron Baker.

South Bend Washington is the next on the list. Names like Ron Fellows who played most of the 80's, Marv Matuszal, a LB who played for 6 teams over a 9 year career headline the Washington players who have played in the NFL.

Hobart has a storied football history and has had the 6th most NFL players of Indiana schools. Current Hobart assistant Craig Osika was the most recent Brickie in the NFL. Bob Kuchenberg is a legend in Miami having played on the only undefeated team in league history. His brother Rudy was also spent time with the Bears, Browns, Packers and Falcons, Also adding the the Karras legacy is Ted, the son of Ted Karras Sr, who is the current head coach at Walsh University with previous stops in high school at Andrean and KV as well as several college jobs. Who played in 1 game for Washington,

Gary Roosevelt, Cathedral, Indianapolis North Central and EC Roosevelt round out the top 10.

Other Northwest Indiana teams who have had players in the NFL are EC Washington, Merrillville, Whiting, Lew Wallace, Wirt, West Side, Michigan City, Hammond Catholic Central (currently Bishop Noll). Valpo, Horace Mann, Michigan City Elston,

Froebel, Lowell, Highland, Munster, La-Porte, Cedar Lake (yes, there was a Cedar Lake High School), East Chicago Central, Tolleston. Lake Central, Bishop Noll and Griffith. While many of these schools had players that only played for a year or less, there is still the pride of knowing that your local school had a gridiron star who rose to the highest level.

Indiana currently has 23 active players in the league from 22 different schools: Cathedral is the only school with more than 1 active player with 2..

Jack Doyle (TE, Colts) and Mathias Kiwanuka (DE, Giants) are both Cathedral products. Other active players include WR Courtney Roby (North Central/Atlanta), OL James Brewer (Warren Central/New York Jets), Mike Neal (Merrillville/Green Bay), WR Tandon Doss (Ben Davis/Jacksonville) and DE Ryan Kerrigan (Muncie Central/Washington). Also, DB Bernard Pollard (FW South/Tennessee), QB Curits Painter (Vincennes Lincoln/Free Agent), T Zac Martin (Chatard/Dallas), QB Jay Cutler (Heritage Hills/Chicago) and TE Tyler Eifet (Dwenger/Cincinnati) . In addition, QB Rex Grossman (Bloomington South/Free Agent), DB Stevie Brown (Columbus East/New York Giants), DT Kawann Short (EC Central/Carolina), DT Chris Jones (Brownsburg/New England), WR Nathan Palmer (Elkhart Central/Denver). LB A.J. Edds (Greenwood//Free Agent), DE Anthony Spencer (Luers/Dallas), T Joe Reitz (Hamilton Southeastern/Indianapolis), and P Steve Weatherford (Terre Haute North/New York Giants) round out the current NFL players from the Hoosier state.

This years draft should see more than a few names added to this list.

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# Baseball Tips On Hitting: Ten Basics You Really Should Know!

## By: Larry Cicchiello Special to MAB Monthly

I truly believe in giving a baseball hitter some good guidelines and starting points and then "backing off." Here are ten very good guidelines and then it's going to be up to you.

1. Stand close enough to the plate so that when you're bent over slightly at the waist, you can extend the bat and still reach the outside corner of the plate.

2. As far as your baseball stance, make believe its basketball and you're guarding another player. That's an absolutely great starting point for the width of the feet, the bending of the knees and the bending of the waist. It will also give you a very good foundation to encourage effective baseball hitting. Your weight should be on the balls and you should be leaning slightly toward home plate.

3. Relax and let the air out. Tension is a hitter's worst enemy. An expression that's been around forever and still holds true today.

4. Grip the bat where the fingers meet the hands. Not the palms. Use a medium grip because a tight grip will actually slow down your bat speed.

5. Your chin should be away from your chest. Your head should be facing the pitcher and completely relaxed, just as if you are watching television. Watch the pitcher's cap, as it is a very good point to focus your eyes on because it is close to the height where the pitcher will be releasing the ball. Your eyes will be focused properly and will not have to refocus.

6. The height of the back elbow should be lined up like you are going to punch a balloon that's about chest high and in front of you. In other words, the back elbow should be slightly lower than the back shoulder.

Please don't listen to that old clich that's been hollered out for decades to "keep your back elbow up." It is one of the worst baseball tips on hitting you will ever hear. To have your back elbow up by your back ear works for very few hitters. The goal is to be in a good, comfortable baseball hitting position and having the back elbow up too high is not a comfortable baseball hitting position for most.

7. When the pitcher breaks his hands apart, shift your eyes from the pitcher's cap to the pitcher's window. (His window is simply where he releases the ball.) Go back and "load up" by cocking the wrists and the hips a split second before the pitcher releases the ball.

8. As the pitcher is actually releasing the ball, stride forward with your weight about 70% back on the inside of the back leg and about 30% on your front foot.

9. As the ball is pitched, you must turn your head and follow the ball into the hitting zone. If you leave your head turned and facing toward the pitcher, when the

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ball arrives in the hitting zone you will be looking at the ball out of the corners of your eyes which only makes baseball hitting tougher. Turning your head toward the point of contact is often referred to as "keeping your head behind the swing" and this must be done.

10. When swinging, keep the front shoulder and front hip closed! The baseball hitting is not taking place by your third base coach if you are a right-handed hitter or by your first base coach if you are a left-handed hitter. Not staying "closed" is a recipe for disaster.

If you do not keep your front side "closed," three very negative things will occur that will prevent you from being efficient at baseball hitting:

1) Your head will pull off the ball when your front side opens up early and you will be looking at the ball out of the corner of your eye. Baseball hitting is difficult enough when you do see the ball well.

2) Any power you have will be lost because your body will be in a different spot from where the actual baseball hitting is taking place. The hitting is not taking place out toward your third base coach if you are a right-handed hitter or out toward your first base coach if you are a left-handed hitter. It is taking place right in front of you!

3) Tough low and away strikes will cause many baseball hitting problems for you. It simply will be physically harder to reach the low and away pitch.

Throw the barrel of the bat at the ball. You can break all rules and not follow all the excellent baseball hitting tips but if you can consistently get the sweet spot of the bat on the ball, you will be very successful.

Please note that the "load up," "stride" and "swing" are three separate movements. They are separate but they should happen very quickly and be done as smoothly as possible.

Remember that you go back slowly and you go forward quickly. It's called the "calm before the storm."

One of the best baseball tips on hitting you will ever learn is to keep the front elbow pointing downward at the start of your swing. If you don't, you will be a fraction of a second late to the ball because you will have a very slight loop to your swing. A fraction of a second is an eternity when you consider a fastball takes less than a second to hit the catcher's mitt. You must go from point "A" to point "B" in a straight line. The only way to achieve this is by keeping the front elbow facing downward at the start of your swing.

The ideal baseball swing is level only at the point of contact and not before!

Larry Cicchiello is the successful author of "Excellent Baseball: 30 Seconds Away." He unconditionally guarantees that ANY baseball player, coach or baseball parent who wants to help their child will be fully equipped! Some FREE tips at http://www.LarryBaseball.com

# Baseball Pitching Tips: How To Improve Your Control By Playing A Game That Is Fun!

**By: Larry Cicchiello Special to MAB Monthly**

Take a look at almost any inning in which three or more runs are scored and I would venture that in at least 75% of those innings one or more walks were involved. I teach pitchers that you must throw strikes consistently and I don't care if a batter hits the ball into the trees past the outfield fence. You cannot give the opposing team free gifts. I truly believe that pitching begins with having good control. The first thing that should be taught to a pitcher is that he must have good command of his fast ball to all four parts of the strike zone. Good command equals good control. After step one is completed, step number two is to teach variations on the fast ball and the changeup. Step number three is to teach the breaking ball.

A lot of people don't realize that control also means being able to throw a ball off the plate and not just over the plate. That means that I can throw a ball three or four inches off the plate to get a hitter out who "chases" bad pitches. If I'm ahead in the count, the batter almost has to swing at the pitch that's just off the plate.

Control obviously also means control within the strike zone. Being able to control pitches up and in or low and

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away is very important. If I'm shooting for low and away and I'm too high by a foot, the pitch is not nearly as effective and could very well get hit hard.

If I'm shooting up and in and I'm off by ten inches and get the middle of the plate, once again, it's not nearly as effective. If you are serious about pitching, you should aim for a target every time you throw a baseball. Every time you throw a baseball!

When I'm having a catch with my sixteen year old son and I'm not behind the plate, we play a game we invented called "Target." We are both very competitive and this game is fun! Twenty points usually wins and you have to win by two points. We have a regular catch and give each other a target. The target can be left or right shoulder, left or right hip or basically wherever you want to place the target. If you are throwing and are within a foot of the target with a fastball, you get one point. If you throw a changeup or breaking ball and are within a foot, you get two points. (This gives you the flexibility to go after two points if you are trailing late in the game.) Not only will this help your control, but you will have a blast while you're playing it!

Even if you want to insult my son Tyler and I and not play "Target," remember that to improve your control, one of the best baseball pitching tips is to aim for a target every time you throw a baseball! It can be your throwing partner's left hip, right hip, left shoulder, right shoulder, etc.

How can this possibly not help your control?

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Larry Cicchiello is the successful author of "Excellent Baseball: 30 Seconds Away." He unconditionally guarantees that ANY baseball player, coach or baseball parent who wants to help their child will be fully equipped! Some FREE tips at http://www.LarryBaseball.com

# IHSAA Releases New Classifications

## Press Release Provided

The Indiana High School Athletic Association has announced the new classifications for IHSAA member schools in several sports for the next two school years. The enrollment figures, the total of boys and girls in grades 9-12, were submitted by the schools to the Indiana Department of Education last fall and are used to determine the classifications in the sports of baseball, boys and girls basketball, football, boys and girls soccer, softball and volleyball.

Five schools that have joined the IHSAA membership in the last two years are not yet eligible to compete in IHSAA tournaments and are not included in the listing of schools. Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter, Providence Cristo Rey and Smith Academy for Excellence will be eligible in 2017-18 while Gambold Preparatory Academy and Traders Point Christian Academy will be eligible in 2018-19.

Also, per IHSAA By-Law, C-2-3c, any school has the option to play up one or more classes in any sport for the two-year classification period by notifying the Association Office. Mishawaka's football team has opted to continue to play in Class 5A even though their enrollment would place them in 4A. Fort Wayne Canterbury's boys soccer team, which played the last two years in Class 2A due to the Tournament Success Factor, has decided to continue in 2A even though it did not garner enough points the last two seasons to remain there by rule and their enrollment would make it a Class A school.

Please note that Tournament Success Factor points will still be accumulated in baseball and softball this spring and any necessary updated versions in those sports will be released in the days following the end of those respective state tournaments.

Sectional groupings for each sport will be announced no earlier than May 4 following approval of the IHSAA Executive Committee. Schools that will change classification in a given sport are listed below.

Baseball

Moving from 3A to 4A
(1) Muncie Central.

Moving from 4A to 3A
(5) Indianapolis Northwest, Jay County, Marion, New Palestine, South Bend Washington.

Moving from 2A to 3A

(4) Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Sullivan, Tipton.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(9) Blackford, Eastbrook, Gary Roosevelt, Knox, Lighthouse CPA, Mitchell, Rochester, Wheeler, Whitko

Moving from A to 2A (2) Carroll (Flora), Monroe Central

Moving from 2A to A
(8) Cambridge City Lincoln, Clinton Central, LaVille, North Central (Farmersburg), North Miami, Northfield, Riverton Parke, Sheridan.

Boys Basketball
* Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor

Moving from 3A to 4A
(3) Guerin Catholic*, Kankakee Valley, Muncie Central.

Moving from 4A to 3A

(4) Indianapolis Northwest, Marion, New Palestine, South Bend Washington.

Moving from 2A to 3A
(8) Indianapolis Cardinal Ritter, Indianapolis Crispus Attucks, Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Park Tudor*, Rensselaer Central, Sullivan, Tipton.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(7) Bowman Academy*, Eastbrook, Gary Roosevelt, Knox, Mitchell, Rochester, Whitko.

Moving from A to 2A
(6) Barr-Reeve*, Covington, Carroll (Flora), Marquette Catholic*, Monroe Central, Rossville,

Moving from 2A to A

(4) Clinton Central, North Central (Farmersburg), North Miami, Riverton Parke,

Girls Basketball
*Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor

Moving from 3A to 4A
(2) Kankakee Valley, Muncie Central.

Moving from 4A to 3A
(3) Indianapolis Northwest, Marion, South Bend Washington.

Moving from 2A to 3A
(9) Fort Wayne Canterbury*, Heritage Christian*, Indianapolis Cardinal Ritter, Indianapolis Crispus Attucks, Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Rensselaer Central, Sullivan, Tipton.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(8) Blackford, Eastbrook, Evansville Mater Dei*, Gary Roosevelt, Knox, Mitchell, Rochester, Whitko.

Moving from A to 2A
(6) Carroll (Flora), Covington, Lafayette Central Catholic*, Monroe Central, Oregon-Davis*, Rossville.

Moving from 2A to A

(4) Clinton Central, North Central (Farmersburg), North Miami, Riverton Parke.

Football

* Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor

** Denotes school opted to play in higher class

Moving from 6A to 5A
(3) Castle, Indianapolis Tech, Lafayette Jefferson. Moving from 5A to 6A (2) Indianapolis Cathedral*, LaPorte.

Moving from 4A to 5A
(4) Columbus East*, Mishawaka**, Muncie Central, New Palestine*.

Moving from 5A to 4A
(4) Fort Wayne Wayne, Jennings County, Munster, Richmond.

Moving from 3A to 4A
(6) Andrean*, Delta, Edgewood, Evansville Bosse, Silver Creek, Western.

Moving from 4A to 3A
(5) Danville, Griffith, Indianapolis Bishop Chatard*, Indianapolis Northwest, Norwell.

Moving from 2A to 3A
(7) Benton Central, Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Rensselaer Central*, Southridge, Sullivan, Tipton.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(8) Blackford, Eastbrook, Fort Wayne Bishop Luers*, Gary Roosevelt, Knox, Mitchell, Rochester, Whitko.

Moving from A to 2A
(6) Eastern Hancock, Indianapolis Howe, Northeastern, South Adams, Whiting, Winamac.

Moving from 2A to A
(7) Eastern Greene, Knightstown, Lafayette Central Catholic*, North Judson-San Pi-

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erre, North Knox, Shenandoah, Tell City.

Boys Soccer
* Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor
** Denotes school opted to play in higher class

Moving from A to 2A
(7) Fort Wayne Canterbury**, Fort Wayne Concordia, Greensburg, Guerin Catholic*, Herron, Indianapolis Washington, West Noble.

Moving from 2A to A
(3) Bellmont, Indianapolis Howe, Indianapolis Manual.

Girls Soccer
* Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor
** Denotes school opted to play in higher class
Moving from A to 2A
(6) Fort Wayne Concordia, Greensburg, Herron, Indianapolis Washington, West Lafayette*, West Noble.

Moving from 2A to A
(5) Bellmont, Indianapolis Howe, Indianapolis Manual, Mishawaka Marian*, Providence*.

Softball
Moving from 3A to 4A
(1) Muncie Central.

Moving from 4A to 3A
(5) Indianapolis Northwest, Jay County, Marion, New Palestine, South Bend

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Washington.

Moving from 2A to 3A
(4) Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Sullivan, Tipton.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(7) Blackford, Eastbrook, Knox, Mitchell, Rochester, Wheeler, Whitko.

Moving from A to 2A (2) Carroll (Flora), Monroe Central. Moving from 2A to A (4) Cambridge City Lincoln, Clinton Central, North Central (Farmersburg), Riverton Parke.

Volleyball
* Denotes change due to Tournament Success Factor

Moving from 3A to 4A
(4) Brebeuf Jesuit*, Fort Wayne Concordia*, Muncie Central, Shelbyville.

Moving from 4A to 3A
(5) Indianapolis Bishop Chatard*, Indianapolis Northwest, Marion, South Bend Washington, Yorktown*.

Moving from 2A to 3A
(5) Indianapolis Manual, Indianapolis Washington, Providence*, Rensselaer Central, Sullivan.

Moving from 3A to 2A
(7) Eastbrook, Gary Roosevelt, Knox, Mitchell, Rochester, Wapahani*, Whitko,

Moving from A to 2A
(4) Barr-Reeve*, Carroll (Flora), Monroe Central, Wes-Del*.

Moving from 2A to A
(4) Clinton Central, North Central (Farmersburg), North Daviess, Riverton Parke

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# RailCats Celebrate Back to the Future Night

### Press Release Provided

**GARY, IN** – The Gary SouthShore RailCats and the Hobart Jaycees will be bringing fans back to 1985 and 1955 with a "Back to the Future" Night on June 13th, celebrating the seminal movie's 30th anniversary.

The RailCats will wear uniforms modeled on Marty McFly's iconic orange vest, plaid shirt, and denim jacket from the 1985 movie. Jerseys will be auctioned off during the game with proceeds supporting the Hobart Jaycees Foundation.

This special night at the ballpark will also include "Back to the Future" décor, 80s music, and contests centered on the movie. Fans born in 1985 or 1955 can show their ID at the box office for one free reserved ticket to the game. An original Delorean DMC-12 will be present for fans that wish to see the time machine up close. The national anthem will be performed with an electric guitar, just like Marty at the "Enchantment Under the Sea" dance. Fans driving a Delorean will receive free VIP parking for the game.

The Hobart Jaycees are a local chapter of the United States Junior Chamber, a leadership training and civic organization for people between the ages of 21-40. Areas of emphasis for the Jaycees are business development, management skills, individual training, community services, and international connections. For more information on the Hobart Jaycees, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HobartJaycees.

"It's a great opportunity to be able to sponsor such an amazing event. We look forward to building a relationship with the RailCats organization and wish them luck in their 2015 season" said John Soria, the Hobart Jaycees Membership Vice-President Elect.

The RailCats open their season, at home, on May 21st against the Quebec Capitales of the Canadian-American Association of Professional Baseball.

# Did you Know?

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**I a record that will likely never be broken, Ernie Never once scored 40 points in a 1929 game for the Chicago Cardinals.**

**1988 is the only year in the modern era of the NFL draft where a quarterback was not taken in one of the first two rounds.**

**The 1990 Yankees pitching staff set a record for the fewest complete games: 3.**

**Chuck Bednarik was the last NFL player to play both offense and defense on every down.**

# April Broadcast Schedule

4-1-15 HS Baseball Morgan Park vs Mt. Carmel 415 pm

4-1-15 HS Baseball Noll vs Lowell 715pm

4-6-15 HS Baseball Hobart vs Highland 715pm

4-8-15 MAB Weekly 530pm

4-9-15 HS Baseball Crown Point @ Munster 415pm

4-10-15 HS Baseball Portage vs Hammond Clark 715pm

4-11-15 HS Baseball Calumet vs Hammond Academy Noon

4-11-15 HS Baseball LCC vs Tinley Park 345pm

4-13-15 HS Softball Andrean @ Griffith 415pm

4-16-15 HS Baseball Marian Catholic @ Andrean 415pm

4-17-15 HS Baseball TF North vs TF South 715pm

4-23-15 HS Baseball Providence @ Andrean 415pm

4-24-15 HS Baseball RF vs Lake Station 415pm

4-24-15 HS Baseball Munster vs Hammond Morton 715pm

4-27-15 HS Baseball Chatard @ Andrean 415pm

4-30-15 HS Softball Griffith @ Andrean 415pm

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