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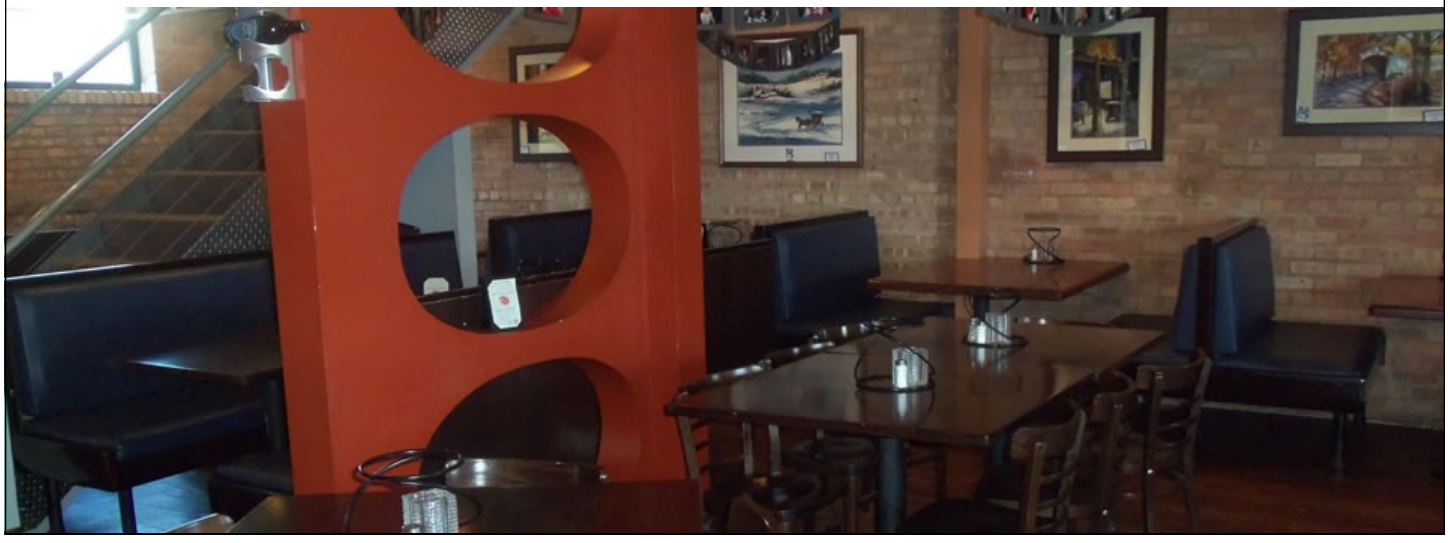

MAB ONLINE MAGAZINE

January marks a new year and so, of course we have our now annual tradition of Trisha Madura's Sports Resolutions! We also have a look back at the boys and girls basketball seasons and at the Bears season as well!

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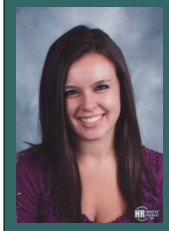

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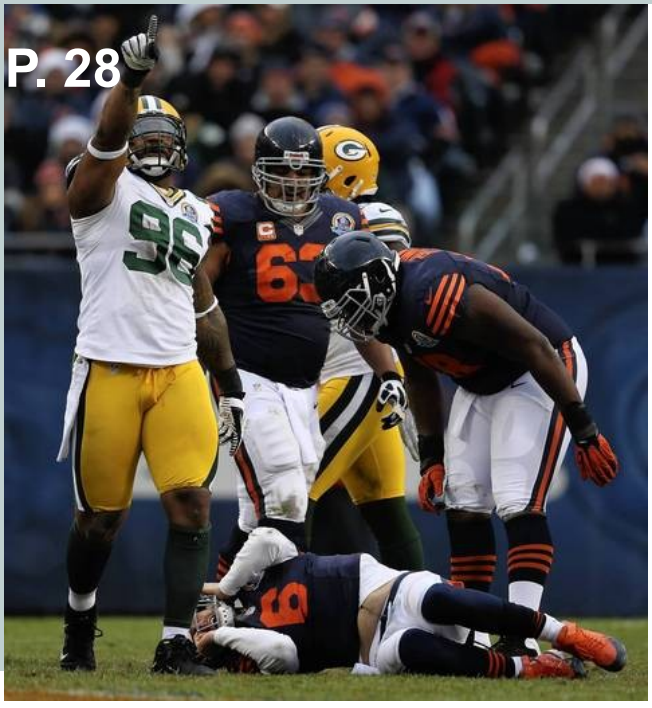

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Athletes of the Month

Written and Compiled by Andy Wielgus MAB Staff Writer

Jordan Hankins
Lawrence North

Lawrence North Senior Jordan Hankins scores 39 points in two games in the Roncalli Girls Basketball Tournament. Lawrence North defeated Holy Cross of Ky. 63-48 and Roncalli 58 -51 to win the tournament and go to 13-0.

Tom Megeysi
Lake Central

Former Lake Central HS Girls Basketball Coach Tom Megeysi is inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame.

Damian Jefferson
EC Central

East Chicago Central's Damian Jefferson had 30 points and 10 rebounds vs Brownsburg and 20 points in a 74-51 victory over Munster.The Cardinals are off to a 4-1 start.

Samantha Jankowski
South Bend Adams

South Bend Adams Point Guard Samantha Jankowski hit 6 three point shots and scored 36 points in a 73-65 victory over Oregon-Davis in South Bend, to improve the Eagles record to 4-2.

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2015 MAB Mid-Season Calumet Region Boys and Girls Hoops Report

By Andy Wielgus, MAB Monthly Staff Writer

As we break into 2015 there are still many unknowns on the Boys and Girls side this year. Calumet Region teams have played well as they have competed outside the area for Holiday Tournaments. Who are the top teams so far at the Mid-Season Break? Here is how I how I see it as of 1-1-15. On the Boys Side the 8-1 Griffith Panthers are the deepest team that I have seen so far with the Murphy twins and there only loss is to Chicago Morton 56-49, so they are technically 8-0 in Indiana. Could Gary Hayes' team give Munster its 1st ever NCC loss?

Valpo's Conner Ten Hove

East Chicago Central is 7-2, with two close losses to Brownsburg and North Central. Damien Jefferson and Hyron Edwards may be one of he best duos in the state. Can they get consistent scoring beyond these 2 players? That may be the key and it may make them the favorite to win there sectional in 4A over Munster, LC, and Gary West Side. Could East Chicago Central then be the biggest challenge to Penn at the Regional?

Crown Point is 6-2 and have impressive wins over Guerin Catholic, Avon, Lafayette Jefferson, and Munster. There only losses coming to Penn and Nobles-

ville. Nick Jeffirs and Grant Gelon have been leading the way for the Dogs. Like the Cardinals there solid duo of Nick Jeffirs and Grant Gelon have been strong, but they need more consistent scoring fom other sources as well.

Merrillville and Valpo have been surprising at 6-1, in that they do have younger players to go along with there stars DJ Wilkins and Conner TenHove. Along with CP and Michigan City they could be challenging for the DAC Crown and beyond this year. Gary Roosevelt and Chesterton have been strong his year at 8-3 and 7-3 respectively and have been impressive at times. Michigan City at 4-3 and Munster at 5-3 are teams to keep on the radar along with a young Lake Central Team in St. John. In 1A Michigan City Marquette is 6-4, but they are holding there own with the Illinois teams in the McDipper Classic, led by Providence-bound Ryan Fazekas. And they defeated Chicago Leo 62-57. In 2A Noll is 4-4 and Wheeler has a win over Andrean. Look for these two teams along with Whiting, who has a surprise win over Hebron 68-47, to battle it out.

On the Girls side, the DAC will be a battle between Lake Central at 11-1 and LaPorte at 11-1. Look for these two teams to be the favorites in their Sectional and will possibly match up with Penn or South Bend Washington at the Regional. Lake Central has defeated Penn this year and LaPorte's only loss is in Overtime to Northwood.

Gary West Side at 7-5 and East Chicago Central at 7-7 will look to derail Lake Central in the Sectional. As they have been hanging tough with the likes of South Bend Washington, Heritage Christian, and Fort Wayne Canterbury this year. Dana Evans and Tijaney Hawkins are D1 talents. They have led the way for the Cougars and Cardinals this year. Hammond Morton is 8-5 and the Lady Govs are having a good year also. Other teams that have had some good wins this year include Michigan City and 10-4

Hobart. And 5-5 Chesterton, 5-7 Valpo, 5-10 Portage, and 6-8 Crown Point will be battling it out for the middle of the DAC.

In 3A KV at 8-3 will be battling it out with Hobart in the NCC and 9-4 Hanover Central in the Sectional. Knox and Andrean could be darkhorses in the 3A Sectional and Griffith is 5-9. But because of the strength of their schedule could be a favorite in there sectional also. This would be over teams with better records like Hammond Gavit at 9-5. In 2A Bishop Noll is 10-2 and should win its Sectional. RF at 8-6 could be a darkhorse in 2A.

In 1A the Oregon-Davis Sectional could be the best in 1A. OD is 7-3 and is led by Lexi Minix and two 6 foot players in Alex Bope and sharp shooting Taylor Kranenburg. All three of their losses are to 4A Schools. Kylie Mason will lead a 8-4 Triton team out of Bourbon, who beat South Central at Union Mills recently. South Central is playing plenty of DAC Schools this year and they are led by one of top Juniors in the State in Riley Popplewell. She has been a double- double machine for South Central this year. Culver at 10-2, Argos at 8-4, and La-

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crosse at 8-2 make this Sectional very tough. Kouts at 11-1 will battle it out with Washington and Morgan again in there 1A Sectional and it is tough to beat good teams multiple times in the same year. Look for West Central to win its Sectional also and to make it to the Regional again this year.

In Girls Basketball at the Regional Level look for these teams to be the favorites if they make it that far to their Regional

4A Penn or SB Washington
3A Undefeated SBSJ
2A Fort Wayne Canterbury
1A Who ever wins the OD Sectional and they will be a favorite to play LCC at the Semistate.
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Oregon—Davis Hopes to Repeat in 1A

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Athletic Resolutions for 2015

By Trisha Madura, MAB Monthly Staff Writer

And that's a wrap for another year. Hello, 2015. A new year for chasing dreams and making anything possible. Everyone has their passions, their goals, and what they need to improve on in their daily and athletic lives. So here I present the question, "What is your athletic resolution for 2015?" College athletes from various schools and sports have shared just some of their new years' resolutions regarding how they see themselves moving forward this year in their athletics.

Starting with basketball, as this is one of the highlighted sports during this time of the year. The first athlete, **Thomas Drew**, captain of Davenport University's men's basketball team, shares his goal for his final season with the team. "My New Years' Resolution for my team and on a personal level would be to just exhaust ourselves: to give everything we have in practice and in games so that we can reach our potential as a team." Drew leads the Panthers as a red-shirt senior this season. "Personally, this is my last season as a college basketball player, so my goal is to leave everything I have out there. I want to be able to look back at my career-when it's all said and done- and be able to say that I gave every ounce that I had to my team each practice and game."

Another starter for the Panthers, sophomore **Nick Gamble** of Fort Wayne, Indiana, shares his personal and unified goals for their team. "My individual New Years' Resolution is to make the all-conference team and to lead the team in assists. My team resolution is to win a national championship." Davenport made it to the Elite Eight at NAIA Nationals in 2014.

Freshman **Wes Webbert** shares similar goals for Davenport basketball this season. "My New Years' Resolution is to win a conference championship, followed by winning the national tournament."

Davenport Basketball player Nick Gamble

Another new player for Davenport this season, red-shirt freshman **Bishop Robinson** is finding ways to improve his personal well-being, while contributing to his team's efforts. "My New Years' Resolution as an individual is to become more of an independent student: to concentrate more on growing up and taking school even more seriously." Robinson has transferred to Grand Rapids this year from Kalamazoo at Western Michigan University. "As a team, I hope for us to go undefeated for the rest of the year and bring our team closer together."

As the final player from Davenport men's basketball, junior **Connor Heminger** sees his goals in a different perspective. "My

resolution with basketball for this upcoming year is to be a more vocal leader," Heminger states. "I have always tried to be a hard worker and lead by example, but I have never really been one to speak up and lead people in that way. I think it is important to be able to lead both through actions and by talking to people."

As a player of an opposing NAIA team, sophomore **Nate Bubash** shares his goal for Indiana Wesleyan's basketball team this season. "My New Years' Resolution personally is to get in the gym more to help my team succeed as the season goes on." Bubash returns to his basketball team to play as a returning NAIA National Champion this year.

As another basketball in Michigan, senior **Ricky Carbajal** shares his goals for Grand Valley State University during his final season. "My New Years' Resolution is somewhat the same every year. My team is still trying to win a conference championship. We have been contenders for the past two years, and we hope that this will be our year." Carbajal, as well as Bubash, are both alumni of Munster High School basketball in Northwest Indiana. "I also hope that my whole team stays healthy, including avoiding injuries, which can effect what we are really trying to accomplish. We know that we have the talent to win a championship; we just have to start playing as a unit and go on a winning streak."

Since many men's teams are planning their future, we can't forget about our women's basketball teams, either! Juniors **Alex Law** and **Shaina Johnson** of Davenport University Women's Basketball share their goals for the Panthers for the remainder of their year.

"A resolution for our team would be to take that extra step to work harder to win a national championship this year," Law exclaims about Davenport this year. "Individually, I want to push myself to the next level to get better and take care of my body even more."

On the same page, Johnson shares her passion. "My New Years' Resolution is to spend extra time in the gym to get my shot more consistent." The Panthers have a current undefeated record for the season, including a win over defending-national champions University of Saint Francis (2014). "As a team, I would like to see us reach our full potential. If we come every day to get better than we were the day before, there's no one

that can stop us!" And that's a wrap for our basketball resolutions!

For another in-season sport, **Travis Reichert** of Davenport University DIII Hockey shares his work ethic with MAB. "As a hockey player at DU, my resolution would be to work hard and push myself day after day to be the better opponent, in addition to scoring my first college hockey goal." Reichert is a current freshman at DU's Grand Rapids campus. "I would also like to give back to the sport by working with younger skaters to help them grow as players and succeed in the game. Hockey is all about having fun, and that's what I intend to do as the season continues."

Next, we will move onto a sport that is not often recognized in MAB Monthly: bowling. First bowler, **Nick Farsakian**, also has nationals in his mind when it comes to goals. "My New Years' Resolution for DU Bowling is for our team to do enough at Sectionals to make it to Nationals. We have a great group of guys, and we treat each other like family. In return, I would like nothing better than to share a National Championship with them this year."

In addition, bowler **Andrew Anderson** has more personal goals for the game. "My bowling resolution is to raise my tournament average 10 pins, practice two more hours each week, and to give back more to the sport." As well as already being a coach, Anderson is a member of the Junior Team USA for bowling. "Giving back to the community would either be through coaching or donating back to high school teams."

Junior team USA bowler Andrew Anderson

Another sport that we don't seem to

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cover too often is lacrosse. As a unique sport I was quite unfamiliar with before leaving for college, athletes from both men and women lacrosse teams shared their resolutions for 2015.

For Davenport Women's Lacrosse team, senior **Natalie McHale** sees a healthier year in her near future in lacrosse. "My individual resolution is to become all around healthier. I have started a detox water routine, healthier eating habits, and using a humidifier. Controlling everything will help me to achieve a better outcome at the end of the season." McHale hopes to see some tough results for her final season as an athlete. "If we all do the littlest things right for our team, we can have that much more control of our fate."

Davenport Lacrosse player Emily DeVries

Another member of the team, junior **Emily DeVries** states that her resolution is to win a national championship with the team.

As the final interviewed member of DU lax, junior **Hannah Maroe** sees a bright future as well. "My resolution for our team is to win our conference and conference tournament in hopes of going on to win the national championship!"

For the men's side, these lax players are setting goals for their future.

First, **Chester Bush**, a sophomore for the Panthers, wants his resolution to be to "not make mud." "This means that I won't take any steps backwards on and off the field that will slow me down to the team's ultimate goal of winning a national championship."

A fellow sophomore, **Carter Janssen**

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Left: Valparaiso tennis player Paige Heuer , Right: Davenport Basketball player Shaina Johnson

aspires to eat a solid breakfast to start off every day in 2015.

And as a rookie for the team, freshman **Joe Lopez** wants to hit the weight room harder this upcoming year. "Since I'm typically smaller than some of my teammates and opponents, hitting the weight room more often will give me the edge I need to gain on my opponents for the future."

Another sport that I've started to become more familiar with after going away for college is rugby. With my school not having a football team originally, rugby has become an interesting substitute to get to know.

A sophomore for the Panthers, **Onye Onwukanjo**, hopes to get "everyone on the team on the same page with our goal and to personally push myself past my limits."

"My New Years' Resolution is to come together as a team and utilize our true potential when we work together," says **Donovan VanPatten**, another college rugby player. "Also, I hope for everyone to commit themselves 100% to the team to work toward a national championship."

Mike Lau, another fellow sophomore for the Panthers, wants to become "the complete rugby player." "That means working hard every single particle and training session, as well as getting good grades, attending every class, getting enough sleep, and eating healthy." Lau hopes to improve rugby overall in 2015.

"My New Years' Resolution is for my team to peak in regards to our chemistry," says **Andrejs Ruperts** (Davenport University rugby). "The closer we are as a team,

the better we play on the pitch."

Fellow teammate (and twin brother!) **Arnolds Ruperts** shares similar goals. "My New Years' Resolution is for my team to become dedicated to motivating themselves and their teammates. Mental preparation for the hard work ahead will give us an edge for the physical preparation."

Andrew White, new sophomore for the Panthers, wants to overall understand rugby's concept. "My New Years' Resolution as an individual is to dedicate myself to learning the game of rugby more and to improve myself as more of a leader. As for our team, I would like our resolution to be becoming more of a team."

Rookies for Davenport, freshmen **Mason Heimbaugh** and **Trevor Rothhaas** share similar individual goals. "For the new year, I would like to improve my performance on the field," Heimbaugh says. "I would like to get to know my teammates better and become a closer team."

For myself, my resolution is to become a smarter and faster rugby player," Rothhaas shares. "And for the team, it is to play more as a unit and win a national title."

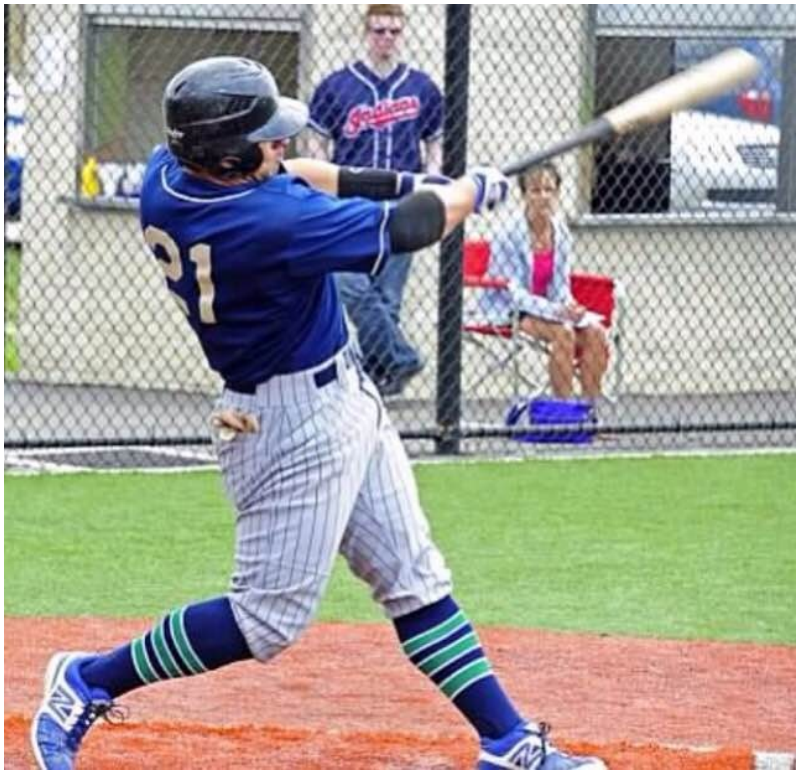
Now onto tennis! As the spring season is arising shortly, men and women teams are finding ways to improve. "My New Years' Resolution is to live a cleaner lifestyle off the court so that the work I put in on the court doesn't go to waste," says **Kevin Slagh**, Davenport men's tennis player.

"Our team goal is to finish higher in the Horizon Leauge," exclaims **Paige Heuer**, a Valparaiso University tennis player. "Last year we placed 8th, and with the help of our new freshmen and the leadership of our seniors, I think we can definitely do even better this year!"

And from a freshman's viewpoint, another women's tennis player **Bridget Barrett** of Davenport University shares her personal goals. "My New Years' Resolution to help improve my tennis game is going to the court more and dedicating more time to improving my doubles game." Playing doubles is a completely new game to Barrett, as playing singles and doubles are both requirements for college tennis. "My team's goal is to make it to nationals, and I'm willing to do whatever it takes to make that goal possible."

As for baseball players, two college seniors share personal and team goals.

"I would have to say that we have a lot of team goals this season," says **Matt Priebe**. The Panthers went 42-17 for the 2013-2014 season, as well as winning



Davenport baseball player Matt Priebe

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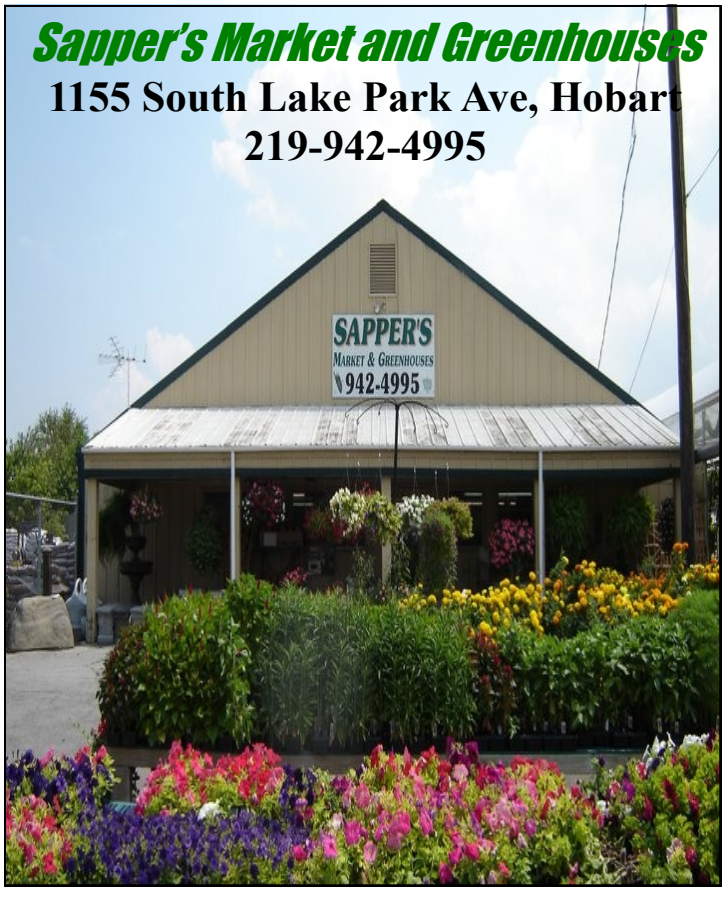

Top: Davenport dancer Taja Gipson , Right: Saint Mary's cross country runner Colleen Ogren

their first conference championship and WHAC tournament. "We want to win both again. We want to improve our rankings and prove that we are the best team in the country to win another national championship for Davenport." Panthers were pre-ranked as number 19 for preseason. "It's going to take a lot of hard work and hours put in, but we are prepared for it."

Another senior **Mike Clutterbuck** has more personal goals. "My New Years' Resolution personally is to eat healthier and be more supportive to my team."

And for softball, championships are also on their minds.

"We have our goals set on winning the NJCAA DI national championship, and we have been working really hard this year on accomplishing that," says **Carly Murphy**, a sophomore at Lake Land College. "I think our New Years' Resolution is just to hit even harder and push through whatever gets to be too much on the field and in the classroom. We want to do whatever it takes (and more) to reach our goal of winning that ring."

"My New Years' Resolution is to bring more confidence into my pitching on the mound," says **Alyssa Nelson**, a pitcher for Davenport. "I plan to use my teammates as a focal point. Anytime I start to feel unconfident, I will be able to know they have my back in everything. Confidence is key to all sports, especially softball."

Sharing the confidence level, runners have to have high confidence to

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Top: Davenport Rugby players (L to R) Arnolds Ruperts, Mike Lau, and Onye Onwukanjo Right: Davenport volleyball players (L to R) Rylee Kuiphoff and Maddy Cassleman

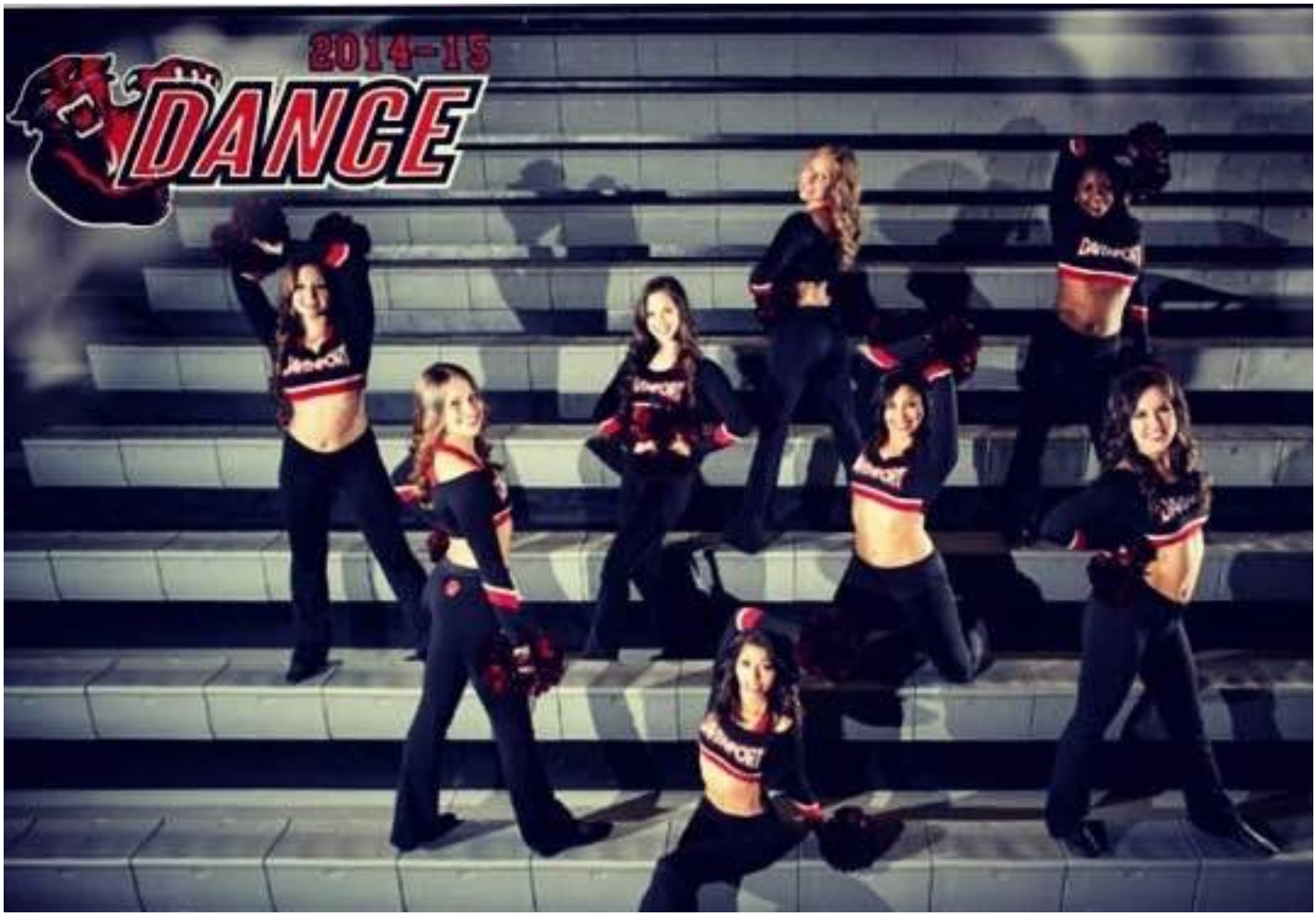
keep on moving. Freshman **Sam Katron** resolves to "make the most out of every practice to become the best that I can be."

Senior **Ross Melinn** hopes "to qualify for indoor and outdoor nationals."

Sophomore **Colleen Ogren** of Saint Mary's has team goals for her Cross Country team. "Our New Years' Resolution as a team is to make into the top 12 at regionals, which is better than we have ever done. Our coach has already set up individual meetings with us to discuss goals as to how we can all work together to make our dream come true."

Coming off of two surgeries thus far this year, junior **Alex Butler** shares his stories and goals. "My resolution is to be healthy. After two shoulder surgeries and a three-month post-surgery recovery time from an injury that has hindered me for four years, my goal is to reach the full potential of my athletic abilities. I'm focused on competing with myself to find my limitations to push past them."

Jamie Cattran, of the Davenport golf team, expresses his 2015 goals. "I hope to get better everyday by focusing on certain areas of my game each week that I can improve upon." He also shares some team goals. "For the team, we need to work together as a team in practice and conditioning



Davenport University dance team (Including Emily Esteban, Taja Gipson, Celeste Richardson, and author Trisha Madura)

in the winter to set ourselves up for success in the spring."

For soccer, sophomore **Holley Tripp** shares goals for her team. "My resolution for myself would probably be to train harder in the off season to be more prepared for the actual season to get better every practice."

As for football, sophomore **Travis Frank**, sees his goals for Anderson University. "My New Years' Resolution for my team is to come into this next season more prepared. Last season we had some close losses and good wins, so we really need to build off of the past. Personally, I want to put in my best

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effort on and off the field to make sure I can do what I need for us to win!"

For another fall sport, two players of the Davenport volleyball team share their team goals after a very successful 2013-2014 season. "My New Years' Resolution for the team would be to not let our success from this year be enough," says sophomore **Rylee Kuiphoff**. "We don't want to settle and expect things to go our way again because, for the most part, they did this year. I want us to always strive to be a better team than we were before and to play our hearts out every time we get the opportunity to step onto the court."

Fellow teammate **Maddy Cassleman** sees personal goals. "My New Years' Resolution is to not necessarily go on a diet but to eat healthier and to stay on top of my exercise plan to make sure I am ready for the spring and upcoming fall season."

And for the last sport covered for MAB's first 2015 issue, my own team, Davenport dance, has some personal and team goals coming off of a successful last season, as well.

"My goal for the team is to push ourselves harder than ever," says **Emily Esteban**, returning junior for the Panthers. "The Davenport dance program has come such a long way since it has first started. With coming in 2nd place at Nationals last year, we did not let that defeat us. We are ready to do anything we can to put it all out on the floor this year at Nationals. No matter what the outcome is, I'm so proud to say that I am a part of such an

Davenport golfer Jamie Cattran

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amazing team."

Another fellow junior **Taja Gipson** just overall wants to "love what I do and be satisfied with my performance overall."

Rookie for the team **Celeste Richardson** has personal goals, too. "My New Years' 2015 Athletic Resolution is to be one of the first four to finish running a full mile throughout our team. Running is not one of my strengths, but it is something that I'd like to push myself to get to. Not only will it help my cardiovascular strength, but it will also help my mental strength. Knowing that I have overcome one of my weaknesses this year in running will be a great accomplishment."

Finally, for myself as a college athlete, I have many goals for my dancing career. First, I overall want to train to be in the best physical and mental state of my life this year. For specific team goals, I want to work hard enough for our team to win a national title this April, as well as myself being a returning All-American at camp this next July. And although I want to work harder than ever in 2015, I need to also just remember to have fun: to remember why I have such a passion for this wonderful sport and why I chose to continue dancing as a college athlete. Having a good mental attitude about why I dance is already halfway to success.

And with that, there are clearly so many college athletes working toward success this upcoming New Year. May they always remember their passions, and may they always stay on the right path toward success. All of us at MAB wish all college athletes the best this upcoming year, and a Happy New Year from our staff!

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Bear, Down

By Dan Breed, MAB Monthly Staff Writer

About a week or two ago, MAB Monthly head-honcho-in-chief Rich Sapper asked me to write some sort of year-in-review piece for the January issue. I told him I would be happy to come up with something and my mind whirled: should it be about local sports? Pro sports? Baseball? Football? All of the above?

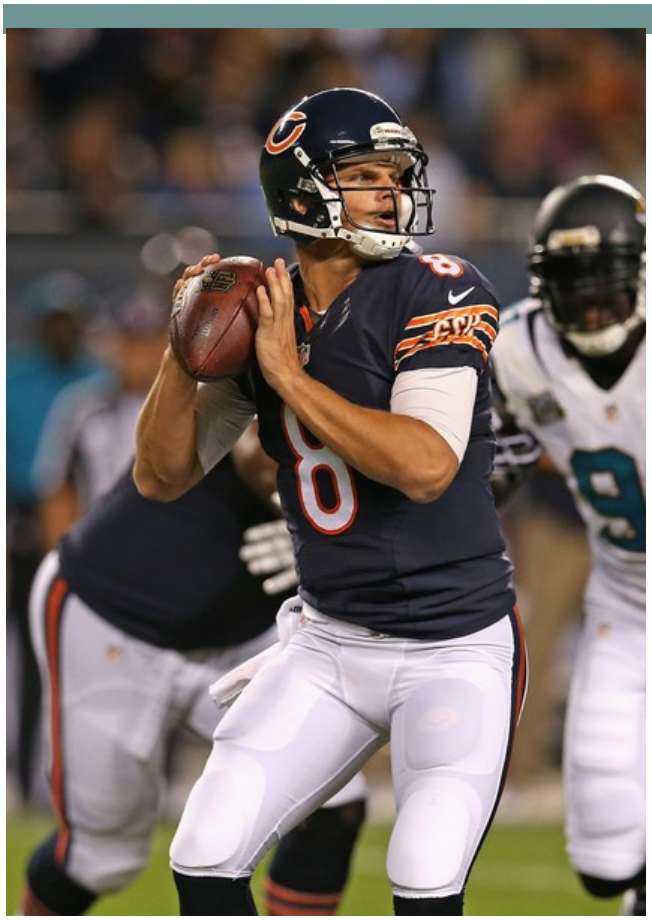
I thought about it and mulled over ideas, occasionally checking the internet for information about, among others, the Lake Central Basketball Indians' run to the state tourney in the spring, Andrean's baseball and football dynasties, the incredible journey of the LaPorte Slicer football team, Jeff Samardzija's long trip back to Chicago, Joe Maddon's hiring on the north side, and both local MLB clubs building their way back to relevance.

But, over the last few weeks, every single time that I opened up a sports webpage, checked my twitter feed, or simply read a newspaper's sports section, someone connected to my Beloved Chicago Bears had done something almost unbelievably stupid, miring the proud franchise in the muck of loserdom usually only occupied by teams like the Raiders and Jets.

Some of the decisions are so mind-boggling that even rumors and fake stories seem more realistic. A couple of months ago, the comedy news website The Onion ran a false story about Jay Cutler blaming a loss to New England on punter Pat O'Donnell. Sadly, some Bears fans thought this story was authentic and took to message boards, incensed that Cutler would be so ignorant as to blame the punter for a game in which the opponent put up 51 points. Irony, indeed. In defense of those fans, however, many of the real shenanigans at Halas Hall in 2014 eclipsed what The Onion considered unrealistically absurd. Here are a few examples:

A few days before the home opener against Buffalo, linebacker and team leader (but not team captain, captains have been abolished in the Trestman era) Lance Briggs is granted a day off from practice not for an injury, not for a family emergency, but for an event at a new barbecue and rib restaurant in which he has ownership interest. Not surprisingly, the Bears lose the opener in which they were heavily favored, and several weeks later, Briggs is appropriately sidelined with a rib injury.

Over the next few weeks, there were flashes of hope for fans. Road wins against San Francisco and the Jets gave the Bears a short-lived winning record, but Mel Tucker's defensive schemes quickly derailed any hope for the season. Tucker stated that he would retain Lovie Smith's cover-2 defense but unfortunately it looked as though Tucker



thought 'cover-2' meant "cover two of the opposing receivers, but leave the third and/or fourth wide-out wide open." When not in cover-2, the Bears were usually running Tucker's signature scheme: The Blown Coverage Defense, which he popularized in Jacksonville, consistently finished 30th or lower each season he coached there.

Then came the two games sandwiching the bye week, which finally broke the once proud franchise. So many records were set in those two games in makes one's head spin. The first half against the Patriots marked the most points given up by the Bears in any half in the history of the franchise. That record stood for exactly 14 days until it was broken against the Packers in the very next game. In both of those games, the Bears ended up surrendering more than 50 total points, a feat never before 'accomplished' by any modern NFL team. A couple more wins would occur, but they came against Minnesota, which is not only not an NFL caliber team, but are barely a bunch of clowns tumbling out of a tiny car. It is a testament to rookie head coach Mike Zimmer that he was able to coach that squad, not short on its own turmoil, to one more win than the Bears. The other win came against Lovie Smith's Buccaneers, another franchise in its own disaster protocols. And let's not forget after these historically bad defensive performances, no coach was fired or even re-assigned, except for wide receiver Santonio Holmes, who was released after clearly being responsible for the whole problem on defense. Clearly. It all comes down to Marc Trestman's favorite buzzword: accountability. Of which there has been none in the Bears organization for at least the last two years.

All this was child's play compared to what came next. A report surfaced that the

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Bears were suffering 'buyer's remorse' from signing Jay Cutler to a very expensive multi-year deal. This was really not a surprise, based on Cutler's performance, and many people assumed the quote came from ownership, but when the source of the report was revealed as offensive coordinator Aaron Kromer, the entire season, and really the entire franchise, unraveled. As all of the information surfaced, it became quickly obvious to everyone that the Bears had no real leadership, no direction, no clue, and no hope. First, Trestman allowed Kromer to call a team meeting where he apologized for being the leak, which is weird enough when this is a situation where the head coach and general manager need to be involved. GM Phil Emery was MIA through the entire progression of events and Trestman made every decision in the manner of someone who has no idea what a leader needs to be. Not only Cutler, but the entire locker room, had given up on the coaching staff and the season largely because of the lack of accountability. Tucker had not been held accountable for his incompetence, and Kromer should have been fired immediately for selling out his quarterback and his entire team, not given the opportunity to choose to address the team on his own. Not even The Onion could have come up with a story that improbable. Cutler's subsequent performance against New Orleans was not a surprise considering what he and the entire team had been through the previous week.

Nor was Cutler's benching the following day a complete surprise. Yes, it came probably several games, possibly several years, too late, but the real surprise was that the starting QB was now Jimmy Clausen, a career backup who was 1-9 (now 1-10!!) as a starter. Everyone (else) knows that Clausen is not the answer at the position. The Bears had drafted David Fales in the sixth round of the 2014 draft, considered by many to be a hidden gem in this year's QB draft class. The team had just moved him up to the 53 man roster, but neglected to get him enough – or any – reps in practices to get him any playing time. Starting Clausen gained nothing and solved nothing. Finding a way to get Fales into the game would have at least given the organization a clue as to whether he is worth developing. So, the real question should have been: Can Fales succeed where so many have failed? And we missed out on

what would have been my favorite headline of the year: 'Cutler Fails, Fales Starts'. It only got more absurd when we found out that Clausen suffered a 'concussion' and would not be able to play in Week 17 at Minnesota, and that Cutler is back in the driver's seat and Fales was nowhere to be seen. It became doubly absurd when we found out that if Cutler suffered a severe injury and could not play next year, the Bears could not cut him and were on the hook for over $15.5 million next year. Bad football decisions and bad business decisions had stacked up faster than losses, which was another 'impressive' accomplishment by the Bears.

So, here I sit on Black Monday. The Bears have finished the season 5-11. As I write this, I hear that Trestman and Emery have both been fired and I anxiously await their farewell press conferences. Rumors swirl that club president Ted Phillips, the chief architect of the team over the last 15 years hiring both Jerry Angelo and Phil Emery, will be moved into a non-football role and I hope that by the time you read this that it will be true.

In the next few days, the McCaskey family will hire a new 'chief football mind'. I have always liked Bill Cowher for this, but I think he will likely be too smart to take on a mess like the Bears and remain in the broadcasting industry. There are rumors of other big names like Mike Holmgren and Mike Shanahan (who drafted Jay Cutler in Denver) coming in to run the show. The truth is regardless of who is hired, the next two to five years are lost in Chicago. Too much needs to be fixed. I have no idea who will be brought in to run football operations or what they will need do to restore the Bears, but I hope it will be someone who can fix this mess.

And for the next few years, hope is the only thing any Bears fan will have. Bear Down.

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2015 Mock Baseball Hall of Fame Ballot

By MAB Monthly Staff

It's that time of year again! Each year the MAB staff has given our votes for the inductees into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Below is a list by staff member of who they would put into the Hall.

Andy Wielgus

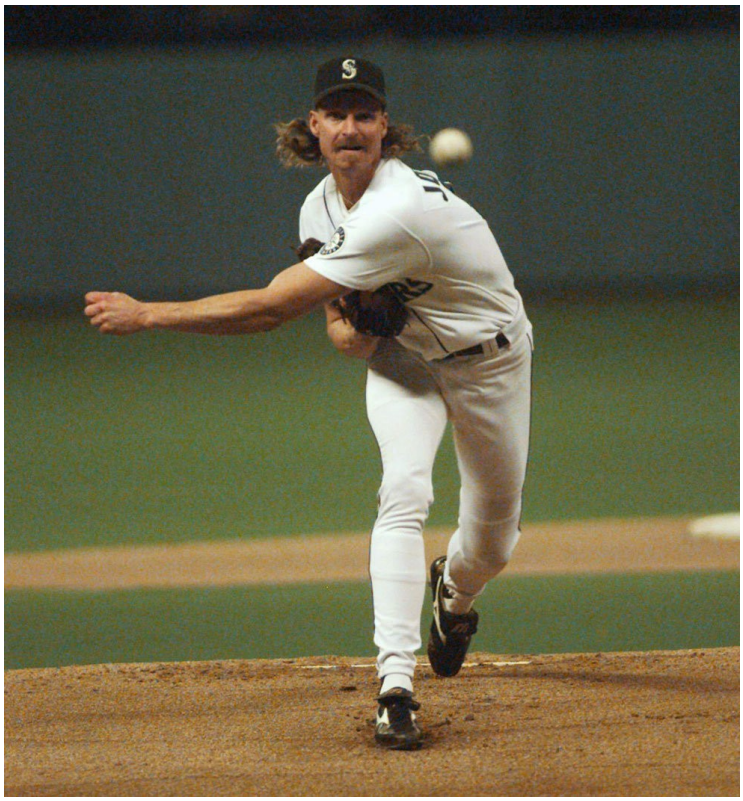
1. John Smoltz
2. Randy Johnson
3. Pedro Martinez
4. Craig Biggio
5. Jeff Bagwell
6. Mike Piazza
7. Lee Smith
8. Tim Raines
9. Curt Schilling
10. Mike Mussina

Hank Kilander

1. Randy Johnson
2. Lee Smith
3. Don Mattingly
4. Roger Clemens
5. Barry Bonds
6. Mark McGwire
7. Sammy Sosa
8. Tim Raines
9. Craig Biggio
10. Tim Raines
11. Pedro Martinez

Dan Breed

1. John Smoltz
2. Randy Johnson
3. Craig Biggio
4. Jeff Bagwell
5. Tim Raines
6. Lee Smith!



Randy Johnson is the only player to make all 6 of our ballots

7. The Crime Dog Fred McGriff
8. Mike Piazza
9. Mike Mussina
10. Gary Sheffield

Bob Potosky

1. Randy Johnson
2. Pedro Martinez
3. John Smoltz
4. Craig Biggiio

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5. Mike Piazza
6. Tim Raines
7. Roger Clemens
8. Barry Bonds
9. Curt Schilling

JT Hoyo

1. Pedro Martinez
2. Craig Biggio
3. Mike Piazza
4. Curt Schilling
5. Randy Johnson
6. John Smoltz
7. Fred McGriff
8. Mike Mussina
9. Tim Raines
10. Jeff Bagwell

Reuters / Tim Parker, 1998

Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire made two of our ballots

Rich Sapper

1. Lee Smith
2. Barry Bonds
3. Randy Johnson
4. Roger Clemons
5. Don Mattingly
6. Mark McGwire
7. John Smoltz
8. Pedro Martinez
9. Curt Shilling
10. Sammy Sosa

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Baseball Coaching Tips: Mind Games Between The Pitcher And The Hitter!

By: Larry Cicchiello Special to MAB Monthly

As you advance to older levels of play, you will find that many baseball hitters will play certain mind games with the pitcher and pitchers will do the same with hitters. Personally, I would not recommend getting involved in any mind games until the high school level of play or higher whether you are the pitcher or the hitter. One of the better baseball coaching tips to always remember is that playing good baseball requires clever use of the mind and not just the body.

Hitters will ask for a time out when you are getting ready to make the pitch to annoy you. This is not to say every time a baseball hitter does this he's playing a mind game but sometimes he is. They will wander away from the batter's box while you are kept waiting, hoping to annoy you.

If you are well aware beforehand that these things are definitely going to happen, it should be easier for you as a pitcher to deal with them. You know batters are going to do it so why let them accomplish what they want to do and let it bother you? If you do, it's a victory for the batter, isn't it?

As a baseball pitcher, you too can play a few mind games with the batter. It is pretty much a proven fact that working quickly on the mound is beneficial to a pitcher because his fielders have to "stay on their toes." There

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simply isn't any time for their minds to wander. An added plus is that the pitcher is also sending an indirect message to the hitters that he is extremely confident and can't wait to throw the next pitch to them.

There are times however, when it just might be the right time to slow things down a little! When a very aggressive and anxious batter gets to the plate and it appears that he can't wait to hit, it may be a very good time to step off the mound and rub up the baseball. Hey, if the hitter likes things to happen fast, make sure you slow things down which is the exact opposite of what the hitter wants.

It may be the perfect time to talk something over with your catcher. You may want to motion for your catcher to come out to the mound for a chat. Tell your catcher that you simply are "fussing" with the batter and want to simply talk for a minute. Anything to keep the over anxious hitter waiting impatiently.

When I pitched, if a runner was on first base and a real good anxious hitter was up, I would make sure I came to the set position and would pause there for two or three seconds and then lob the ball to first base. I might do it a second or even a third time also.

I may pause in the set position on the rubber for three or four seconds and then step off the rubber. I could literally see the look of anger on the faces of some of these hitters. Many times these mind games will make the batter angry or very impatient at the plate and swing at pitches out of the strike zone!

Obviously, I would much rather have a hitter thinking about how annoyed he is with me instead of focusing strictly on his baseball hitting. That's a victory for me as a pitcher. Disrupting the batter's thinking means that I've won half the battle before it has even begun!

If you are involved in baseball coaching, just remember that mind games should not be played with younger players, who are just starting to learn the game of baseball.

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

Core Players Return for 2015

Press Release Provided

The Gary SouthShore RailCats have re-signed veteran infielders Zac Mitchell and Danny Pulfer and catcher Ryan Babineau for the 2015 season. The RailCats have also signed infielder Caleb Palensky.

Mitchell, a 2014 American Association All-Star, was originally signed by the RailCats on July 24, 2012 as a rookie out of Belmont University. Mitchell hit .262 with 1 HR and 49 RBI in 94 games during the 2014 season. The Memphis, TN native is a career .252 hitter with 3 HR and 100 RBI while playing shortstop and second base.

Pulfer returns for his third season with the RailCats. The school record holder for career hits, doubles, games played, and at-bats at Oregon, Pulfer was drafted in the 19th round of the 2011 MLB Amateur Draft by the Arizona Diamondbacks. A career .288 hitter while playing around the horn, the 2014 American Association All-Star hit .307 with 7 HR and 61 RBI during the 2014 season.

Babineau returns for his fourth season on the South Shore. The Rancho Cucamonga, CA native hit .292 with 4 HR and 55 RBI in 84 games during the 2014 season. Babineau was the starting catcher for three seasons at UCLA hitting .260 with 11 HR and 87 RBI before being drafted by the Arizona Diamondbacks in the 17th round of the 2008 draft.

"Every Championship caliber team has to have an exceptional core group of players. Players who lead on and off the field at the highest level. We're fortunate to have 3 of these players returning to the RailCats in 2015. Ryan, Zac, and Danny were keys to our '13 Championship and were instrumental in our ballclub continuing to compete at a high level in 2014." RailCats manager Greg Tagert said.

Palensky had 2 RBI in 12 ABs before being released by the RailCats on June 26, 2014. Palensky attended Nebraska-Omaha where he hit .305 in 2014 in 51 games with 40 RBI. The Papillion, Nebraska native hit 7 HR and drove in 86 runs in three seasons in Omaha. Palensky attended the same high school (La Vista South) that produced RailCats pitcher Stephen Bougher.

The RailCats open the 2015 season at home on May 21, 2015 against the Quebec les Capitales of the Canadian American Association of Professional Baseball.

For 2015 Gary SouthShore RailCats Season Ticket and Group Outing information call 219-882-2255 or visit www.railcatsbaseball.com.

Did you Know?

Pittsburgh is the only city where all the major sports teams (MLB,NHL,NFL) have the same colors: Black and gold.

Kite flying is a professional sport in Thailand.

Mushing is the official state sport of Alaska.

Tug of War was an Olympic event between 1900 and 1920.

Hall of Famer Wilt Chamberlain never fouled out of a game.

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Mary Shane was hired by the Chicago White Sox as 1st woman TV play-by-play

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1-7-15	530pm	Girls BB OD @ Triton
1-9-15	530pm	BB DH Merrillville @ Chesterton
1-10-15	7pm	Girls BB Elkhart Christian @ OD
1-13-15	5pm	Girls BB Glenn @ OD
1-14-15	530pm	MAB Weekly
1-15-15	7pm	Girls BB Argos @ OD
1-6-15	530pm	BB DH Chesterton @ LaPorte
1-17-15	7pm	Girls BB CP @ Merrillville
1-20-15		Bi County Tny - Times TBA
1-23-15	530pm	BB DH LaPorte @ Michigan City
1-24-15	7pm	Boys BB Griffith @ EC Central
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