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March 2015 FREE

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Boys Regional Basketball Preview

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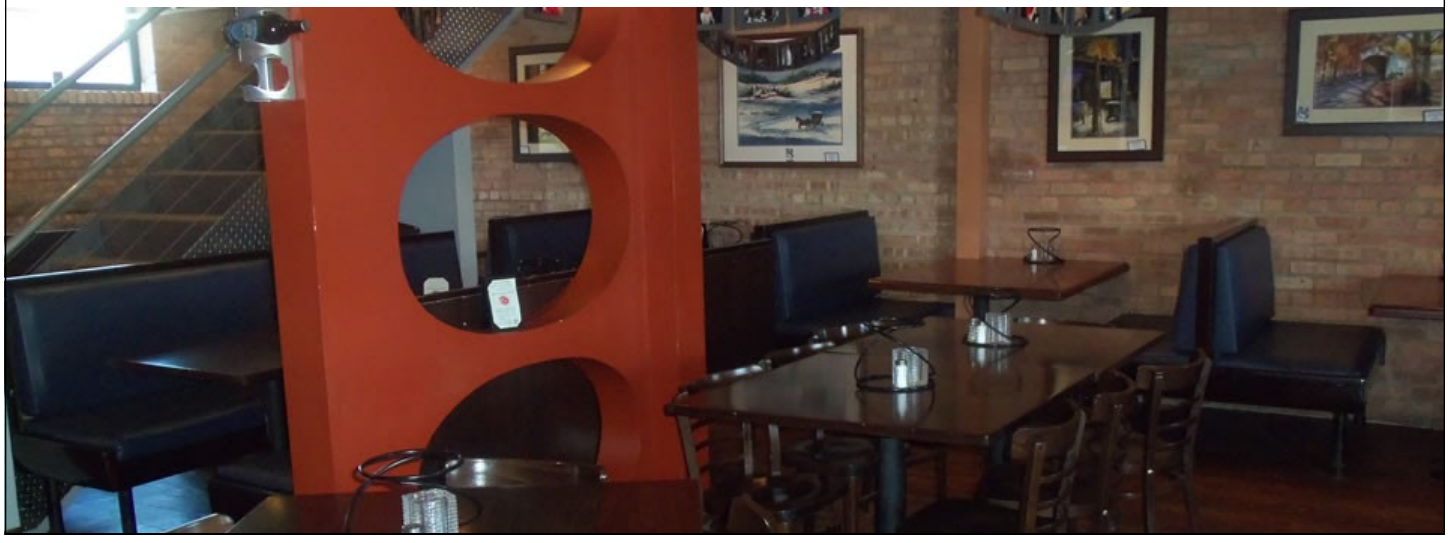

MAB ONLINE MAGAZINE

Even though high school basketball season ends in March, it is one of the most exciting months of the year for college basketball fans. Spring training baseball gives hope to fans and the NFL starts free agency.

Make sure to look for next month's issue that will be out annual baseball preview. We will look at all of the teams in the area and will prepare you for an exciting baseball season and in particular for the RailCats High School Baseball Challenge.

Enjoy this issue and make sure to give us any feedback that you might have!

Contact Information

Phone: 219-973-7990

Website: www.midamericabroadcasting.com

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MAB STAFF

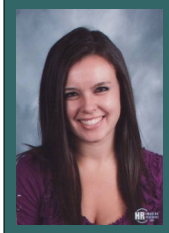
Rich Sapper
Staff Writer
Broadcaster/ Host
Sales
Layout & Design

Bob Potosky
Broadcaster/ Host
Staff Writer

Andy Wielgus
Broadcaster/Host
Staff Writer

JT Hoyo
Broadcaster/Host
Staff Writer
Sales

Brandon Vickery
Broadcaster



Trisha Madura
Staff Writer
Sales
Broadcaster

Brett Hill
Staff Writer
Sales
Broadcaster

Dan Breed
Staff Writer
Sales
Broadcaster

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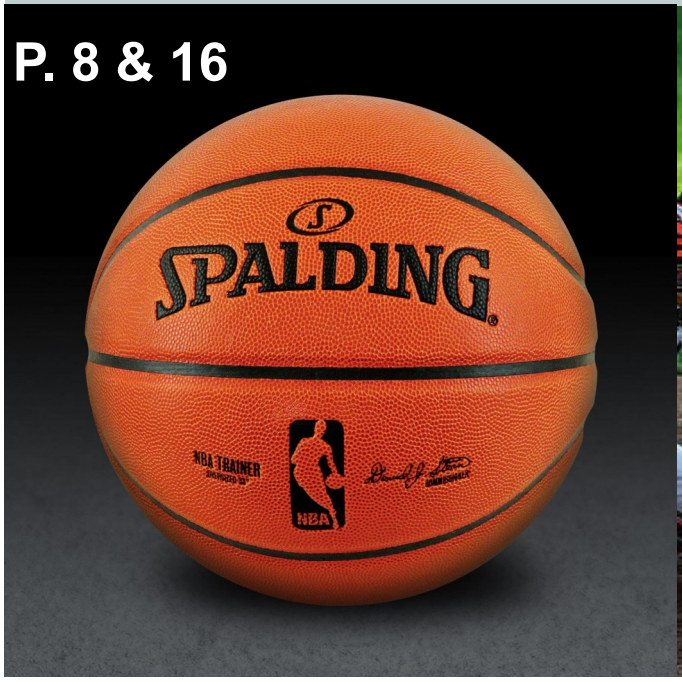

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Athletes of the Month

Written and Compiled by Andy Wielgus MAB Staff Writer

Drew Hackett Munster

Munster's Drew Hackett broke the all-time scoring record at Munster of 1,316 points set by Aaron Jillson in 2000. Hackett has committed to UIC.

Jordan Collazo Portage

Portage's Jordan Collazo scored 29 points had 3 assists and 3 steals in a 2 Ot. loss to Crown Point. Portage is 11-8 on the season.

Riley Popplewell South Central

South Central's Center Riley Popplewell hit the shot at the buzzer to beat Culver Community in 1A Sectional 51 play at Oregon-Davis.She then scored 19 points and had 10 rebounds in a 40-34 victory over Triton.

Northwest Indiana Wrestlers

4 Calumet Region Wrestlers won 2015 individual state titles in Wrestling. The winners are at 106 lbs. Colton Cummings of Lowell, at 145 lbs. Jacob Covaciu of Merrillville, at 160 lbs. Drew Hughes of Lowell, and at 285 lbs.Shawn Streck of Merrillville. Streck and Hughes were also undefeated on the season at 46-0 and 44-0 respectively.

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2015 Girls Basketball Highlights

By Andy Wielgus,
MAB Monthly Staff Writer

With the season now over it is now time to review some of the highlighted players and teams starting with the big three at Oregon-Davis of Lexi Minix,Taylor Kranenburg, and Alex Bope.

The Lady Bobcats had another tournament run that ended in the semistate loss to the eventual state champion Lafayette Central Catholic in 1A. Minix showed great physicality and athleticism all season long and Kranenburg became a dead eye shooter as the season went along, hitting 17-18 free throws in the Semistate.OD had some big wins this year over Culver, John Glenn, South Central, Kouts, and FW Blackhawk Christian. They will move up to 2A next year and MAB had every game on the air for you this year as they played some strong ranked big school teams like Northwood, Roncalli, SB Adams, Holy Cross of Ky.,and John Glenn.

Michigan City's Michal Miller Signs her Nathional Letter of Intent to play at Arizona

In the Duneland Athletic Conference, Michal Miller of Michigan City led the way in scoring at 25.5 points per game, but at the beginning of the year it was LaPorte and Lake Central that battled it out. LaPorte with it's duo of Nicole Konieczny at 16.0 ppg and Kyleigh Kubik at 16.2 ppg had a great year. But it was LC that won the Duneland, a Sectional and beat Penn twice with the great balance of Lindsay Kusbel at 13.3ppg, Tara Zlotkowski at 11.9 ppg, and Gina Rubino at 10.6 ppg. In the postseason it was once again Merrillville that was undefeated in 2015. This was until it fell at the Semistate to Homestead. Michigan State bound Victoria Gaines recovered from injury in 2015 to score 11.6 ppg and she was helped by her teammates Jasmine Wright at 11.9

ppg and Joshlynn King. The Lady Pirates beat Penn, SBSJ, Warsaw, and LC in the second half.

In the Northwest Crossroads Conference,Taylor Steele of Highland averaged 16.5 ppg and Breanna Toppen of Kankakee Valley , had a great year at 13.9 ppg but neither team made it to the Regional. The same story happened this year to Munster, Hobart, Andrean, Griffith, and Lowell with each team falling in the Sectional. Griffith saw its sectional streak snapped this year by Gary Lighthouse CPA.

In the Greater Southshore Conference, it was a great year as River Forest and Lake Station recovered to have good years. But it was Hanover Central and Noll that made their mark in 2015 in the Regional. Both of these clubs return a strong nucleus next year. Noll was led by Brittany Anderson at 12.7 ppg and Naomi House at 11.8 ppg. While Hanover Central under Doug Nelson was led by Brooke Sterkowitz at 16.7 ppg.

In the Porter County Conference, Kouts won a 1A sectional and Riley Popplewell was a 1A All State player for South Central at 19.2 ppg and 11.9 rbs. a game. Washington Township had one of the area's leading scorers with Heather Burton at 21.4 ppg. Lacrosse was led by one of the best Freshman in the state in Point Guard Justine Charlesworth at 16.7 ppg. Other strong scorers in the conference included Jayla

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Crump of Kouts, Mary Parkman of Westville, Katie Vance of La-crosse, Kameron Stanko of Morgan Township, Megan Heinhold of Kouts, Madison Bell of Hebron, and Kia Holder of Morgan Township.

Other great players in the area in-cluded Dana Evans of West Side at 22ppg Tiajaney Hawkins of EC Central, and Jensae Bishop of EC Central at 20.9 ppg. Gary Lighthouse CPA made a re-gional run this year and were led by Da-jah Smith, Lyric Ward, and Ayanna Hunter.

Look for next year to be an inter-esting year with a new coach in Crown Point and at Calumet. And Oregon-Davis, Rochester, Lafayette Central Catholic, Noll, and possibly South Cen-tral all in the 2A class next year. 3A will also have 2 new powerhouses in Canter-bury and Heritage Christian as well, And once again MAB will have it all covered for you in 2015-2016 on sportsjuice and midamericabroadcasting.com!

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Counting Down the Days

Less than forty days until the annual NDA/NCA College National Championship in Daytona Beach.

By, Trisha Madura, MAB Monthly Writer

That time is just around the corner again, as hard as that is to believe. Yet another season for us dancers and cheerleaders is nearing the end, yet the absolute peak for these seasons is quite underway, as well. The National Cheer Association and National Dance Alliance (better known as the NCA and NDA) will be hosting their annual national championship for college teams this April 9-11 in Daytona Beach, Florida. Cheer and dance teams around the nation will compete for that National title that seems to be every team's ultimate dream. Holding that trophy is the ultimate goal leaving the sunshine state to conclude this year's season.

Being a dancer myself for a college team tends to spark many of my article ideas for writing with MAB. In actuality, the experience down at college nationals is an experience like never before.

Starting this season off with the Davenport University dance team, which is located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, our team's first stop was NDA camp this past summer. The Panthers traveled to University of Louisville for a weekend full of learning routines, perfecting technique, and plenty of team bonding. In reality, it turned out to be a weekend consisting of lots of dance and very little sleep. Not saying that was a bad thing J

From that weekend, we came out on top with a first place award in DIII dance. In addition, we scored ourselves a silver paid bid to nationals this April: the best our program has ever done so far.

With that being said, we have been training harder than ever before

this year. DUDT has added two more practice days than last year, including early morning conditioning classes. We have also added classes at Pure Barre, located in Ada, Michigan, for one Sunday per month. Our team has spent numerous weekends, in addition, volunteering at local charities, performing at local high schools, and putting in extra work not required by our coach. Needless to say, we have the mindset that "this is our year." This year, the DU dance team will be competing two dances at Nationals. The first dance will be performing in the NAIA Small Team Dance division. This dance will consist of three styles of dance- pom, jazz, hip hop- with at least thirty seconds of each. A few of

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the teams competing in our division include: Calumet College of Saint Joseph, Ottawa University, and William Penn University.

For the second dance, we will be competing in DII Hip Hop. This dance will require around two minutes of hip hop style, tricks, and technique. A few of the other teams competing in this division include: Grand Valley State University and Saint Ambrose University. The Davenport University dance team will be wishing all of the teams the best of luck at our upcoming competition! Until then, we will all be working our absolute hardest and counting down the days until Daytona Beach!

2015 Boys Regional Preview

By Andy Wielgus MAB Monthly Staff Writer

Regular Seasons are meant to get you ready for the tournament. And in 4A the favorites are not at Michigan City.

Gone is DAC Champ Valpo, powerhouse Penn, and athletically gifted EC Central In their place will be the underdog 10-14 SB Riley club who will face 14-10 Northridge. Who would have predicted 18-9 Munster and 18-8 Crown Point?

Both clubs struggled at times but the Mustangs were buoyed by wins over Valpo and Merrillville. The 2nd game heard on MAB helped propel them to 3 victories over LC,West Side, and a 51 point Drew Hackett game sealed the deal with a 88-77 win over EC. Hackett broke the scoring record of Aaron Jillson on a game heard on MAB. The Dogs saw 7 3pters by Blake Bonin in the opener vs Valpo and then great team 3 pt shooting and a 24-6 1st qt lead over Portage led them to the final where they handled Chesterton easily. Crown Point handled Munster physically the 1st time, look for more of this but Drew Hackett is the best player here and may be a slight favorite.

In 3A Griffith is out and now they are in, if they beat Roosevelt look for SBSJ at 18-6 to beat Andrean and then to face Griffith in my view who is too athletic for 18-8 Twin Lakes.

Once again the favorite is gone in Marian. And Griffith led by the Murphy twins have a legit shot if they get by Roosevelt. Andrean beat Griffith this year but I do not believe they will get past SBSJ at KV.

In 2A at North Judson Winamac survived Rensselaer in Ot. 54-50 and look for another nailbiter with 20-6 Laville. Noll at 11-13 lost several GSSC games but rebounded to the Regional and could have a real shot of riding he wave over Canterbury or Churubusco

and then in the final to win in 2A again.

In 1A Marquette survived 21st Century and may be on a collison course with Barr Reeve, bar none in the State Final. Their 4A Schedule of Illinois Powerhouses makes them the favorite over Blackhawk OD, and Tri-County. Providence bound Ryan Fazekas will lead the way and OD had a huge upset over Triton to win the Sectional 38-34.
My regional picks are Munster, Griffith, Noll, and Marquette. Hey all region why not? Nothing else has went as predicted as the topsy turvy tournament goes with Penn, Valpo, EC Central, Marian, and Triton all gone in the Sectional.

Look for updates on Twitter as @mabsports and on Facebook at Mid America Broadcasting LLC.

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Concussion Training/Awareness Bill Heads to House

Press Release Provided

(original copy Jess Seabolt, The Statehouse File.com)

INDIANAPOLIS – Legislation that would expand the reach of concussion awareness, diagnosis, and treatment in student athletes passed the Senate on Thursday.

Under current law, high school athletes who are suspected of suffering a concussion are required to sit out of practice or games until they are cleared by a health care provider. Senate Bill 403, authored by Sen. Timothy Lanane, D-Anderson, would extend that requirement to athletes in grades 5-8.

The bill also extends concussion training requirements to the coaches of a "number of sports in addition to football including cheerleading," said Lanane.

Current law only requires that of high school football coaches. That training would have to be sport-specific.

Lanane said applying the concussion guidelines to younger students could help them avoid problems later.

Michael Duerson, brother of former NFL star and two-time Super Bowl champion Dave Duerson, testified for the bill in committee. He has firsthand experience with the effects of concussions.

Dave Duerson committed suicide in 2011 and left a note asking that his brain be studied. Researchers found he had Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy due to the concussions he received during his career.

Michael Duerson also suffered a concussion during his time as an Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis basketball player that paralyzed half his body for six months. Duerson said that the hardships continued throughout his life as an engineer and now he is unable to be in the workforce due to the effects of the concussion.

The events led Michael Duerson to create the Dave Duerson Athletic Safety Fund, a program that aims to support and benefit student athletes in

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all sports. Duerson said he supports SB 403 and its motive to further help children dealing with concussions.

Dave Duerson
Athletic Safety Fund, Inc.

The bill had its critics, including Bobby Cox, commissioner of the Indiana High School Athletic Association.

Cox said in a committee meeting that the IHSAA already requires that coaches take a free and generalized concussion course. He said the bill's requirement for sport-specific courses is "unnecessary and cumbersome." He stood by the IHSAA's current education program and said that it has already served millions of coaches nationwide.

Jolene Bracale, program coordinator for Student Health Services in the Indiana Department of Education, also spoke against the specialized courses.

Bracale said that the concussion courses that currently exist are more beneficial since they are free and general so that they can cover many areas at once. Bracale also said that football coaches could keep their existing training course while a general one could be offered to all other coaches.

"Head injuries at a young age have far-reaching complications from which we must protect all our athletes," said Lanane in a press release, because during 5th and 6th grade children are at a crucial developmental stage.

The bill passed 45-4 and now moves to the House.

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Who Says You Can't Go Home?

By: Rich Sapper,
MAB Staff Writer

Coach Geffert as a player at Griffith (left) and at Indiana State (right)

Who says you can't go home? No, this article is not in reference to the Bon Jovi song, but instead to the homecoming former Griffith star defensive end Ben Geffert who returns to the west Lake County school a mere 8 years after he graduated.

This time though, the former highly touted football recruit, returns to his alma mater as the head football coach, looking to return his former club to the glory that he knew as a player. Geffert, played for legendary head coach Russ Radtke during his tenure in Griffith and made his name as a top 50 player in the state and was recruited nationally to play defense. Geffert then went to Indiana State, where, after a redshirt season, he played on the defensive side of the ball. In his redshirt freshman campaign, Geffert played in all 12 games and amassed 26 tackles. The following season, he moved to offense starting the season as the staring center, before moving to the starting right guard position in the latter half of the season. The 2010 season saw him play his 4th different college position moving to left guard on a solid offensive line.

Naming Geffert as head coach bring to Griffth one of the youngest head coaches (if not THE youngest) in the state, but also a man who reminds the Griffith faithful of the teams that made two semi-state appearance while he led the defense. Now, after stints

The Boneyard at Griffith High School

with Highland, Munster and Griffith as an assistant, Geffert has realized his dream of becoming the head coach of the Panthers.

Geffert is not alone among region coaches who have returned home to take the helm of their alma mater. Some examples include Ryan Turley who is a Hobart graduate, and the current head coach at Hobart after stints as an assistant at LaPorte, Wheeler and Crown Point. The man Turley replaced at Hobart, Wally McCormack left the Brickies to return to lead Portage; the school he played for and

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graduated from following the aforementioned stint at Hobart and Andrean. Zac Wells was also one of those guys. He was a star LB at Merrillville in the early 90's and he had been the head coach of the Pirates for a decade before he announced that he was leaving to become the defensive coordinator for former Portage and Michigan City head coach Craig Buzea at Homewood-Flossmoor in Illinois.

The reason for a school finding a legendary player is pretty obvious. It reenergizes the fan base who is hungry to win. Turley was hired after a rough final season for McCormack who had been one of the few non-Hobart grads hired by the school. His resume included helping to build a program from the bottom up in Wheeler, and a strong record as an assistant at Crown Point, but honestly what Hobart fans were buzzing about was his playing days and the state championships that he won as a player under Don Howell. Likewise, Wally McCormack was touted as much for his ties to some of the glory days on the playing field and his ties to the successful Indian teams of the past as he was for his success at Hobart and his state championship at Andrean.

The hiring of Geffert was certainly based on his strong resume as an assistant under some pretty solid head coaches, but fans are likely happiest that the man in charge has some ties to the powerhouse teams that Russ Radtke piloted and he was a part of.

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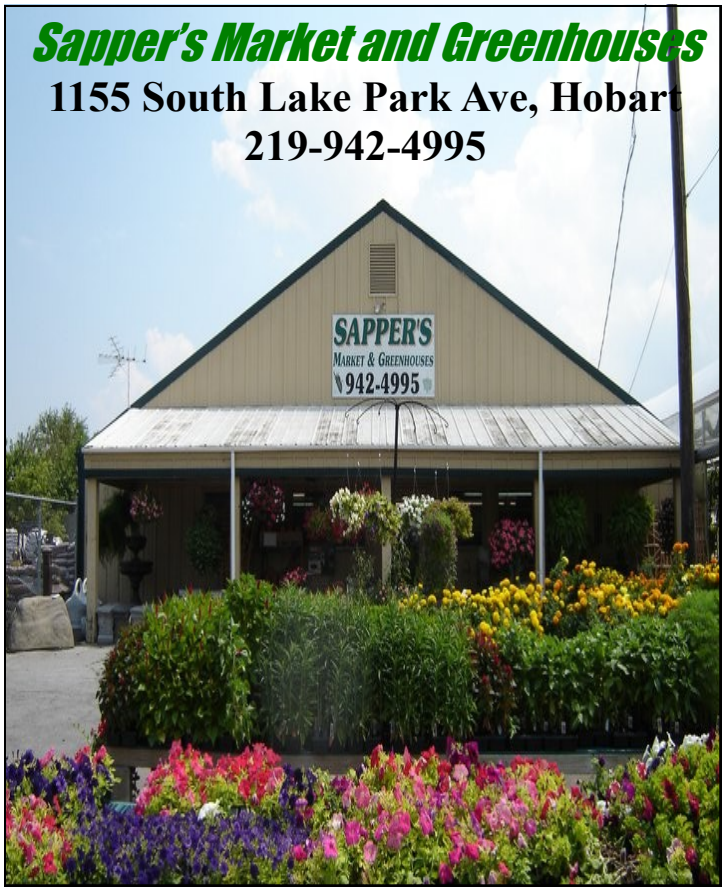
There also seems, if the history of some of the guys who came before him holds true, fans may be a bit more patient with their former star athlete than someone from the outside.

And Geffert is going to need it. To say that Griffith has had their struggles for the past couple of seasons is an understatement. The Panthers have gone 3-7, 3-8 and 1-9 in the past three seasons. Prior to that, Griffith had not had a losing season in the 2003 campaign when the team went 4-8 in large part due to three games that were required to be forfeited. Outside of that anomaly, Griffith was always a threat for a conference title at very least, but also a threat for sectional and regional titles as well.

Fans that are not forgiving when there has been a culture of winning and regardless of whether it is a coaches fault, it is simply because the talent has had a bit of a downturn at your school or if the other school around you have just gotten better it is typically the coach who gets the brunt of it. That was the case at Griffith.

The good news for Geffert is that he can only go up from the 1-9 record last season, has gained some great experience in college playing a variety of positions and learned from some very good head coaches how to be a head coach at the high school level. It doesn't hurt that he is also one of Griffith's favorite sons. How that seemingly perfect storm translates into success on the field remains to be seen, but Griffith fans certainly hope that it will.



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Baseball Coaching Tips: Getting Hit By A Pitch Can Be Disheartening For All

By: Larry Cicchiello Special to MAB Monthly

It is a foul about 350 feet from home plate. In two subsequent at bats, he hesitated and decided to swing at the last fraction of a second. He was 0 -3 against me and did not come close to getting a hit off me. Please...I am not making fun of Danny nor am I bragging. I have always and still have total respect for everyone on the baseball field. The only point I'm making here is for your benefit and not mine. The point is that I was able to learn a lot about this hitter after throwing one pitch!

He saw fastballs off the plate and medium speed or slow curve balls the entire game. I still had to show him the fast ball because he's a good hitter for a reason and he will make adjustments. If I

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threw him only curve balls, probably about the fifth one would go over the fence. He would progressively go from looking terrible to looking very good and that's why he's a very good hitter.

Okay, let's get back to knowing a batter quickly. Let's make sure we are clear on something. Remember that even if I see that a hitter does not like a pitch in a certain location, it does not mean that I can throw that same pitch over and over and over again and expect to be successful. Good hitters will make adjustments at the plate. I still have to show him other pitches and other locations also.

Be cautious that a batter doesn't start out one way and then when he is actually swinging, he changes. For example, a batter may have his bat curled around his head but when he's actually ready to hit, he changes and it's not curled any longer.

Another example is if a batter has an open stance. He may possibly close his stance just before getting ready to swing. You have to pay attention, just like a batter who takes your pitch and follows it all the way into the catcher's mitt to see how your pitch is moving.

Baseball pitching tips require clever use of the mind as well as the body and pitching is not simply getting the ball and throwing the pitch. Please make sure you learn a hitter's tendencies as quickly as possible!

And don't ever forget to take that sneaky look at those practice swings, one of the best baseball pitching tips you will ever hear!

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

RailCats to Host 2 Open Tryouts This Spring

Press Release Provided

GARY, IN – Gary SouthShore RailCats Manger Greg Tagert has announced two chances to become a RailCat with open tryouts on March 14th at Cumberland University in Lebanon, TN and May 2nd at U. S. Steel Yard in Gary, IN.

The RailCats and Schaumburg Boomers, both owned by prominent Chicago attorney Pat Salvi and his wife Lindy, will team up to host the first tryout at Cumberland University on March 14th. Cost for participants in $60 and registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. for position players and 12:30 p.m. for pitchers.

The second chance to become a RailCats player will be at U. S. Steel Yard, the home of the RailCats, on Saturday, May 2nd. Registration cost is $50 and begins at 9 a.m. for position players and 12 p.m. for pitchers.

Players should wear proper baseball attire and will need to provide their own equipment, including wood bats and catchers gear.

The first chance to see the 2015 RailCats in action will be Saturday, May 9th at the inaugural Baseball, Brews & Blues craft beer festival.

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

Did you Know?

Only 16 pitchers in the history of Major League Baseball have pitched more than 1,000 career games. 2 of those 16 are LaTroy Hawkins and Dan Plesac, both of who grew up in Gary.

Boxing was not a legal sport until 1901.

The first baseball uniforms included straw hats.

There has never been a perfect March Madness bracket.

The legendary dog sled race, the Iditarod is actually a recreation of a 1925 emergency medical supply run from Anchorage to Nome Alaska in 1925.

The first volleyball were made from the bladder of a basketball.

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