



2001 Notre Dame Softball



University of Notre Dame Sports Information • March 21, 2001 • Contact: Alan Wasielewski, 219-631-7516, Fax: 219-631-7941

2001 Schedule			
<i>February</i>			
<i>16-18 Fri.-Sun. at Holiday Inn Invitational (Tampa, Fla.)</i>			
16	Fri.	vs. Maryland	W, 4-1
16	Fri.	vs. South Florida	W, 5-3
17	Sat.	vs. #4 Washington	W, 3-2
17	Sat.	vs. Hofstra	W, 8-1
18	Sun.	vs. #18 S.Carolina	W, 1-0
<i>23-25 Fri.-Sun. at Lady Razorback Invitational (Fayetteville, Ark.)</i>			
23	Fri.	vs. Texas Tech	W, 4-0
24	Sat.	vs. Arkansas	W, 4-3
24	Sat.	vs. Maine	W, 8-0 (5)
25	Sun.	vs. Arkansas	L, 0-2
<i>March</i>			
<i>2-4 Fri.-Sun. at Frost Tournament (Chattanooga, Tenn.)</i>			
2	Fri.	vs. Jacksonville St.	W, 4-1
2	Fri.	vs. Tenn.-Chatt.	W, 5-3
3	Sat.	vs. Alabama-Birm.	W, 9-1 (5)
11	Sun.	at #24 Cal St. North. (Northridge, Calif.)	W, 5-1
13	Tues.	at Long Beach State (Long Beach, Calif.)	W, 7-3
13	Tues.	at Long Beach State (Long Beach, Calif.)	W, 2-0
<i>15-18 Th.-Sun. Kia Klassic Tournament (Fullerton, Calif.)</i>			
15	Thurs.	vs. Utah State	W, 6-0
15	Thurs.	vs. #7 Fresno State	W, 4-2
16	Fri.	vs. #5 Oklahoma	L, 2-4
17	Sat.	vs. Hawaii	W, 4-1
17	Sat.	vs. #10 Arizona St.	W, 5-1 (9)
18	Sun.	vs. #9 Cal. St. Full.	L, 4-5
27	Tues.	Western Michigan	4:00 p.m.
28	Wend.	Valparaiso	4:00 p.m.
31	Sat.	*St. John's	11:00 a.m.
<i>April</i>			
1	Sun.	*Seton Hall	11:00 a.m.
3	Tues.	at Purdue	2:00 p.m.
7	Sat.	*at Connecticut	12:00 p.m.
8	Sun.	*at Syracuse	11:00 a.m.
11	Wend.	Bowling Green	3:30 p.m.
12	Thurs.	Loyola (Chicago)	4:00 p.m.
14	Sat.	*Pittsburgh	11:00 a.m.
17	Tues.	at Indiana State	2:00 p.m.
19	Thurs.	at #13 DePaul	4:30 p.m.
21	Sat.	*at Virginia Tech	11:00 a.m.
24	Tues.	at Illinois-Chicago	5:30 p.m.
25	Wend.	Toledo	4:00 p.m.
28	Sat.	*Boston College	11:00 a.m.
29	Sun.	*Providence	11:00 a.m.
<i>May</i>			
4	Fri.	*at Villanova	12:00 p.m.
5	Sat.	*at Rutgers	10:30 a.m.
10-12	Th.-Sat.	BIG EAST Championship	
17-20	Th.-Sat.	NCAA Regionals	
24-28	Th.-Mon.	College World Series	
All home games (indicated in bold) played at Ivy Field.			
* - indicates BIG EAST Conference game			

Who: Notre Dame, Western Michigan and Valparaiso
What: Notre Dame's first two home dates of the 2001 season
Where: Notre Dame, Ind., Ivy Field
When: #12 Notre Dame vs. Western Michigan (DH), Tuesday, March 27, 4 p.m.
 #12 Notre Dame vs. Valparaiso (DH), Wednesday, March 28, 4 p.m.

Notre Dame will enjoy well-deserved week off before its home opener on March 27: The 12th-ranked Notre Dame softball team will take a break from action for a weekend to rest up from a highly successful Spring Break trip and prepare for its home opener vs. Western Michigan on March 27, at 4 p.m.
Irish move up to highest-ever ranking in the USA Today/NFCA Top 25: Notre Dame has moved up to its highest-ever ranking after an impressive run to third place in the Kia Klassic (March 15-18). Notre Dame finished third in the prestigious tournament and knocked off #7 Fresno State and #10 Arizona State during the competition.
 Notre Dame entered the season ranked 19th in the preseason poll and moved to 14th in the Feb. 21st poll. The Irish then dropped a spot to 15th in the Feb. 28th poll, but moved back up to 14th for two weeks (March 7 and 14).

Notre Dame in the USA Today/NFCA Top 25 this season:
 Preseason: 19 (0-0)
 Irish defeat #4 Washington and #18 South Carolina while capturing the Holiday Inn Invitational in Tampa, Fla.
Feb. 21: 14 (5-0)
 Irish give up two runs on a double in the sixth inning to drop first game of the season at Arkansas.
Feb. 28: 15 (8-1)
 Irish lose three games off the schedule due to inclement weather but claim third tournament title of the season at the Morning News Invitational in Chattanooga, Tenn.
March 7: 14 (11-1)
 Irish sweep a doubleheader at #24 Cal State Northridge.
March 14: 14 (13-1)
 Irish finish third in the Kia Klassic, knocking off #7 Fresno State and #10 Arizona State while posting a 5-2 record during the week.
March 21: 12 (18-3)
 Irish earn highest-ever ranking and face a week off before their home opener vs. Western Michigan (March 27).
Notre Dame posts best-ever start: Notre Dame's 18-3 (.857) record over its first 21 games is by far the best start to a season since the program began in 1989. The Irish also started the season with an 11-1 record, as the 8-4 starts in 1995 and 2000 seasons were the previous best starts for a season.
 Notre Dame's 21-game record to start a season during the Liz Miller era (1993-current):
 1993: 12-9 (.571)
 1994: 10-11 (.476)
 1995: 14-7 (.667)
 1996: 12-9 (.571)

1997: 11-10 (.523)
 1998: 8-13 (.380)
 1999: 12-9 (.571)
 2000: 16-5 (.762)
 2001: 18-3 (.857)
Andrea Loman becomes second Irish player to earn BIG EAST Player of the Week accolades: Sophomore first base Andrea Loman (Riverside, Calif.) was named the BIG EAST Player of the Week on March 19, for her performance during the Kia Klassic last weekend (March 15-18). In the nine games the Irish played over Spring Break, Loman increased her batting average from .214 to .333 by pounding out 12 hits, three RBI and one home run (vs. Hawaii).
 Loman also faired well against Notre Dame's higher-ranked competition, including a three-for-three afternoon against #5 Oklahoma, a two-for-three game vs. #24 Cal State Northridge and a two-for-four contest vs. #9 Cal State Fullerton.
 She is the second Irish player (Jenny Kriech, Feb.26) to earn the award this season.
Kriech dominates competition over the first month of the season: No player on the Notre Dame roster has been more consistent than junior rightfielder Jenny Kriech (Indianapolis, Ind.) in the first three weeks of the season.
 She started off by splitting tournament MVP honors with teammate Lizzy Lemire at the Holiday Inn Invitational (Feb. 16-18) and earning a spot on the Morning News Invitational (Feb. 23-25) all-tournament team.
 The Irish lead-off hitter has 27 hits in 21 games this season, including the following dramatic moments:
 • A game-winning single up the middle against #4 Washington on Feb. 17.
 • A game-tying single against Arkansas (Feb. 24) in the top of the fifth, setting the table for teammate Jen Sharron's game-winning home run and Kriech scoring the eventual game-winning run.
 • A walk-off three-run triple in the bottom of the fifth against Maine (Feb. 24) that ended the game on collegiate softball's eight-run rule.
 • She drove the first pitch of the third inning vs. Jacksonville State deep over the wall in right field for her first home run of the year and third of her career.
 • She is second on the team in hitting with runners in scoring positions (8-19, .421), has posted a batting average of .500 (17-34) when she leads off an inning and has nine two-out RBI.
 Kriech leads the team with a .391 batting average and also has 11 RBI and 16 runs scored so far in 2001. She also has four stolen bases and was named the BIG EAST Player of the Week on Feb. 26.

2001 Notre Dame Softball Roster

No.	Name	Year	Pos.	Ht.	B/T	Birthdate	Hometown (High School)
2	***Melanie Alkire (C)	Sr.	SS/RHP	5-8	R/R	10-6-79	Union City, CA (James Logan)
4	***Danielle Klayman (C)	Sr.	OF	5-7	L/L	9-17-79	San Diego, CA (La Jolla)
5	**Kas Hoag	Jr.	UT/DP	5-5	L/R	6-13-80	Wallingford, CT (Lyman Hall)
7	Jessica Sharron	So.	RHP	5-8	R/R	10-12-81	Agoura Hills, CA (Thousand Oaks)
8	Kristin Schmidt	Fr.	RHP	5-9	R/R	4-3-82	Houston, TX (North Shore Senior)
9	***Jen Sharron (C)	Sr.	LHP	5-9	L/L	9-14-79	Agoura Hills, CA (Thousand Oaks)
10	*Alexis Madrid	So.	2B/SS	5-1	L/R	10-17-81	Temecula, CA (Temecula)
11	**Jenny Kriech	Jr.	OF	5-7	L/L	9-8-80	Indianapolis, IN (Perry Meridian)
15	Nicole deFau	Fr.	IF/OF	5-9	R/R	10-5-82	Southington, CT (Southington)
16	***Lizzy Lemire (C)	Sr.	OF	5-9	R/R	10-10-79	Irvine, CA (Woodbridge)
17	Sarah Kirkman	Sr.	OF/DP	5-11	R/R	11-2-78	Kokomo, IN (Northwestern)
18	*Andria Bledsoe	So.	3B/SS	5-7	R/R	8-4-81	Higley, AZ (Highland)
19	Chantal DeAlcuaz	Fr.	C	5-9	R/R	4-29-82	Modesto, CA (Central Catholic)
20	*Lisa Mattison	So.	1B/C/DP	5-10	R/R	4-26-81	Granger, IN (Penn)
22	**Jarrah Myers	Jr.	C	5-9	R/R	4-22-80	Carbondale, KS (Santa Fe Trail)
33	*Andrea Loman	So.	1B/3B	5-10	R/R	11-25-81	Riverside, CA (Poly)

* - indicates monograms won
 (C) - indicates 2001 team captains
Head Coach: Liz Miller (Western Michigan, '69), 341-152 (.692) record at Notre Dame (Eight years)
Associate Head Coach: Deanna Gumpf (Nebraska '92)
Assistant Coach: Traci Conrad (Michigan '99)
Volunteer Assistant Coach: John Gumpf (Cal St. San Bernardino '97)
Trainer: Chantal Porter (Iowa State '94)
Team Managers: Maureen Guilfoyle, Sean Coary

Pronunciation Guide

Melanie Alkire Al-KYE-er
 Chantal DeAlcuaz Deh-All-quez
 Nicole deFau duh-FOE
 Andria Bledsoe An-DREE-a
 Kas Hoag..... HOE-g
 Jennifer Kriech Creek
 Lizzy Lemire Lah-MEER
 Andrea Loman An-DRAY-a

Notre Dame Softball Quick Facts

All-Time Record: 458-235-2
 Extra-Innings Record: 29-31-2
 Overall Winning Seasons: 12
 Overall Losing Seasons: 0
 2000 Record: 47-14
 Home: 14-4
 Away: 14-2
 Neutral: 19-8
 BIG EAST: 14-2 (1st)
 Starters Returning/Lost: 9/0
 Monogram Winners
 Returning/Lost: 11/3

Streaking: As Notre Dame opened the season with eight consecutive victories, the Irish stretched their regular-season win streak to 16 (dating back to May 22, 2000). That streak ranks as the third-best in school history.

All-time Notre Dame regular-season win streaks:
 21: April 11, 1998 – Feb. 20, 1999
 19: March 16, 1996 – April 11, 1996
 16: May 22, 2000 – Feb. 25, 2001
 13: April 16, 1990 – April 25, 1990

Hitting the long ball: Six Irish players have blasted home runs over the first three weeks of the season. **Andria Bledsoe (Higley, Ariz.)** hit her first career round-tripper against South Florida while **Andrea Loman** added a solo shot against #4 Washington and Hawaii (March 17). **Jen Sharron (Agoura Hills, Calif.)** joined the home run club with a three-run shot in the fifth inning vs. Arkansas (Feb. 24). It was Sharron's third career home run. Notre Dame's top hitter so far in 2001, **Jenny Kriech**, hit her first home run of the year vs. Jacksonville State (March 9).

Jarrah Myers (Carbondale, Kan.) leads the team in round-trippers with three, blasting two in one game vs. #24 Cal State Northridge and one against #9 Cal State Fullerton.

Three bases are better than two: Notre Dame set the team record for triples last season with 18 and the Irish seem to have their minds set on exceeding that mark this year, having posted seven triples so far this season.

Jarrah Myers, Lizzy Lemire, Andria Bledsoe and Jenny Kriech have all hit triples this season. It was Lemire's eighth career three-bagger, while Myers and Bledsoe both posted their fourth career triples. Kriech has moved into fourth place on the all-time list for career triples with 10. Katie Marten ('94-'97) tops the list with 13.

Rookie righthander Schmidt puts up veteran numbers: The success of freshman RHP **Kristin Schmidt (Houston, Texas)** has put the Irish coaching staff in

the enviable position of possessing two quality starting pitchers for the 2001 season.

Schmidt is 8-1 in six starts this season with a 0.95 ERA. She has struck out 80 and pitched a complete-game three-hit shutout in Notre Dame's 8-0 five-inning victory over Maine. The freshman hurler struck out a 11 Maine batters in just five innings of work.

The rookie stepped up her game to an even higher level at the Kia Classic (March 15-18), shutting down some of the top offenses in the nation. Schmidt earned two victories with complete game performances vs. 10th-ranked Arizona State and a four-hit shutout of Utah State.

Against the Sun Devils, she pitched all nine innings of the extra-innings contest, surrendering just two hits (a lead-off bunt single, followed by a single in the bottom of the ninth that allowed the runner placed on second in the international tie breaker rule to score) in the game. At one point in the game, Schmidt retired 17 straight Sun Devil batters.

Against Utah State on March 15, Schmidt posted a career-best 13 strikeouts while allowing just four hits.

Schmidt also made an extended relief appearance vs. Oklahoma, taking over for starting pitcher Jen Sharron for the third out of the first inning. She had an immediate impact, striking out the first batter she faced in three pitches and eventually holding the potent Sooner offense to just three hits the rest of the way.

Schmidt posted some eye-popping numbers for the week: 23.1 innings pitched, just 10 hits allowed, two runs (one earned) and 28 strikeouts (1.21 per inning pitched) for a 0.30 ERA in four appearances.

Myers ties two school records: Junior all-BIG EAST catcher **Jarrah Myers** equalled two school records in the second game of a doubleheader vs. #24 Cal State Northridge on March 11, in Northridge, Calif. She blasted two home runs in the game, matching the school record held by six different Irish players, in-

cluding herself when she hit two home runs vs. Seton Hall on April 30, 2000. Against CSUN, Myers launched a three-run shot down the leftfield line in the fifth inning and muscled a two-run homer over the rightfield fence in the seventh inning. Adding an RBI single in the first inning, she posted six RBI in the game, matching the school record held by teammate **Melanie Alkire (Union City, Calif.)** (vs. San Diego State, 3-12-00).

Quick recap of the Spring Break trip: Notre Dame completed its most successful Spring Break trip in the program's history with a 7-2 record while knocking off three ranked teams during its trip to Southern California (March 10-18). The Irish began the nine-game slate on March 11, with a doubleheader sweep of #24 Cal State Northridge (5-1, 7-3). Both games were highlighted by impressive pitching performances by Notre Dame starting pitchers **Jen Sharron** (complete game, four hits, one run, six strikeouts) and **Kristin Schmidt** (6.1 innings pitched, five hits, no runs and seven strikeouts) and the thunderous bat of Irish catcher **Jarrah Myers**. Myers finished three-for-six in the two games with two home runs and seven RBI.

Notre Dame returned to competition on Wednesday, March 13, vs. Long Beach State. The game evolved into a pitchers duel, as Irish starter Jen Sharron would allow just three hits in a complete game shutout while Long Beach's Kelly Nasrawi would give up just two Irish runs in five innings of work. **Jenny Kriech** and **Andrea Loman** both posted two-for-three performances vs. the 49ers and the Irish earned their 14th win of the season 2-0.

The team entered the Kia Classic on Thursday, March 15, and solidified its standing as one of the top teams in the nation. The Irish would compile a 4-2 record (and a third place finish) in the tournament while knocking off #7 Fresno State and #10 Arizona State. Notre Dame currently boasts a 6-2 record in 2001 against teams ranked the the USA Today/NFCA Top 25.

USA Today/NFCA Top 25
(as of March 21, 2001)

School	Record	Points	LW
1. UCLA	35-0	674	1
2. Arizona	33-2	639	2
3. California	32-1	613	3
4. Alabama	25-0	602	4
5. Stanford	28-2-1	554	5
6. Oklahoma	21-1-1	557	6
7. LSU	23-5	483	8
8. Cal St. Fullerton	25-8	470	9
9. Arizona State	25-8	434	10
10. DePaul	14-7-1	409	11
11. Fresno State	17-8	393	9
12. NOTRE DAME	18-3	362	14
13. Iowa	18-6	339	13
14. Washington	20-9	335	12
15. Oregon State	21-10-1	285	14
16. Florida State	29-5	255	16
17. South Carolina	20-10-1	248	17
18. Nebraska	21-9	244	18
19. Baylor	25-7	153	19
20. Texas A&M	22-6	134	20
21. Wisconsin	15-9	92	22
22. Pacific	24-5	80	25
23. SW Texas State	24-7	74	23
24. Cal St. Northridge	14-11	49	24
Michigan	9-9	49	21

Others receiving votes: Louisiana-Lafayette (42), Oregon (39), Florida Atlantic (36), Massachusetts (27), Texas (26), New Mexico (16), North Carolina (14), Utah (13), Florida International (12), Florida (8), Texas Tech (6), Hawaii (5).

Bold indicates 2001 Notre Dame opponents.
Lw - ranking in the last poll

Notre Dame Sports Information

Publicity for Notre Dame softball is coordinated by sports information publicity assistant Alan Wasielewski.

Photographs, statistics and feature ideas are available by contacting Wasielewski at (219) 631-7516 or via e-mail at Wasielewski.3@nd.edu.

Requests to interview student-athletes must be arranged through the SID office and should be made at least 24 hours in advance. Media may contact coach Liz Miller directly on weekdays at (219) 631-6167. Credentials for home games can be obtained by calling Wasielewski.

Statistics, results and weekly releases also are readily available on Notre Dame's official athletic site, www.und.com.

Irish picked to repeat as BIG EAST champs: Notre Dame, which finished last season ranked 24th in the country, returns all nine starters from its 2000 BIG EAST Championship title team last year. Led by captains **Melanie Alkire**, **Danielle Klayman**, **Lizzy Lemire** and **Jen Sharron**, the Irish have been picked to repeat as BIG EAST champions by a vote from the league's coaches.

The 2001 BIG EAST Coaches Preseason Poll:

1. Notre Dame, 100 pts.
2. Connecticut, 91 pts.
3. Seton Hall, 68 pts.
Virginia Tech, 68 pts.
5. Boston College, 64 pts.
6. Villanova, 55 pts.
7. Syracuse, 50 pts.
8. St. John's, 43 pts.
9. Rutgers, 29 pts.
10. Pittsburgh, 25 pts.
11. Providence, 12 pts.

The Irish finished with a 14-2 record in BIG EAST competition last season and swept through the BIG EAST Championship in three games. Notre Dame outscored Boston College (5-2) and Connecticut (5-0, 7-0) 17-2 to earn its third consecutive conference championship title.

All-Americans return: Seniors **Melanie Alkire** and **Jen Sharron** became Notre Dame's first All-Americans since 1996 by earning NFCA second-team All-American honors last year.

Katie Marten ('94-'97) earned NFCA third team honors in 1995 and 1996 while Terri Kobata ('93-'96) earned third team honors in 1995 and second team honors in 1996.

Alkire finished the 2000 season with 13 home runs, 64 RBI and 73 hits. She also posted a 7-1 pitching record (in 13 appearances) with a 2.30 ERA, including a six-hitter against sixth-ranked and 2000 National Champion Oklahoma on Mar. 18, 2000.

Sharron pitched 27 complete games last season, tossing 246 strikeouts and posting a 0.88 ERA. In her career, the Agoura Hills, Calif., native has pitched 574.2 innings with 504 strikeouts and a 1.26 ERA entering the 2001 season.

Talented and noteworthy returnees: The Irish are loaded with veteran players and talented underclassmen this season. Out of the nine starting players that return to the lineup this season, eight earned postseason accolades from the BIG EAST conference. **Jen Sharron** earned her third consecutive BIG EAST Pitcher-of-the-Year award and was picked by league coaches to repeat the honor once again in 2001.

Melanie Alkire won her second consecutive BIG EAST Player-of-the-Year award last season and placed an exclamation point on her conference season by earning the Most Outstanding Player award at the 2000 BIG EAST Championship.

Andrea Loman helped the Irish earn a sweep of the major player-of-the-year awards by becoming the second consecutive Notre Dame player to earn BIG EAST Rookie-of-the-Year accolades (**Jarrah Myers** earned the distinction in 1999).

Alkire, Loman, Myers and Sharron were joined on the all-BIG EAST first team by Danielle Klayman, Jenny Kriech and Lizzy Lemire. **Andria Bledsoe** rounded out the Notre Dame award winners with a second team all-BIG EAST selection and a spot on the all-rookie team.

In keeping with the stellar league performance by her team, Irish head coach **Liz Miller** earned her second BIG EAST Coach-of-the-Year award. Miller previously won the award in 1996.

Miller is coaching in her 26th season: Notre Dame head coach Liz Miller is now in her ninth season with the Irish and 26th season as a collegiate head

Notre Dame Statistical Leaders
(as of March 21, 2001)

Batting Average (min. 50 at-bats)

Kriech, J. ....	.391
Myers, J. ....	.390
Loman, A. ....	.333

Runs

Kriech, J.	16
Myers, J.	13
Klayman, D.	12

Hits

Kriech, J.	27
Myer, J.	23
Alkire, M.	21

Doubles

Alkire, M.	5
Bledsoe, A.	5
Myers, J.	4

Triples

Kriech, J.	2
Lemire, L.	2
Myers, J.	2

Home Runs

Myers, J.	3
Loman, A.	2

RBI

Myers, J.	17
Bledsoe, A.	13
Kriech, J.	11

SLG %

Myers, J. ....	.678
Kriech, J. ....	.522
Loman, A. ....	.500

Total Bases

Myers, J.	40
Kriech, J.	36
Loman, A.	27

On Base %

Myers, J. ....	.478
Kriech, J. ....	.462
Loman, A. ....	.379

Stolen Bases

Kriech, J.	4
Myers, J.	4
Klayman, D.	2
Lemire, L.	2

Fielding %

Three tied with	1.000
-----------------------	-------

Assists

Alkire, M.	27
Madrid, A.	27
Bledsoe, A.	25

Pitching

ERA

Schmidt, K.	0.95
Sharron, Jen	2.08

Strikeouts

Schmidt, K.	80
Sharron, Jen	69

Shutouts

Sharron, Jen	3
Schmidt, K.	2

2001 BIG EAST Weekly Awards

Player of the Week:

Feb. 26 - **Jenny Kriech, Notre Dame**
 Mar. 5 - Carmen Farmer, Virginia Tech
 Mar. 12 - Keri Jacklets, Providence
 Mar. 19 - **Andrea Loman, Notre Dame**
 Mar. 26 -
 April 2 -
 April 9 -
 April 16 -
 April 23 -
 April 30 -
 May 7 -

Pitcher of the Week:

Feb. 26 - **Jen Sharron, Notre Dame**
 Mar. 5 - **Kristin Schmidt, Notre Dame**
 Clarisa Crowell, Virginia Tech
 Mar. 12 - Theresa Hornick, Villanova
 Mar. 19 - Christina Shanko, Seton Hall
 Mar. 26 -
 April 2 -
 April 9 -
 April 16 -
 April 23 -
 April 30 -
 May 7 -

coach. She boasts a 882-294 (.750) record over the last 26 years, 17 of which she coached at Lake Michigan College before heading to the Golden Dome in 1993.

In each of her previous eight seasons with the Irish, Miller has led the team to a conference title (Midwestern Collegiate '93-'95, BIG EAST '96-present) and the team has advanced to the NCAA tournament five times.

While at Lake Michigan College, Miller's teams amassed 12 conference championships and 11 regional titles. From 1981-85 her team finished in the nation's top five each year.

Miller entered the season ranked 16th on the NCAA winningest active coaches list with a 341-152 (.692) record at Notre Dame.

Alkire among the national and Notre Dame historical leaders: Senior Melanie Alkire compiled one of the best offensive seasons ever for a Notre Dame softball player in 2000. Alkire led the team in most of the offensive categories, ranking first in batting average (.376), hits (73), doubles (15), home runs (13), RBI (64), total bases (129), slugging percentage (.665) and on-base percentage (.421).

Her 64 RBI ranked fifth in the nation in 2000, while her 13 home run mark was ranked 34th.

Poised to eclipse many of the Notre Dame career offensive records in her final season, Alkire is fourth in career doubles (37), second in home runs (25), tied for first in RBI (137), sixth in walks (43) and fifth in toughest-to-strike out (15.80 at-bats per K).

So far in 2001, Alkire has 21 hits, including five doubles and five RBI.

Sharron assaults the Irish record books: Senior lefthander Jen Sharron is coming off one of the most dominating seasons ever for a Notre Dame pitcher. After posting a 0.88 ERA and 246 strikeouts in 2000, she has positioned herself among the best to ever enter the pitching circle for the Fighting Irish.

Ranking in the top five in 12 career pitching categories, just a typical season from "#9" will put her on top of many of the all-time charts. Sharron has averaged 191.4 inning pitched, 168 strike outs, 20.3 wins and 18 complete games in her first three years with the Irish. Over that same period of time, she has won three consecutive BIG EAST Pitcher-of-the-Year awards and is favored to win her fourth trophy this season.

Sharron has a 10-2 record with a 2.08 ERA and 69 strikeouts so far this season.

Sharron named a BIG EAST Scholar-Athlete: Standout Notre Dame softball pitcher Jen Sharron and Irish baseball pitcher Mike Naumann have been selected as the BIG EAST Conference Female and Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year, respectively, from the University of Notre Dame.

Sharron will receive \$2,000 toward graduate studies from the BIG EAST and Aeropostale, and be-

comes eligible for the overall female BIG EAST award based on nominees from each league member school. Aeropostale sponsors the league's post-graduate student-athlete scholarship program, awarding 31 scholarships to conference student-athletes.

A 3.272 student (on a 4.0 grade-point average scale) as a film, television and theater major in the College of Arts and Letters, Sharron twice has been a BIG EAST Academic All-Star and for two years has been part of the University's Academic Honors Program matching high-achieving student-athletes with faculty mentors.

In addition, Sharron is the softball team's representative on the Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC), participates with the STAR reading program, speaks to young people on the dangers of drug use as part of the Notre Dame Athletes Against Drugs program, has assisted with freshman orientation and participates in various activities with student-sponsored services events, primarily with Memorial Medical Center Pediatrics.

Irish placed at 19th in USA Today/NFCA Pre-season Top 25 poll: The Irish were ranked 19th in the USA Today/National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) preseason poll that was released on Wednesday, Jan. 24. The 19th ranking marks the highest the Irish have been placed in the preseason since 1994, when the team entered the season ranked 17th.

Notre Dame returns all nine starters from the 2000 squad that compiled a 47-14 record and won its second consecutive BIG EAST Championship title. Last year's team climbed to 17th in the NFCA poll last season, tying the school mark for the highest-ever national ranking. The Irish were ranked 24th in the final NFCA poll last season.

Irish boast a strong schedule this season: Notre Dame will face a number of ranked teams this season, as six opponents on the 2001 schedule appeared in the preseason top 25. Another five opponents received mention in the 'others receiving votes' category in the poll. Notre Dame has already defeated #4 Washington and #18 South Carolina at the Holiday Inn Invitational (Feb. 16-18) in Tampa, Fla., and #7 Fresno State, #10 Arizona State and #24 Cal

Notre Dame Softball Roster Breakdown

Starting Pitchers

Pos.	No.	Name	Year	Height	Bats/Throws	Birthdate	Hometown	Notes
LHP	9	Jen Sharron	Sr.	5-9	L/L	9-14-79	Agoura Hills, CA	Launched game-winning home run vs. Arkansas
RHP	8	Kristin Schmidt	Fr.	5-9	R/R	4-3-82	Houston, TX	8-1 with a 0.95 ERA and 80K in 66.2 innings

Probable Starters

C	22	Jarrah Myers	Jr.	5-9	R/R	4-22-80	Carbondale, KS	Leads the team in homers (3) and RBI (17)
1B	33	Andrea Loman	So.	5-10	R/R	11-25-81	Riverside, CA	Lifted batting avg. from .214 to .333 in 9 games
2B	1	Alexis Madrid	So.	5-1	L/R	10-17-81	Temecula, CA	Game-winning RBI single vs. #18 South Carolina
SS	2	Melanie Alkire	Sr.	5-8	R/R	10-6-79	Union City, CA	Has 21 hits in 21 games
3B	18	Andria Bledsoe	So.	5-9	R/R	8-4-81	Higley, AZ	Second on the team with 13 RBI
LF	16	Lizzy Lemire	Sr.	5-9	R/R	10-10-79	Irvine, CA	Five hits in the last four games
CF	11	Jenny Kriech	Jr.	5-7	L/L	9-8-80	Indianapolis, IN	Leads the team in batting average (.391)
RF	4	Danielle Klayman	Sr.	5-7	L/L	9-17-79	San Diego, CA	Posted a 10-game hit streak this season
DP	5	Kas Hoag	Jr.	5-5	L/R	6-13-80	Wallingford, CT	Two-run single vs. Maine

Off the Bench

IF	15	Nicole deFau	Fr.	5-9	R/R	10-5-82	Southington, CT	Started first game of her career as dp vs. Arkansas
C	19	Chantal DeAlcuaz	Fr.	5-9	R/R	4-29-82	Modesto, CA	Has scored one run as a pinch-runner this year
OF	17	Sarah Kirkman	Sr.	5-11	R/R	11-2-78	Kokomo, IN	Gives the Irish powerful bat on bench
1B	20	Lisa Mattison	So.	5-10	R/R	4-26-81	Granger, IN	Has three hits as a pinch hitter
RHP	7	Jessica Sharron	So.	5-8	R/R	10-12-81	Agoura Hills, CA	Four appearances, 3 K

2001 BIG EAST Standings		
Team	2001 BIG EAST record	Overall
1. Notre Dame	0-0	18-3
2. Villanova	0-0	10-2
3. Providence	0-0	9-5
4. Virginia Tech	0-0	16-12
5. Rutgers	0-0	10-8
6. Boston College	0-0	11-9
7. Seton Hall	0-0	4-5
8. St. John's	0-0	10-15
9. Connecticut	0-0	5-9
10. Syracuse	0-0	4-10
11. Pittsburgh	0-0	4-19

State Northridge on its trip to California for Spring Break.

The Irish also have their traditional meeting with DePaul this season (Thursday, April 19). The Blue Demons are currently ranked 10th.

Notre Dame has posted a 6-2 record against ranked teams this season in addition to its 5-3 record against ranked teams last season, with victories over #16 Louisiana Lafayette, #6 Oklahoma and #22 Illinois-Chicago three times.

Notre Dame sweeps the first BIG EAST softball weekly awards announcement: The 12th-ranked University of Notre Dame softball team, off to the its best start ever with an 18-3 record in 2001, had two players recognized by the BIG EAST Conference on Feb. 26.

Junior **Jenny Kreich** was named the BIG EAST Player of the Week after posting six hits in four games at the Morning News Invitational in Fayetteville, Ark., (Feb. 23-25). In an 8-0 victory over Maine on Saturday, Feb. 24, Kriech was three-for-three, including a game-ending three-run triple. She finished the tournament with a .545 batting average (six-for-11) and was named to the Morning News Invitational all-tournament team.

Senior All-American **Jan Sharron**, a three-time BIG EAST Pitcher of the Year, began the 2001 season in traditional style by capturing the first BIG EAST Pitcher-of-the-Week award. She allowed just one earned run in two starts during the second week-end of the season, including a one-hit shutout victory against Texas Tech on Friday. That 4-0 win over the Red Raiders included a seven-hour rain delay after the third inning. She joined Kriech and Irish catcher Jarrah Myers on the Morning News Invitational all-tournament team.

Sharron also did some damage at the plate. With the score tied at 1-1 in the bottom of the fifth against Arkansas on Feb. 24, Sharron launched a 0-2 pitch far over the centerfield fence to give her team a three-run lead. Notre Dame eventually won the game 4-3.

Three talented rookies join the Irish roster: **Liz Miller** and her staff welcomes three talented freshmen to the team this season. Catcher **Chantal DeAlcuaz** (Modesto, Calif.), IF/OF **Nicole deFau** (Southington, Conn.) and RHP **Kristin Schmidt** (Houston, Texas) all possess the talent and drive to contribute immediately in the Notre Dame lineup.

Schmidt, a 2000 second-team All-American coming out of North Shore Senior High School, has secured a spot in the Irish rotation with an impressive performance during the fall exhibition season.

Providing her team some solid depth in the in-

BIG EAST Results and Schedule	
March 15	
Rutgers 3, Akron 2	
#18 Nebraska 8, Syracuse 0 (6)	
South Florida 2, Rutgers 1	
March 16	
Georgia State 3, Connecticut 0	
Syracuse 2, Iowa State 1	
East Carolina 1, Providence 0 (8)	
Rutgers 4, Maine 0	
Missouri 5, Pittsburgh 2	
#16 Florida State 3, Syracuse 2	
Florida A&M 5, Connecticut 3	
Pittsburgh 2, Temple 1	
Rutgers 1, Liberty 0	
Virginia Tech 10, Tennessee State 1 (5)	
Virginia Tech 11, Winthrop 0 (5)	
Providence 6, Belmont 5	
March 17	
Rutgers 1, Illinois-Chicago 0 (8)	
Rutgers 6, Fordham 0	
Utah 4, Connecticut 2	
Massachusetts 3, Connecticut 0	
#18 Nebraska 3, Syracuse 0	
Seton Hall 3, Lafayette 2	
Villanova 3, Princeton 0	
Princeton 6, Villanova 2	
Hofstra 3, St. John's 2	
Virginia Tech 5, Bowling Green 1	
Appalachian State 4, Providence 3	
Long Island 1, Seton Hall 0	
Seton Hall 12, George Mason 0 (5)	
Maryland 5, Syracuse 3	
Temple 5, Pittsburgh 0	
Indiana 2, Pittsburgh 0	
March 18	
Seton Hall 13, Siena 0 (5)	
Temple 2, Pittsburgh 0	
Missouri 8, Pittsburgh 0 (5)	
Villanova 8, Brown 6	
Brown 5, Villanova 3	
Illinois 3, Virginia Tech 0	
Providence 3, Kent 0	
Towson 5, Providence 2	
March 22	
Hartford at Virginia Tech (DH)	2 p.m.
St. Joseph's at Villanova (DH)	2:30 p.m.
Long Island at Boston College (DH)	2:30 p.m.
March 23	
•Connecticut vs. Princeton	3 p.m.
•Connecticut vs. Troy State	8 p.m.
March 24	
Providence at Yale (DH)	12 p.m.
St. John's at Manhattan (DH)	1 p.m.
Boston College at Radford (DH)	2 p.m.
Seton Hall at Marist (DH)	TBA
•Connecticut vs. Cleveland State	1 p.m.
•Connecticut vs. Maryland	5 p.m.
March 25	
Boston College at Virginia Tech (DH)	12 p.m.
Manhattan at Villanova	12 p.m.
• - Buzz Classic (Atlanta, Ga.)	
bold indicates BIG EAST conference matchup	

field, deFau has shown the range and ability to be a steady backup to Alexis Madrid and may also see some time in the outfield. deFau joins junior Kas Hoag as the only two Notre Dame players with Connecticut state roots.

DeAlcuaz, who is the eighth Irish player on the 2001 roster from California (Modesto), will have the opportunity to backup and learn from one of the best catchers in the country, junior Jarrah Myers.

Preseason all-BIG EAST awards announced: The BIG EAST Conference has announced its choices for the preseason all-BIG EAST team (Jan. 4) and the Irish placed six players on the 13-member team of league standouts.

Senior shortstop **Melanie Alkire** was picked by the league coaches to earn her third consecutive BIG EAST Player of the Year award. Alkire was a unanimous first team all-BIG EAST selection in 2000 while leading the Irish in batting average (.376), hits (73), doubles (15), home runs (13), RBI (64), total bases (129), slugging percentage (.665) and on base percentage (.421). She boasts a .392 career batting

average in conference games and was also named the Most Outstanding Player at the 2000 BIG EAST Championship.

Senior left-hander **Jan Sharron** earned the nod for the Preseason Pitcher of the Year award. She has won the conference's pitcher of the year award the previous three years, becoming the first Irish pitcher and first-ever freshman to earn the honor in 1998. Sharron went 6-2 in conference competition last season, posting a 0.92 ERA. Her 0.73 lifetime ERA in conference play ranks as fifth on the conference career charts.

Alkire and Sharron were joined on the 2001 preseason all-BIG EAST team by teammates **Jarrah Myers**, **Jennifer Kriech**, **Lizzy Lemire**, and 2000 BIG EAST Rookie of the Year **Andrea Loman**.

Lemire has a great first weekend: Senior captain **Lizzy Lemire** made her presence known in the lineup at the Holiday Inn Invitational (Feb. 16-18). The Irish leftfielder posted six hits in five games, including three hits vs. Hofstra. She also had a double and a triple, scored two runs and notched two RBI over

the course of the tournament.

Her solid play earned her co-MVP honors of the tournament with teammate **Jenny Kriech**.

Notre Dame launches 24-hour sports hotline: The Notre Dame athletic department has launched its varsity sports hotline, available by calling (219) 631-3000.

The hotline provides schedule and results information for all 26 Notre Dame varsity sports and serves as a supplement to the live coverage and game recaps already provided on the official athletic website at www.und.com.

The menu offerings for the 24-hour hotline will be adjusted on a seasonal basis, with schedule and result information from 21 different sports currently being added to the hotline.

Here is how the hotline is currently aligned (as of March 5):

- Dial (219) 631-3000
- Select any of the following subgroups:
 1. Upcoming schedule and recent results of ALL varsity sports currently in action.
 2. Upcoming football schedules for the 2001 - 2003 football seasons.
 3. Men's basketball information.
 4. Women's basketball information.
 5. Lacrosse information (then press 1 for men's lacrosse and 2 for women's lacrosse).
 6. Baseball and softball information (press 1 for baseball, 2 for softball).
 7. Swimming and diving and track and field information (press 1 for swimming and diving and 2 for track and field).
 8. Rowing and golf information (press 1 for rowing, 2 for golf).
 9. Fencing and tennis information (press 1 for fencing, 2 for tennis)

Kevin White Radio Show: A weekly half-hour talk show featuring first-year athletics director Kevin White debuted Aug. 27 on Chicago's ESPN Radio 1000. "The Kevin White Show" is on the air from 11:00-11:30 p.m. for 30 consecutive Sundays on ESPN radio (1000 AM in Chicago, www.espnradio1000.com).

The show also can be heard in 35 states. White will welcome to the show a series of guests and prominent figures associated with college athletics including administrators, coaches and media members.

An Instant Classic? #14 Notre Dame vs. #10 Arizona State in the Kia Klassic: March Madness is not limited to games played in the 2001 NCAA basketball tournament. The "luck of the Irish" on St. Patrick's Day is not limited to the basketball-playing friends and classmates of the Notre Dame softball team.

Continuing a wild weekend of action at the 2001 Kia Klassic, the University of Notre Dame softball team defeated its fifth ranked opponent of the season with a marathon 5-1 victory over #10 Arizona State in the quarterfinals of the Kia Klassic.

Just how wild were the developments in the tournament on Saturday (March 17) afternoon? Two of the heavily favored teams entering the weekend, Arizona and Oklahoma, were eliminated from championship competition by Texas and DePaul, respectively. With the schedule of competition thrown off due to tight contests and an injury in the DePaul-Arizona matchup that required an ambulance to be

BIG EAST Statistical Leaders									
Team Batting Average					Runs Scored				
Villanova	.....			.299	Name	School	Games	Runs	R/G
Notre Dame	.....			.298	Hurt, Tiffany	VT	27	17	.63
Boston College	.....			.291	Kriech, Jenny	ND	21	16	.76
Seton Hall	.....			.263	Farmer, Carmen	VT	28	16	.57
Virginia Tech	.....			.252	Blumfield, Cara	BC	20	14	.70
Team ERA					Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	13	.62
Providence	.....			0.88	Doubles				
Notre Dame	.....			1.37	Names	School	Games	2B	2B/G
Virginia Tech	.....			1.44	Blair, Bronwyn	VT	28	7	.25
Villanova	.....			1.58	Garofalo	VT	28	6	.21
Boston College	.....			1.64	Barrett, Tiffany	UP	17	6	.35
Individual Batting Average					Wylie, Mindi	VT	28	6	.21
Name	School	Games	Hits	Avg.	Alkire, Melanie	ND	21	5	.24
Krueger, Lisa	VU	25	13	.520	RBI				
Blumfield, Cara	BC	57	25	.439	Name	School	Games	RBI	RBI/G
Smith, Mary Carroll	SHU	30	13	.433	Hurt, Tiffany	VT	27	22	.81
Jacklets, Kerri	PC	44	19	.432	Blumfield, Cara	BC	20	19	.95
Mikulyuk, Josey	VU	31	13	.419	Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	17	.81
Individual Pitching					Garofalo	VT	28	17	.61
Name	School	Games	IP	ERA	Houghton, Kelly	SJU	24	13	.54
VanDusen, Cori	PC	6	21.2	0.32	On Base Percentage				
Peterson, Melissa	PC	8	40.0	0.52	Name	School	Games	AB	OB%
Schmidt, Kristin	ND	12	66.2	0.74	Krueger, Lisa	VU	12	25	.586
Singley, Kari	VU	7	17.1	0.81	Blumfield, Cara	BC	20	57	.515
Hornick, Theresa	VU	8	33.0	0.85	Jacklets, Kerri	PC	14	44	.510
Hits					Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	59	.478
Name	School	Games	Hits	Hits/G	Jarratt, Summer	BC	20	59	.471
Garofalo	VT	22	27	.96	Wins				
Kriech, Jenny	ND	21	27	1.29	Name	School	App.	Record	
Blair, Bronwyn	VT	28	26	.93	Sharron, Jen	ND	12	10-2	
Farmer, Carmen	VT	28	26	.93	Schmidt, Kristin	ND	12	8-1	
Blumfield, Cara	BC	20	25	1.25	Black, Leah	RU	10	6-3	
Home Runs					Dobbe, Ashles	VT	11	6-4	
Name	School	Games	HR	HR/G	Calabrese, Gina	SJU	13	6-7	
Hurt, Tiffany	VT	27	7	.26	Strikeouts				
Broughton, Kelly	SJU	24	6	.25	Name	School	App.	K	K/G
Blumfield, Cara	BC	20	4	.20	Schmidt, Kristin	ND	12	80	8.40
Jacklets, Kerri	PC	14	4	.29	Black, Leah	RU	10	74	7.69
Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	3	.14	Sharron, Jen	ND	12	69	6.56
Triples					Calabrese, Gina	SJU	13	64	5.03
Name	School	Games	3B	3B/G	Malandris, Takae	BC	11	54	7.56
Jarratt, Summer	PC	20	4	.20	Innings Pitched				
Blair, Bronwyn	VT	28	3	.11	Name	School	App.	IP	IP/G
Kriech, Jenny	ND	21	2	.10	Calabrese, Gina	SJU	13	89.0	6.85
Lemire, Lizzy	ND	21	2	.10	Fitzgerald, Courtney	SJU	13	83.1	6.41
Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	2	.10	Sharron, Jen	ND	12	73.2	6.14
Stolen Bases					Black, Leah	RU	10	67.1	6.73
Name	School	Games	SB	SB/G	Schmidt, Kristin	ND	12	66.2	5.56
Neer, Brittney	RU	17	8	.47	Team Fielding				
Casey, Nicole	RU	18	4	.22	Name	PO	A	E	%
Pasquerella, Jackie	VU	12	4	.33	Villanova	235	88	7	.979
Flier, Robin	VU	12	4	.33	Virginia Tech	569	243	22	.974
Myers, Jarrah	ND	21	4	.19	Notre Dame	429	119	18	.968
					Boston College	398	167	21	.964
					Pittsburgh	446	188	25	.962

brought onto the field, the Irish-Sun Devil contest was pushed back to a starting time of 9:15 p.m., previously scheduled for 7 p.m.

As the cool California evening chilled both teams' potent offenses, the extra time both pitchers faced before the game must have been time well spent. Notre Dame starter **Kristin Schmidt** and her counterpart, Erica Beach, baffled both team's hitters over six innings of play.

After Arizona State started off the bottom of the first inning with a bunt single, Schmidt would retire

the next 17 Sun Devil batters in a row before yielding a two-out walk to Kristin Farber in the bottom of the sixth.

Beach was equally effective, allowing just a **Melanie Alkire** hit in the fourth over a six-inning stretch. She was lifted in the top of the seventh when Alkire reached on an error by ASU shortstop Kara Brun.

Relief pitcher Kirsten Voak picked up right where Beach left off, posting three consecutive outs and not allowing Alkire to advance past first base in the

inning.

Schmidt worked a perfect one-two-three inning in the seventh and the game was sent to extra innings under the international tie breaker rule, which stipulates that the batter making the last out in the previous inning is placed on second base when her team comes to bat.

Andrea Loman strode out to second at the start of the eighth inning and was moved to third base by an **Andria Bledsoe** sacrifice bunt. **Voak** rebounded to strikeout **Jen Sharron** and get **Alexis Madrid** to line out to shortstop to end the inning.

Now it would be up to Schmidt to keep the Sun Devil offense off the board as **Alicia Flanagan**, pinch running for **Beach**, was placed on second base. **Voak** popped the first pitch of the inning up to third base. **Shiloh Talanoa** then fouled out to third base and the Irish seemed to have the ability to escape the inning unscathed. **Bonnie Brannen** drew a walk, though, and **Flanagan** stole third base to renew the pressure on the Irish defense. Sun Devil pinch hitter **Sara Kahler** foul-popped the first pitch to **Loman** at first base, though, and Notre Dame received another opportunity to take the lead as both teams headed to the ninth.

Madrid was placed on second and **Jenny Kriech** ripped a grounder to shortstop that **Brun** was able to smother but not make a throw to first or third. With runners on the corners **Klayman** singled to short-leftfield, allowing **Madrid** to score the first run of the game. Next, **Alkire** connected for a long drive down the leftfield line that just missed wrapping around the foul pole for a home run. She followed the near-miss by bouncing a grounder to **Brun** that the Sun Devil shortstop could not handle once again. **Kriech** scampered home on the play and the Irish were poised to put even more runs on the board with **Alkire** at second and **Klayman** at third.

Voak recovered to strikeout Notre Dame's **Jarrah Myers** but **Lizzy Lemire** knocked in the second run of the game with a single to leftfield, advancing **Kriech** to third and moving to second base on the throw home attempting to tag **Klayman**.

Loman was due next in the lineup and **Voak** was able to strike her out, but **Brannen** lost control of the pitch behind the plate and **Alkire** came in to score on the passed ball. **Loman** ran to first and turned the corner to second base, drawing a throw from **Brannen** to pick the Irish sophomore off.

Loman was eventually tagged out, but **Lemire**

scored on the play to give the Irish a 5-0 lead heading into the bottom of the ninth.

Jennifer Forner was placed on second to start the bottom half of the ninth. **Farber** grounded the first pitch of the inning back to **Schmidt**, who tossed it over to **Loman** for the first out. **Nichole Thompson** followed with a single to leftfield and **Forner** scored the first and only Sun Devil run of the game. **Brun** then lined out to leftfield on a spectacular running catch by **Lemire**, robbing the ASU shortstop of an extra base hit. **Phelan Wright** popped up to **Madrid** at second base and the Irish were free to enjoy their first win over Arizona State in seven attempts.

GAME NOTES: Even though **Kristen Schmidt** kept the Arizona State bats under control, she was helped by three stellar defensive plays by the Irish ... in the bottom of the fifth inning, **Danielle Klayman** ran down a deep drive in the gap by ASU's **Shiloh Talanoa** ... **Andrea Loman** made a spectacular grab of a line shot in the bottom of the seventh to force the game into extra innings ... **Lizzy Lemire's** running grab in the ninth inning secured the victory for the Irish and robbed **Kara Brun** of the opportunity to make up for her two errors at shortstop.

