

2007 SCHEDULE (1-2)

FEBRUARY

* – BIG EAST game

in San Antonio, TX (Wolff Stadium)

Sat. 17	vs. Prairie View A&M	W, 15-8
Sat. 17	vs. Texas State	L, 1-2
Sun. 18	vs. Texas State	L, 0-6

Baseball at the Beach (Myrtle Beach, SC)

Fri. 23	vs. UNC-Wilmington	4:00 p.m.
Sat. 24	vs. TCU	4:00 p.m.
Sun. 25	vs. Coastal Carolina	12:30 p.m.

MARCH

Stetson Invitational (Deland, FL)

Fri. 2	at Stetson	7:00 p.m.
Sat. 3	vs. Nebraska	3:00 p.m.
Sun. 4	vs. Iowa	noon

Clearwater (FL) Invitational (Jack Russell Stadium)

Sat. 10	vs. Sacred Heart	10:00 a.m.
Sun. 11	vs. Duquesne	10:00 a.m.
Sun. 11	vs. Harvard	2:15 p.m.

FGCU Classic (Fort Myers, FL)

Wed. 14	vs. Dayton	6:00 p.m.
Thur. 15	vs. New York Tech	1:00 p.m.
Fri. 16	vs. Florida Gulf Coast	7:30 p.m.
Sat. 17	vs. Harvard	4:00 p.m.
Tues. 20	Cleveland State	5:05 p.m.
Wed. 21	Western Michigan	5:05 p.m.
Fri. 23	South Florida*	5:05 p.m.
Sat. 24	South Florida*	1:05 p.m.
Sun. 25	South Florida*	1:05 p.m.
Tues. 27	Central Michigan	5:05 p.m.
Wed. 28	Chicago State	5:05 p.m.
Fri. 30	at Pittsburgh*	6:00 p.m.
Sat. 31	at Pittsburgh*	3:00 p.m.

APRIL

Sun. 1	at Pittsburgh*	noon
Tues. 3	Oakland	5:05 p.m.
Thur. 5	at Cincinnati*	6:30 p.m.
Fri. 6	at Cincinnati*	6:30 p.m.
Sat. 7	at Cincinnati*	1:00 p.m.
Tues. 10	IPFW	6:05 p.m.
Wed. 11	Bowling Green	6:05 p.m.
Fri. 13	Georgetown*	6:05 p.m.
Sat. 14	Georgetown*	1:05 p.m.
Sun. 15	Georgetown*	1:05 p.m.
Tues. 15	Toledo	6:05 p.m.
Wed. 17	Purdue	6:05 p.m.
Fri. 18	West Virginia*	6:05 p.m.
Sat. 20	West Virginia*	3:05 p.m.
Sun. 21	West Virginia*	1:05 p.m.
Tues. 24	Ball State	6:05 p.m.
Wed. 25	Valparaiso	6:05 p.m.
Sat. 28	at Rutgers (DH)*	noon
Sun. 29	at Rutgers*	noon

MAY

Tues. 1	Illinois-Chicago	6:05 p.m.
Fri. 4	Seton Hall*	6:05 p.m.
Sat. 5	Seton Hall*	1:05 p.m.
Sun. 6	Seton Hall*	12:05 p.m.
Sat. 12	at Louisville (DH)*	noon
Sun. 13	at Louisville*	1:00 p.m.
Tues. 15	vs. Michigan (5th/3rd Park; Comstock Park, MI)	7:00 p.m.
Thur. 17	Connecticut*	6:05 p.m.
Fri. 18	Connecticut* (CSTV-live)	6:05 p.m.
Sat. 19	Connecticut* (CSTV-live)	1:05 p.m.

BIG EAST Conference Tournament

Tues.- 22-	at Keyspan Ballpark (Brooklyn, NY)
Sun. 26	pairings and times TBA

NCAA Tournament:

Regionals (June 1-4; campus sites) ...
Super Regionals (June 8-11; campus sites) ...
College World Series (June 15-25; Omaha, NE)

2007 NOTRE DAME BASEBALL

(Baseball at the Beach ... Feb. 23-25 ... Myrtle Beach, S.C.)

GOIN' TO CAROLINA – The Notre Dame baseball program continues its challenging start to the 2007 season this weekend with a rare trip to South Carolina, to play in the Baseball at the Beach tournament (hosted by Coastal Carolina) ... the six-team event is to be played at two sites, with all of the ND games in Myrtle Beach at Coastal Federal Field (home of the minor-league Myrtle Beach Pelicans) ... **Dave Schrage** last week became just the second ND baseball coach since 1924 to win his debut game with the Irish (the 15-8 win over Prairie View A&M was the most runs in an ND coach's debut since 1908) ... the Irish face UNC Wilmington (3-4) and #12 TCU (6-1) to open the tournament (Feb. 23 and 24, both at 4:00 EST) before facing the host Coastal Carolina team on the 25th at 12:30 ... LHP Wade Korpi and RHPs David Phelps and Brett Graffy comprise the starting rotation for the Irish (the opponents each are slated to start RHPs) ... note that additional gameday notes will be released prior to each game, with those notes including updated bio. capsules.

PLENTY OF WAYS TO FOLLOW THE IRISH – Notre Dame baseball fans will have several options for tracking the 2007 season on a game-by-game basis, through live-audio broadcasts, GameTracker live stats, free Irish Alert text messages and the ND Sports Hotline (plus potential live streaming video):

- Sean Stires returns as the primary **radio** play-by-play voice for Notre Dame baseball, to be aired live on ESPN Radio **1490 AM**, with some broadcasts on **1620** (ND baseball is part of a small percentage of programs in the nation with its entire season airing live on a commercial station) ... all games are streamed live on und.com, with the links posted on the lower left corner of the und.com main page ... the **online broadcasts are free** of charge, as part of Fighting Irish All-Access (which includes archives or all audio and video content) ... see All-Access signup link via the multimedia gold button at the top of each und.com page.

- Irish **ALERT free text-message updates** are available to your cell phone or other mobile device ... updates typically are sent three times a game ... see link on the rightside blue sidebar on the baseball page at und.com.

- **GameTracker** live stats are provided for all home games and most road games (based on phone-line availability) ... when Notre Dame is on the road, the home team typically provides the live stats – with bonus GameTracker stats also provided by the Notre Dame SID office for select road games (including all three in Myrtle Beach).

- The Notre Dame **Sports Hotline** provides a recap of each game and often will include special in-game updates for postseason action (or for doubleheader days) ... to access the hotline, call 574-631-3000, choose option 4 (for baseball/softball) and then press "1" for the baseball recap ... the hotline will be realigned for the winter/spring format later this week, prior to the season opener.

- In-game/postgame video offerings (details still are being finalized – stay tuned to und.com for possible video options).

COUNTDOWN REACHES ITS END – The Notre Dame baseball program's first games of the Dave Schrage era are in the books and und.com has been the place to be over the past few weeks, providing a series of offerings that counted down to opening day ... see the Countdown release at und.com for convenient links to check out items you might have missed.

WINNINGEST DIVISION I TEAMS OF THE DECADE

Team	2000-06			2007			Decade ('00-'07)			
	W	L	T	W	L	T	W	L	T	Pct.
Rice	348	115	0	6	4	0	354	119	0	.748
Florida State	356	129	1	10	0	0	366	129	1	.737
Oral Roberts	319	114	0	2	3	0	321	117	0	.733
Notre Dame	324	118	2	1	2	0	325	120	2	.729
Nebraska	330	127	0	3	1	0	334	128	0	.722
Texas	344	134	0	7	5	0	351	139	0	.716
Georgia Tech	326	128	0	3	3	0	329	131	0	.715
South Carolina	342	137	0	5	1	0	347	138	0	.715

THE ND-TCU SERIES – The teams have met just twice previously, with TCU winning at home in 1985 (9-3) and in a 2002 game played in Round Rock, Texas (7-3).

GASTON UNDERGOES SEASON-END-ING SHOULDER SURGERY

– Notre Dame senior catcher **Sean Gaston** (Brownsburg, Ind.) underwent shoulder surgery on Feb. 9 and is expected to miss the entire 2007 college baseball season ... Gaston was poised to direct the young Irish pitching staff but now must shift his focus to the rehabilitation process, in hopes of returning for a fifth year of eligibility in 2008 ... a .307 career batter with the Irish, Gaston struck out just 11 times in his junior season and would have been a leading candidate for 2007 Academic All-America honors due to his 3.38 cumulative GPA, as a double major in political science and history ... in addition to being a starter with the Irish during the 2005 and '06 seasons, Gaston spent the past two summers playing with the Cotuit Kettleers of the prestigious wood-bat Cape Cod League ... he was a 2005 Cape Cod League all-star and ranked among Cotuit's top offensive players in each of his CCL seasons.

ON THE SPOT

– Two newcomers – graduate student **Matt Weglarz** and freshman **Ryan Smith** – now enter the 2007 season as Notre Dame's primary options behind the plate ... infielders Ross Brezovsly and Eddy Mendiola also are in the mix for catching duties, as is junior Chris Soriano (a second-year walk-on) ... Weglarz graduated from Missouri State in May of 2006 with a year of eligibility remaining and currently is enrolled in Notre Dame's MBA program ... he played for the Bears in the 2004-06 seasons (also injured in '03, when the team advanced to the College World Series) and was a .293 career hitter, earning second team all-conference honors in the rugged Missouri Valley Conference as a junior in 2005 (when he hit .333 with a team-high 49 RBI) ... Smith received third team high school All-America honors from the American Baseball Coaches Association in 2006 and made some key strides while working with the talented Irish pitching staff during the 2006 fall season and the preseason period.

IRISH SET FOR RARE TRIP TO THE PALMETTO STATE – The Notre Dame baseball team will be making just its second all-time trip to the state of South Carolina and first in the regular season ... the 1994 Irish squad had an impressive performance at the 1994 NCAA East Regional that was played at Clemson, bouncing back from a 9-5 loss to Old Dominion by beating the host Tigers (8-1) and The Citadel (5-1) before losing to Auburn (0-8) ... ND also has limited playing experience in North Carolina, with previous trips to Duke and Elon ... the previous trip to N.C. came in a two-game series at Duke to open the 1988 season.

ALL-TIME MONOGRAM WINNERS MISSING S.C. – Some 830 all-time Notre Dame baseball monogram winners include players from 44 states (plus Canada and Panama) ... the only states not represented among the ND baseball monogram winners are Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Vermont ... former ND executive vice-president **Rev. Edmund P. Joyce** – a legend in the history of collegiate athletics – was the first Notre Dame student who was a native of South Carolina.

UNCW AND COASTAL SET TO BECOME OPPONENTS #288, 289 – Prairie View A&M last week became the 287th different opponent faced by Notre Dame in 115 seasons of Division I baseball, with UNC Wilmington and Coastal Carolina set to join that all-time opponents list this week ... the Irish have faced roughly 62% of the teams currently competing on the D-I level (179 of 291), including all teams currently in the BIG EAST, Missouri Valley, Big Ten, Ivy League, Pac-10 and SEC ... here's a look at the 112 teams still on the list (not including potential first-time opponents this season, among them New York Tech and Florida Gulf Coast):

- ACC** (have played 11 of 12) – with the exception of Maryland
- Big 12** (9 of 10) – Oklahoma State
- Horizon** (5 of 6) – Youngstown State
- Mid-American** (11 of 12) – Buffalo
- Mountain West** (5 of 7) – UNLV, Utah
- Western Athletic** (5 of 7) – San Jose State, Sacramento State
- Big West** (6 of 9) – Cap Poly, CS Northridge, UC Davis
- West Coast** (5 of 8) – San Francisco, St. Mary's, Gonzaga
- Conference USA** (6 of 9) – Southern Miss, UAB, East Carolina
- Mid-Continent** (3 of 6) – Western Illinois, Centenary, Southern Utah
- Patriot** (3 of 6) – Holy Cross, Bucknell, Lehigh
- Sunbelt** (7 of 11) – La. Lafayette, Louisiana Monroe, Troy, Middle Tennessee
- American East** (2 of 7) – Stony Brook, UMBC, Hartford, Binghamton, Albany
- Atlantic-10** (8 of 14) – Charlotte, Temple, St. Joe's, Richmond, URI, UMass
- Atlantic Sun** (5 of 10) – Belmont, East Tenn., Kennesaw State, Gardner Webb, Campbell
- Big South** (2 of 8) – VMI, Charleston Southern, Liberty, UNC Asheville, High Pt, Radford
- Colonial** (5 of 11) – George Mason, VCU, William & Mary, Hofstra, Northeastern, Towson
- Independents** (6 of 13) – Northern Colorado, Longwood, Savannah State, Hawaii-Hilo, New Jersey Tech, North Dakota State, Utah Valley State
- Metro** (2 of 10) – Canisius, Iona, LeMoyne, Manhattan, Marist, Rider, Siena, St. Peter's
- Mid-eastern** (1 of 7) – Bethune Cookman, Norfolk State, Maryland Eastern Shore, Coppin State, Delaware State, NC A&T
- Northeast** (3 of 8) – Central Connecticut, Fairleigh Dickinson, Long Island, Quinnipiac, Wagner
- Ohio Valley** (5 of 10) – Tennessee Tech, Southeast Missouri, Samford, Morehead State, Eastern Kentucky
- Southern** (4 of 10) – Davidson, Appalachian State, Wofford, Georgia Southern, Western Carolina, UNC Greensboro
- Southland** (3 of 12) – Southeast Louisiana, Lamar, Central Arkansas, Northwestern State, McNeese State, Nicholls State, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas-Arlington, Stephen F. Austin
- Southwest** (1 of 10) – Mississippi Valley, Alabama A&M, Jackson State, Alabama State, Alcorn State, Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Grambling, Texas Southern, Southern

COACHING DEBUTS – Dave Schrage joined Pat Murphy (1988; 14-11 at Duke) as the only Notre Dame coaches since 1924 to win their first game with the Irish ... here's a look at the first-game results, dating back to 1914 (5-4-1; previous seasons had rotating coaches who spent only part of the season with the team):

Dave Schrage – 15-8 win over Prairie View A&M, in San Antonio (2007)

- Paul Mainieri – 6-10 loss to Texas at Cal State Fullerton (1995)
- Pat Murphy – 14-11 win at Duke (1988)
- Larry Gallo – 8-7 loss at Delta State (1981)
- Tom Kelly – 4-3 loss to St. Bernard, at Alabama (1976)
- Jake Kline – 7-5 home loss to Ohio State (1934)
- George Keogan – 4-3 win at Georgia Tech (1924)
- Walter Halas – 3-3 tie at home vs. Wisconsin (1921)
- Gus Dorais – 4-3 home win over Wisconsin (1919)
- Jess Harper – 7-2 home win over Wisconsin (1914)

SCHRAGE POSTS RARE HIGH SCORING WIN IN DEBUT – Dave Schrage became just the second ND baseball coach since 1924 to win his debut game with the Irish ... the 15 runs scored vs. Prairie View are the most for Notre Dame in the debut game of a head coach in nearly 100 years, dating back to 1908 when the team posted a 19-0 win over Winona in the first game under coach Harry Curtis.

OPENER NOTES

- The Irish opened their season at San Antonio's Wolff Stadium for the first time and have played five previous openers in the state of Texas: at St. Mary's, Texas Wesleyan, St. Edward's, TCU and Trinity ... Tennessee (7) and Florida (7) are the only states – aside from Indiana – that have been the site of more season openers for ND baseball than Texas (6).
- The Irish have outscored their opposition 43-12 in the past four season openers (also 7-1 vs. San Diego State, 18-3 vs. Florida A&M and 3-0 vs. Indiana State).
- The 15 runs vs. Prairie View represent the 2nd-most for the Irish in an opener in nearly 45 years (since a 20-3 win at Indiana to start the 1963 season) ... the 2005 ND team opened with an 18-3 win over Florida A&M, at Central Florida ... the 15 runs also are the 8th-highest run total in an opener, spanning 115 seasons of Notre Dame varsity baseball.

TOUGH-LUCK LOSS – The season's first loss saw Texas State tie the game on a solo home run and later score the eventual gamewinning run in the 8th, as a untimely catcher's interference play led to that unearned run (scored on a sac. fly) ... the game featured plenty of baserunners but only three of them crossed home plate, with the Irish leaving 10 on base while the Bobcats stranded 11.

OPENING-WEEK LONG BALLS – Mike Dury has just five career home runs with the Irish but two of them have come in opening-week games (also in 2006, vs. Oklahoma).

DEFENSIVE GEMS – Notre Dame made several impressive defensive plays in the first Texas State game, most notably a 1-6-3 double play from Jeremy Barnes to Brett Lilley to David Phelps ... 3B A.J. Pollock and Lilley added some strong plays on the left side of the infield and CF Danny Dressman hauled in David Wood's deep flyout late in the game.

**Notre Dame in
Recent Season Openers**

- 16-4 since 1988 (lost '95, '96, '97, '01)
- 9-1 in past nine openers (6 straight wins)
- 1990 (Feb. 5) and '98 (Jan. 30) are the only seasons to open earlier than 2007
- During the past 13 openers (1995-2007), the opponent already has played an average of 7 games before facing the Irish.

2/17/07	win	ND 15	Prairie View 8 (San Antonio, Texas) <i>PVA&M had played 12 previous gms</i>
2/23/06	win	ND 3	Indiana State 0 (Millington, Tennessee)
2/18/05	win	ND 18	Florida A&M 3 (Orlando, Florida/at UCF) <i>FAMU had played 10 previous games</i>
2/20/04	win	ND 7	San Diego State 1 (at USC Classic) <i>SDSU had played 14 previous games</i>
2/21/03	win	ND 10	Dayton 9 (at Arizona State)
2/22/02	win	ND 7	Missouri 6 (10 inn.) (at University of New Orleans) <i>Missouri had played 4 previous games</i>
2/17/01	loss	UNO 7	ND 6 (at Mississippi State) <i>UNO had played 3 previous games</i>
2/24/00	win	ND 6	Air Force 0 (Millington, Tennessee) <i>AFA had played 12 previous games</i>
2/19/99	win	ND 8	James Madison 4 (at Florida International) <i>JMU had played a previous game</i>
1/30/98	win	ND 10	Florida State 1 (Disney Stadium; Orlando)
2/21/97	loss	LBSU 10	ND 8 (at Long Beach State)
2/17/96	loss	GT 12	ND 4 (at Georgia Tech)
2/24/95	loss	Texas 10	ND 6 (at Cal State Fullerton)
3/5/94	win	ND 8	at Tulane 2
3/8/93	win	ND 11	at Arizona State 4
2/28/92	win	ND 2	Army 1 (Millington, Tennessee)
2/21/91	win	ND 4	Dartmouth 2 (in Phoenix, Arizona)
2/5/90	win	ND 3	Goshen 0 (at ND)
2/23/89	win	ND 12	at Trinity (TX) 2
2/25/88	win	ND 14	at Duke 11

EARLY CHALLENGES

The current season features possibly the most challenging start in the program's 115-year history, due to a combination of the following factors:

- Notre Dame spent the fall and winter preseason adjusting to a brand new coaching staff and their playing system. The 2007 squad is the first Irish baseball team since 1995 - and just the fifth in the past 73 years - that has entered a season under the direction of a new coaching staff.
- The Irish had the rare task of replacing the entire 3-man weekend rotation from the 2006 season, with each of those pitchers being selected in the 2006 Major League draft. A sampling of the previous 17 seasons reveals that none of those ND teams had to replace all three of their top starting arms from the prior season. Only five times since 1989 - in 1993, '99, 2001, '03 and '04 - has an Irish team even faced the task of replacing two top starting pitchers.
- Only three of the nine everyday starting position players from the 2006 team have returned to action this season, as five were lost to graduation and one (catcher Sean Gaston) to injury. The 2006 team's top backup catcher (rightfielder Cody Rizzo) was among the 2006 seniors, as were two others with catching experience. The sampling of the 17 previous ND teams shows that none faced the challenge of replacing six position starters. The only thing comparable came in 2003, when five starters graduated from the 2002 College World Series (one of them the DH, with four starters in the field returning for '05).
- The 2007 team essentially returned only two everyday starters in the field - current juniors Brett Lilley and Ross Brezovsky - as sophomore Jeremy Barnes was the primary DH in 2006. Current senior centerfielder Danny Dressman did log 51 starts in '06, primarily in right field (often when Rizzo was shifted to catcher). The four players listed above include just one - second baseman Brezovsky - who has returned to his same primary position from 2006 (Barnes had moved to first base and Lilley from third to shortstop).
- When looking at the 12 overall "top starters" (9 position players, 3 pitchers), no ND team in the previous 17 seasons has had to replace more than five of those players - while the 2007 team is replacing 9-of-12 starters from 2006 ... comparable to replacing 4-of-5 starters in basketball of 18-of-24 in football (including the kickers).
- The Irish are coming off the the challenge of a season-opening doubleheader - vs. two southern, D-I teams, no less - for the first time since 2001 and just the second time since 1992. The Irish originally were slated to open with a 3-game series vs. fellow Midwest team Northwestern (in San Antonio), but the Wildcats pulled out of the commitment.
- Notre Dame opened with three road games vs. southern D-I teams for only the 15th time in the program's history (ND now has gone just 17-28 in those tough 3-game starts).
- The challenge will continue, as the next four games also are vs. southern D-I squads (UNC-Wilmington, TCU, Coastal Carolina and Stetson). UNCW is 3-4 but returns 16 letterwinners from its 2006 NCAA Tournament team. TCU is 6-1 and ranked 12th in the nation while Coastal Carolina (7-0) just cracked the national top-30 and Stetson - pitched to win its conference and advance to the NCAAs - is off to a 5-2 start that includes two big-margin wins (8-1, 14-1) over nationally-ranked LSU. Only two previous ND teams have opened their season with seven (or more) straight games vs. southern D-I teams: the 1973 squad (went 2-8 in Tulsa, vs. all southern D-I teams) and the 1994 team (started 4-3, after 3-game series at Tulane and Alabama and a game vs. Tennessee).

KORPI, WEILAND COP PRESEASON HONORS – Notre Dame junior LHP **Wade Korpi** and sophomore RHP **Kyle Weiland** each were named to the watch list for the Roger Clemens Award (presented to the nation's top pitcher) while Korpi is on the watch list for the Brooks Wallace national player-of-the-year award ... Notre Dame is one of just 13 teams with multiple pitchers on the Clemens watch list – joining Rice, Texas, Florida State, TCU, Tulane, Arkansas, Wichita State, Virginia, Pepperdine, UC Irvine, Ohio State and Army in that distinction ... both Irish pitchers were on the 12-player preseason all-BIG EAST team, as selected by the league coaches ... the coaches also tabbed Weiland for preseason pitcher-of-the-year honors (as did *Collegiate Baseball* magazine) while *Baseball America* picked Korpi as the BIG EAST preseason pitcher of the year ... Korpi – who served as the 2006 staff's fourth starter – is expected to front a 2007 rotation that is young but highly promising ... Weiland likely will return to the closer role but could be tried as a starter, pending various factors including the returns from their respective injuries by senior Dan Kapala and junior Tony Langford (both of whom missed the entire 2006 season).

IRISH TO FACE SEVERAL TOP OPPOSING PLAYERS – Seven pitchers from Notre Dame's 2007 opponents are on the Clemens watch list, including the TCU duo of RHPs Jake Arrieta and Seth Garrison, Nebraska LHP Tony Watson, Stetson RHP Robbie Elsemiller, RHP Scott Barnes of St. John's, Michigan RHP Chris Fetter and Ball State RHP Kyle Heyne ... ND's Kyle Weiland joins Barnes and Fetter among the 14 sophomores who are on the Clemens watch list ... ND's 2007 opponents also include 16 players who are on the Wallace Award watch list, among them six other players from the BIG EAST: Rutgers SS Todd Frazier, St. John's OF Chris Joachim, Louisville 2B Logan Johnson, South Florida SS Addison Maruszak, Cincinnati RHP Steve Blevins and Seton Hall RHP/DH Dan McDonald ... others include the Nebraska duo of SS Ryan Wehrle and Watson, TCU's Arrieta, Stetson OF Shane Jordan, Michigan OF Eric Rose, Central Michigan OF Bryan Mitzel, Ball State 1B Justin Rogers, Illinois-Chicago OF Larry Gemp, Prairie View A&M RHP Wrandel Taylor and New York Tech DH/RHP Joe Esposito ... five players from ND opponents also were named 2007 preseason All-Americans by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers, with TCU's Arrieta and Nebraska's Watson on the first team while Frazier (Rutgers), Wehrle (Nebraska) and Rose (Michigan) each were named preseason third team All-Americans.

KORPI QUICK NOTES – Junior LHP **Wade Korpi** is coming off a stellar sophomore season that included an MVP effort at the BIG EAST Championship, en route to finishing with a 2.00 ERA that ranked 17th in the nation while his strikeout rate of 11.1 Ks per 9.0 innings ranked 15th in D-I ... Korpi's other 2006 season stats included a 7-2 record, a lowly .204 opponent batting average (55 hits allowed), a 3.5 K-to-walk ratio (94/27) and just three hit batters, one wild pitch and one home run allowed in 76.1 innings (14 appearances/12 starts) ... his 2.00 season ERA ranks 16th in the ND record book and is 8th-best by an Irish pitcher since the early 1980s ... Korpi's 11.08 Ks/9 IP represents the 6th-best season rate in the Irish record book (recent closer Ryan Doherty is the only ND pitcher since the mid-1960s with a higher single-season K rate than Korpi).

WEILAND QUICK NOTES – Sophomore RHP **Kyle Weiland** ranked among the nation's elite freshmen in the 2006 season, receiving top Freshman All-America honors from *Baseball America* (one of 14 on the first team), *Collegiate Baseball* and the The Rosenblatt Report/Rivals.com while also being invited to the annual USA Baseball National Team trials ... a second team all-BIG EAST selection in 2006, the lanky 6-foot-4 righthander finished third nationally with an ND-record 16 saves and compiled a 2.37 ERA that ranked 4th-best on the Irish staff while his 30 appearances were one shy of the ND freshman record (31) set by current big-leaguer Aaron Heilman in 1998 (when he led the nation with a 1.61 ERA) ... in addition to posting nearly a 2.5-to-1 strikeout-to-walk average (48/20) in 2006, Weiland logged 11 more innings (49.1) than hits allowed (39, with only one home run) and limited opponents to a .224 opponent batting average that ranks 3rd-best ever by an ND freshman behind Heilman's .198 in '98 and the .201 allowed by Larry Mohs in '94 ... Weiland converted all but one of his save opportunities en route to nearly doubling Heilman's freshman save record (9) while his 16 saves were three better than the previous overall Irish record (13), set by J.P. Gagne in 2003.

FRESHMAN FORCE – Notre Dame's 2007 opening-day lineup included a grad. student, two seniors, two juniors, one sophomore and three freshmen ... it marked just the third time in the past 13 seasons that the Irish have featured 3-plus freshman starters:

Notre Dame Freshman Starters

- '95 – no freshman starters
- '96 – Jeff Wagner (C) and Paul Turco (SS)
- '97 – Brant Ust (2B) and Jeff Felker (1B), Jeff Perconte (RF platoon)
- '98 – Alec Porzel (LF)
- '99 – Steve Stanley (CF), Paul O'Toole (C) and Andrew Bushey (3B)
- '00 – Brian Stavisky (RF)
- '01 – Steve Sollmann (2B)
- '02 – Matt Macri (SS, injured)
- '03 – Craig Cooper (LF), Cody Rizzo (RF), Greg Lopez (3B), Steve Andres (DH)
- '04 – none
- '05 – Brett Lilley (2B/3B), Ross Brezovsky (3B/2B)
- '06 – none (Jeremy Barnes later had 55 GS)
- '07 – Billy Boockford (RF), A.J. Pollock (3B), Michael Wright (LF)

SUPER SHORTSTOPS – Notre Dame's baseball tradition spans nearly 120 seasons but the shortstop role was not well-represented by elite players, until an impressive run of talent at the position during the past 20 years ... early 1900s player Bobby Lynch and heavy-hitting 1964 All-American Rich Gonski were possibly the most noteworthy shortstops in the first 85 years of the program, followed in the late 1970s by Rick Pullano before an impressive 20-year span that has produced the likes of Tommy Shields, Pat Pesavento, Craig Counsell, Paul Failla, Brant Ust, Alec Porzel, Matt Macri and Greg Lopez at the shortstop position ... junior **Brett Lilley** now takes his turn as he returns to his natural position of shortstop, hoping to add to the program's legacy in the key defensive role.

WEILAND SIDELINED – Notre Dame sophomore RHP and record-setting closer **Kyle Weiland** currently is sidelined, after recently undergoing collarbone surgery ... Weiland could return to action for the Irish in the next few weeks ... in his absence, the Irish will rely on senior setup men **Mike Dury** (LHP) and **Jess Stewart** (RHP) while their classmate **Dan Kapala** possibly could close at least one game (Kapala, a RHP, is returning from shoulder surgery that held him out of the entire 2006 season).

NEWCOMERS

The 2007 Notre Dame baseball team will have plenty of contributions from newcomers, as nearly half of the players on the roster (15 of 35) are new to the program this season ... all but one of those newcomers are freshmen, with the lone exception being graduate student **Matt Weglarz** – a catcher/first baseman who graduated from Missouri State in 2006 with one year of eligibility remaining.

Collegiate Baseball magazine's annual list of the nation's top recruiting classes ranked the current Notre Dame freshmen as the 30th-best incoming class, from among more than 300 teams on the Division-I level ... *Baseball America* had a similar ranking for the Notre Dame freshmen, as *BA* released a top-25 list and then mentioned Notre Dame's class as the "best of the rest" among Midwest schools ... neither of the above rankings took into account the addition of Weglarz, who literally walked into the office of head coach Dave Schrage last fall and announced his desire to continue playing college baseball while pursuing his MBA studies.

Although Schrage and his current staff did not recruit the current ND freshmen, it should be noted that Schrage signed one of the nation's top classes during his final year at Evansville – as the *Baseball America* list of top classes ranks the current Aces newcomers as the 21st-best recruiting class in the nation ... Schrage impressively brought two Midwest players to Evansville who are on *Baseball America's* list of college baseball's top-50 freshmen for the 2007 season, as RHP Wade Kapteyn (Lansing, Ill.) is 8th on that list while 3B/RHP Jared Baehl (Poseyville, Ind.) is listed as the nation's 41st-best freshman ... Schrage and his Irish staff most recently signed an impressive first class at Notre Dame – players who will join the program in the fall of 2007 – and that class already is being forecasted among the nation's top-15 (#13, per *Student Sports*, with the possibility to ultimately be ranked higher).

Notre Dame's current freshman class will play a key role throughout the 2007 season, with five of those players – 3B **A.J. Pollock**, corner outfielders **Billy Boockford**, **Michael Wright** and **rayden Ashdown**, and catcher **Ryan Smith** – likely to be in the starting lineup at some point during the first weekend of the season ... brief bio. capsules of the 15 newcomers are included below

#4 A.J. Pollock (3B; Hebron, CT) – probable starter whose strong all-around fall season included smacking a home run in the Blue-Gold Series (as part of his MVP performance; 5-for-9, 5 RBI in 3 GP); combines great hands, strong arm and classic infield instincts; clutch performer with a quick linedrive swing; possibly team's fastest baserunner; named state player of the year, after batting .462 in his senior season at RHAM High School (4 HR, 27 RBI)

#15 Matt Weglarz (C/1B; Kansas City, MO/grad. of Missouri State) – righthanded power hitter who provides veteran experience to the catcher position; .293 career hitter at Missouri State; 2nd team all-Missouri Valley Conference in 2005 (.333, team-best 49 RBI); Academic All-America candidate who graduated from Missouri State with 3.48 cumulative GPA, as a business major (posted 3.42 in his first semester as an MBA student at ND)

#17 Billy Boockford (OF; Glen Ellyn, IL) – probable starter in right field who combines strong arm with ability to hit for average and power; good baserunner for his size (6-2, 195); three-sport standout who set season batting record at Glenbard West HS (.565, as a senior, with 41 RBI and 6 HR)

#12 Brayden Ashdown (OF; Tucson, AZ) – athletic option in left field who rates among team's top defensive outfielders; has a compact linedrive swing from the right side; named to baseball hall of fame at Catalina Foothills HS (hit .329 with .529 on-base pct. as a senior)

#1 Michael Wright (OF; Lockhart, TX) – exciting addition to the outfield who will combine with senior Danny Dressman to give the Irish two quality options in center field; lefthanded hitter noted for his bunting ability, clutch linedrive hits, plate discipline and havoc he creates on the bases; hit .500 with a .595 on-base pct., as a senior at Lockhart HS

#16 Eric Maust (RHP; Alpharetta, GA) – two-sport standout who was backup punter on '06 ND football team; in mix for a starting role on 2007 staff; savvy pitcher who effectively locates three pitches for strikes (mid-80s fastball), does good job controlling the running game and fields his position well; also was a centerfielder and quarterback at Blessed Trinity HS, where he set school single-season records for ERA (1.35), Ks (83) and wins (12) ... also holds school record for hits in a season (56; his .496 batting is 2nd-best), plus football records for career passing yards (1,743) and season punting avg. (39.8)

#45 Ryan Smith (C; Waldorf, MD) – key newcomer who will combine with Weglarz as top options behind the plate; an outgoing leader and good communicator on the field, with a strong arm and improving offensive skills; homered in Blue-Gold Series; tabbed for All-America honors as a senior at Westlake HS, after batting .446 with 7 HR and 37 RBI

#18 Steven Mazur (RHP; Round Rock, TX) – strike-throwing middle reliever who had pair of solid outings in the fall Blue-Gold Series; has improved the reputation on his mid-80s fastball and slider; averaged 13.0 Ks/9 IP in his career at Stony Point HS, also setting team records as a senior for ERA (1.17), Ks (85) and wins (6)

#31 Andrew Scheid (RHP; Highlands Ranch, CO) – highly-rated prep pitcher who could emerge as key middle reliever on 2007 staff; has 6-6, 200-pound frame with high arm slot on mid-80s fastball and hard breaking ball; played for Regis Jesuit HS and Cherry Creek Connie Mack (posted 3.16 ERA with 53 Ks in 48.2 IP during summer of '06)

#5 David Mills (OF/LHP; Battle Creek, MI) – two-way player who provides speed on bases and quick lefthanded stroke, as candidate for corner outfield; also a lefthanded reliever with good deception on his low-80s fastball and tough breaking ball; an all-state performer as an outfielder and pitcher for Lakeview HS team that won 2006 state title, setting team single-season records for hits (51; on .408 batting), runs (51), strikeouts thrown (103) and ERA (0.49)

#29 Ryne Intlekofer (IF; Moorpark, CA) – hard-nosed middle infielder noted for his hustle and quick back; likely to see time at second base; hit .340 as a senior at Moorpark HS, where he also starred for the football team; has several family connections to Notre Dame, including two grandfathers who attended the university (one of whom played on the 1930 ND freshman baseball team)

#25 Austin Pearce (OF; Lake Oswego, OR) - switch-hitting corner outfielder who can hit for power from both sides of the plate; former all-state quarterback who combines 6-2, 210-pound frame with strong work ethic; hit .494 as a senior at Jesuit HS while leading football team to state title

#36 Herman Petzold (IF; Saint Clair Shores, MI) - middle infielder who boasts good baseball instincts and solid baserunning ability; earned spot on team during 2006 fall walk-on tryouts; a .331 career batter at De LaSalle HS

#34 Dylan Blake (IF; Coon Rapids, MN) - good-sized infielder (6-4, 200) who could play on the left side or even at first base; walk-on member of the team who made strong progress at the plate in fall season; hit .526 with 30 RBI as a senior at Coon Rapids HS

#30 Will Harford (IF; Chicago, IL) - walk-on utility player who could play on left side of infield or at catcher; a tough out who puts the ball in play; hit .390 as a senior at Notre Dame HS before postgraduate year at the Kent (CT) School (hit .477 as team MVP)

OPENING WEEK HISTORY

RECENT OPENING-WEEK TEAM STATISTICS

<u>Yr. (18-23)</u>	<u>Avg. (H-AB)</u>	<u>Runs (R/gm)</u>	<u>TB (HR-3B-2B/Slug)</u>	<u>On-Base</u>	<u>SB</u>	<u>BB/K</u>
1995 (1-2)	.352 (38-108)	23 (7.7)	60 (2-3-10/.556)	.450	2-4	18/25
1996 (0-2)	.246 (17-69)	8 (4.0)	28 (1-0-8/.406)	.316	1-2	4/22
1997 (0-3)	.297 (33-111)	17 (5.7)	46 (1-2-6/.414)	.350	1-1	8/25
1998 (1-2)	.260 (27-104)	19 (6.3)	39 (3-1-1/.375)	.353	2-3	14/21
1999 (1-3)	.197 (25-127)	11 (2.8)	38 (2-0-7/.299)	.270	4-4	10/36
2000 (2-1)	.279 (24-86)	14 (4.8)	40 (2-2-6/.465)	.304	2-2	4/16
2001 (2-1)	.302 (35-116)	17 (5.7)	46 (0-2-7/.397)	.385	6-9	13/22
2002 (1-2)	.257 (29-111)	16 (5.3)	43 (2-1-6/.387)	.415	6-10	8/15
2003 (2-2)	.367 (54-147)	36 (9.0)	86 (6-2-10/.585)	.428	2-2	10/24
2004 (2-0)	.310 (18-58)	10 (5.0)	23 (1-0-2/.397)	.388	5-5	6/17
2005 (3-1)	.274 (34-124)	27 (6.8)	46 (2-0-6/.371)	.421	3-9	16/21
2006 (2-2)	.250 (31-124)	20 (5.0)	43 (3-0-3/.347)	.333	2-5	13/16
2007 (1-2)	.200 (18-90)	15 (5.3)	30 (3-1-1/.333)	.354	4-6	17/21
Totals	.279 (383-1375)	218 (5.7)	538 (24-13-70/.412)	.367	40-62	141/281

Per-Game Avg: 3.4 BB, 6.8 Ks, 1.0 SBs, 2.8 extra-base hits (0.6 HRs)

(FINAL)

<u>Year (18-23)</u>	<u>R/ER</u>	<u>IP</u>	<u>ERA</u>	<u>K/BB</u>	<u>H-AB</u>	<u>AVG</u>	<u>Slug. (HR)</u>	<u>WP/HB</u>	<u>ERA</u>
1995 (1-2)	35/30	25.0	10.80	18/20	39-102	.382	.559 (2)	7/9	(4.53)
1996 (0-2)	21/18	16.0	10.13	11/11	26-72	.361	.556 (3)	1/2	(3.87)
1997 (0-3)	35/24	25.0	8.64	17/21	34-107	.318	.486 (3)	7/5	(4.51)
1998 (1-2)	14/11	25.0	3.96	22/14	24-90	.267	.345 (0)	2/4	(4.02)
1999 (1-3)	33/28	33.0	7.64	29/15	42-141	.298	.560 (10)	6/2	(5.15)
2000 (2-1)	8/5	22.0	2.05	23/7	19-79	.241	.354 (2)	0/1	(3.93)
2001 (2-1)	14/7	29.0	2.17	13/8	26-106	.245	.292 (0)	0/8	(3.22)
2002 (1-2)	20/19	27.2	6.18	22/9	37-112	.330	.473 (3)	2/4	(3.57)
2003 (2-2)	44/34	32.0	9.56	11/28	46-136	.338	.544 (4)	7/5	(3.35)
2004 (2-0)	2/1	16.0	0.57	18/5	9-53	.170	.208 (0)	1/2	(3.43)
2005 (3-1)	10/7	35.0	1.80	17/19	37-129	.287	.357 (1)	1/5	(4.41)
2006 (2-2)	13/8	36.0	2.00	38/10	30-129	.233	.333 (2)	1/4	(3.52)
2007 (1-2)	16/12	27.0	4.00	23/7	28-101	.277	.347 (1)	1/7	—
Totals	265/204	348.2	5.24	262/174	397-1357	.292	.419 (31)	36/58	(3.97)

9-Inn. Avg.: 7.2 Ks, 4.5 BB, 10.7 hits, 0.9 HRs, 1.0 wild pitches, 1.5 hit batters

(FINAL)

<u>Year (18-23)</u>	<u>Errors</u>	<u>Chances</u>	<u>Pct.</u>	<u>UE Runs</u>	<u>DPs</u>	<u>UER Loss Margin</u>	<u>Fld.)</u>
1995 (1-2)	6	97	.938	5	0	0	.960
1996 (0-2)	4	73	.945	3	1	0	.953
1997 (0-3)	12	118	.898	11	1	1	.942
1998 (1-2)	4	121	.967	3	4	0	.962
1999 (1-3)	9	149	.940	5	0	0	.954
2000 (2-1)	3	102	.971	3	2	1	.965
2001 (2-1)	4	129	.969	7	3	1	.964
2002 (1-2)	4	127	.969	1	5	0	.961
2003 (2-2)	8	160	.950	10	3	1	.970
2004 (2-0)	1	64	.984	1	0	0	.967
2005 (3-1)	7	163	.957	3	10	0	.960
2006 (2-2)	4	148	.973	5	4	2	.972
2007 (1-2)	5	124	.960	4	1	1	—
Totals	71	1,575	.955	61	34	7	.961

Per-Game Averages: 1.9 errors, 1.7 unearned runs, 0.8 double plays

EARLY HOME RUNS

OPENING-DAY HOME RUNS – Three members of the 2007 team (freshman 3B **A.J. Pollock**, freshman LF **Michael Wright** and senior DH **Mike Dury**) smacked home runs in last week's season opener vs. Prairie View A&M ... Pollock (3-run) and Wright (solo) homered two batters apart in the 2nd inning (their first career ABs with the Irish) and are believed to be the first ND freshmen ever to homer in a season opener ... since 1989, ND players now have combined for 16 HRs on opening day ... the Prairie View game was the first time since 1993 that ND has hit 3 HRs in an opener (Craig DeSensi, Paul Failla and Eric Danapilis all homered in the 1993 opener, a 11-4 win at Arizona State) ... ND players now have homered in each of the past six season openers – also Matt Bok in 2002 (vs. Missouri, at UNO), Kris Billmaier in 2003 (vs. Dayton, at ASU), Matt Edwards in 2004 (vs. San Diego State, at USC), Steve Andres and Edwards in 2005 (vs. Florida A&M) and Matt Bransfield in 2006 (vs. Indiana State) ... Edwards is the only player among those listed below to hit multiple opening-day HRs in his ND career ... the program's 16 opening-day HRs in the past 19 seasons have come from seven seniors, five juniors and two sophomores (none since '93, when DeSensi and Failla did it) ... the 16 have included three first basemen (Edwards twice), three DHs and three leftfielders, plus two catchers, two shortstops, a centerfielder, a rightfielder and a third baseman.

Notre Dame Opening-Day Home Runs Since 1989

Ed Lund (Jr., C, '89) – at Trinity (12-2)
Craig DeSensi (So., DH, '93) – at Arizona State (11-4)
Paul Failla (So., SS, '93) – at Arizona State (11-4)
Eric Danapilis (Sr., CF, '93) – at Arizona State (11-4)
Bob Lisanti (Sr., C, '96) – at Georgia Tech (4-12)
Dan Leatherman (Jr., 1B, '98) – vs. Florida State, in Orlando (10-1)
Brant Ust (Jr., SS, '99) – vs. James Madison, at FIU (8-4)
Matt Bok (Sr., DH, '02) – vs. Missouri, @UNO (7-6)
Kris Billmaier (Sr., RF, '03) – vs. Dayton, @ASU (10-9)
Matt Edwards (Jr., 1B, '04) – vs. San Diego State, @USC (7-1)
Steve Andres (Jr., LF, '05) – vs. Florida A&M, @UCF (18-3)
Matt Edwards (Sr., 1B, '05) – vs. Florida A&M, @UCF (18-3)
Matt Bransfield (Sr., LF, '06) – vs. Indiana State, @Millington, Tenn. (3-0)
Michael Wright (Fr., LF, '07) – vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)
A.J. Pollock (Fr., 3B, '07) – vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)
Mike Dury (Sr., DH, '07) – vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)

OPENING-WEEK LONG BALLS – Notre Dame players combined to hit 28 opening-week home runs during the past 13 seasons ('95-'06) ... four players in that span hit multiple opening-week HRs: infielder Brant Ust (2; '98 and '99), RF Kris Billmaier (3, in '03), 1B Matt Edwards (2; '04, '05) and LF/DH Steve Andres (2; '03, '05) ... Billmaier is the only ND player among those listed below who had a multi-HR game during opening week (vs. Newman, at ASU) ... Andres (at Arizona State) is one of four from this list to homer during opening week of their freshman season, as is Ed Golom (as a pinch-hitter, at FIU in '99), OF Brian Stavisky (at Memphis, in '00) and RF Cody Rizzo (in the second '03 game at ASU) ... the others include just two freshmen (both from 2006, see below), three sophomores (one of them current junior 2B **Ross Brezovsky**), eight juniors and 10 seniors (current DH **Mike Dury** hit opening-week HRs in 2006 and '07)... the position breakdown of the opening-week HR hitters since 1995 is as follows: RF (6), 1B (4), SS (3), C (3), DH (3), LF (3), CF (2), 3B (2), PH (1) and 2B (1).

Notre Dame Players Opening-Week Home Runs Since 1995

Rowan Richards (Jr., CF, '95) – game 3 vs. Pepperdine, in Anaheim (14-5)
Ryan Topham (Jr., RF, '95) – game 3 vs. Pepperdine, in Anaheim (14-5)
Bob Lisanti (Sr., C, '96) – game 1 at Georgia Tech (4-12)
Justin Scholl (Sr., RF, '97) – game 2 vs. USC, at Long Beach (4-14)
Dan Leatherman (Sr., 1B, '98) – game 1 vs. Florida State, in Orlando (10-1)
Brant Ust (So., 3B, '98) – game 2 vs. N.C. State, in Orlando (8-10)
Jeff Wagner (Jr., C, '98) – game 2 vs. N.C. State, in Orlando (8-10)
Brant Ust (Jr., SS, '99) – game 1 vs. JMU, at FIU (8-4)
Ed Golom (Fr., PH, '99) – game 2 at FIU (1-14)
Alec Porzel (Jr., SS, '00) – game 3 at Memphis (4-3)
Brian Stavisky (Fr., RF, '00) – game 3 at Memphis (4-3)
Matt Bok (Sr., DH, '02) – game 1 vs. Missouri, @UNO (7-6)
Andrew Bushey (Sr., C/3B, '02) – game 2 at New Orleans (7-8)
Kris Billmaier (Sr., RF, '03) – game 1 vs. Dayton, @ASU (10-9)
Kris Billmaier (Sr., RF, '03) – 2 HRs in game 2 vs. Newman, @ASU (15-5)
Steve Andres (Fr., DH, '03) – game 3 at Arizona State (3-16)
Matt Macri (So., SS, '03) – game 4 at Arizona State (8-14)
Cody Rizzo (Fr., CF, '03) – game 4 at Arizona State (8-14)
Matt Edwards (Jr., 1B, '04) – game 1 vs. San Diego State, @USC (7-1)
Steve Andres (Jr., LF, '05) – game 1 vs. Florida A&M, at UCF (18-3)
Matt Edwards (Sr., 1B, '05) – game 1 vs. Florida A&M, at UCF (18-3)
Matt Bransfield (Sr., LF, '06) – game 1 vs. Indiana State, @Millington, Tenn. (3-0)
Ross Brezovsky (So., 2B, '06) – game 2 vs. Air Force, @Millington, Tenn. (8-2)
Mike Dury (Jr., 1B, '06) – game 4 vs. Oklahoma, @Millington, Tenn. (3-4)
Michael Wright (Fr., LF, '07) – game 1 vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)
A.J. Pollock (Fr., 3B, '07) – game 1 vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)
Mike Dury (Sr., DH, '07) – game 1 vs. Prairie View A&M, @San Antonio (15-8)

EARLY-SEASON LINEUP

Notre Dame's opening-week rotation and probable starting lineup for the season opener in San Antonio featured junior LHP **Wade Korpi** starting the opener vs. Prairie View A&M while two sophomores – RHP **David Phelps** and LHP **Sam Elam** – started on the mound against Texas State ... the opening-day lineup included just one player – junior 2B **Ross Brezovsky** – returning to his primary position from the 2006 season while three freshmen and veteran newcomer **Matt Weglarz** all were in the game-1 starters group.

In addition to Brezovsky, three others with significant starting experience started the opener: junior SS **Brett Lilley**, senior CF **Danny Dressman** and sophomore 1B **Jeremy Barnes** (the likely 1-2-3 hitters) ... Lilley started each of the past two seasons (primarily at 3B) while Dressman's 87 career starts with the Irish have included 32 in right field, 31 in center and 10 in left (29 of his 31 starts in center came during the '04 or '05 seasons) ... Barnes led the Irish in RBI during the 2006 season, with most of his starts coming at DH and second base.

Switch-hitting senior **Mike Dury** was the opening-day starter at the DH position while Weglarz – who graduated from Missouri State in May of 2006 – was tabbed for the game-1 start behind the plate ... Dury and Weglarz could prove to be key power hitters for the 2007 Irish offense.

Freshman **A.J. Pollock** has assumed Lilley's role at third base while his classmate **Billy Boockford** was the opening-day starter in right field ... two freshmen, lefthanded-hitting **Michael Wright** and righthanded bat **Brayden Ashdown**, emerged as the top day-1 options in left field (Wright got the nod)... Wright – who joined Elam, Barnes and two others (junior OF/LHP **Tony Langford** and freshman RHP **Steven Mazur**) in making their return last weekend to their home state of Texas – could provide a "second leadoff hitter" look in the 9-hole, a role filled on past Notre Dame teams by the likes of J.J. Brock, Jeff Perconte and Cody Rizzo.

The opening-day infield included four players – Barnes, Brezovsky, Lilley and Pollock – who each were all-state shortstops during their high school careers ... the 13 current players mentioned above (weekend rotation and starting lineup) hail from nine different home states: Florida (2), Texas (3), Missouri (2), Ohio, California, Indiana, Connecticut, Illinois and Arizona.

Notre Dame Probable Starting Rotation – Baseball at the Beach tournament

• Game 1 (vs. UNC-Wilmington; Fri., Feb. 23: 4:00 p.m. EST)

Junior LHP Wade Korpi (5-10/180; Lake Worth, FL/Santaluces HS)

Opening week vs. Prairie View A&M: winner in planned pitch-count rotation, allowing 4 runs (3 earned; 6.25 ERA), on 4 hits and 3 walks in 4.0 innings while striking out 6 and allowing a .286 opponent batting avg. (0 WPs, 0 HBs)

2006 stats: 2.00 ERA, 7-2 record, 94 strikeouts, 8 walks, 55 hits allowed in 76.1 innings, .260 opp. batting avg., 1 home run allowed, 1 wild pitch, 3 hit batters

Career stats (pre-2007): 3.44, 11-5, 126 Ks, 41 BB, 128 H, 130.2 IP, .260, 4 HR, 5 WP, 10 HB

• Game 2 (vs. TCU; Sat., Feb. 24: 4:00 p.m. EST)

Sophomore RHP David Phelps (6-3/185; Hazelwood, MO/Hazelwood HS)

Opening week vs. Texas State: no-decision in 5.0 solid innings, allowing 6 hits (one a solo HR; 1.80 ERA) and just 2 walks while tying his career-high with 7 Ks (.300 opp. avg.; hit batter)

2006 stats: 7.09, 2-0, 23 Ks, 10 BB, 30 H, 26.2 IP, .280, 0 HR, 2 WP, 5 HB

• Game 3 (vs. Coastal Carolina; Sun., Feb. 25: 12:30 EST)

Sophomore RHP Brett Graffy (6-2/195; Homer Glen, IL/Joliet Catholic Academy)

Opening week vs. Texas State: had solid relief appearance of soph. LHP Sam Elam, in 6-0 loss to Texas Stat; allowed 2 runs on 7 hits and no walks in 4.1 innings (2 Ks; .412 opp. avg.)

2006 stats: 3.71, 2-0, 13 Ks, 6 BB, 23 H, 26.2 IP, .245, 0 HR, 2 WP, 2 HB

Notre Dame Probable Starting Lineup – Baseball at the Beach

Junior **SS Brett Lilley** (bats left; 5-8/170; North Canton, OH/Hoover HS)

Senior **CF Danny Dressman** (bats left; 5-8/180; San Jose, CA/Archbishop Mitty HS)

Sophomore **1B Jeremy Barnes** (bats right; 5-11/200; Garland, TX/South Garland HS)

Senior **DH Mike Dury** (bats switch; 6-5/240; Indianapolis, IN/Bishop Chatard HS)

Junior **2B Ross Brezovsky** (bats left; 5-9/170; Naples, FL/Barron Collier HS)

Freshman **3B A.J. Pollock** (bats right; 6-1/190; Hebron, CT/RHAM HS)

Grad. student **C Matt Weglarz** (bats right; 6-3/220; 6-3/220; Kansas City MO/Missouri State '06 grad./Rockhurst HS)

Sophomore **LF Ryan Connolly** (bats right; 6-0/180; Binghamton, NY/Binghamton HS)

Freshman **RF Michael Wright** (bats left; 5-7/160; Lockhart, TX/Lockhart HS)

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Notre Dame baseball fans should be apprised of several alterations to the 2007 schedule ... most notably, the March 10-12 games in Clearwater will be played at Jack Russell Stadium while the BIG EAST has announced that the site for its 2007 baseball championship will be Keyspan Ballpark in Brooklyn, N.Y. ... several start times also have been adjusted and are noted below:

Here's a rundown of the recent schedule adjustments:

- The **Baseball at the Beach** tournament in Myrtle Beach, S.C., will feature six total Division-I teams ... some games will be played on the campus of Coastal Carolina but **all games involving ND are set for Coastal Federal Field**, home of the Myrtle Beach Pelicans (high-A affiliate of the Atlanta Braves) ... the Irish face three of the teams in the tournament – UNC-Wilmington, TCU and Coastal Carolina – with N.C. State and West Virginia also participating.
- The start time for the sixth game of the season – **Feb. 25 vs. Coastal Carolina** – has been pushed back a half-hour to **12:30 p.m.**
- All games in the **Clearwater** (Fla.) College Invitational will be played at **Jack Russell Stadium**, the former spring training home of the Philadelphia Phillies ... earlier schedules indicated that the games were being played at Bright House Networks Field.
- The adjusted schedule for the Notre Dame games in **Clearwater** includes: **10:00 a.m.** on Sat., **March 10**, vs. Sacred Heart; **10:00 a.m.** on Sun., **March 11**, vs. Duquesne; and **2:15 p.m.** on the **11th** vs. Harvard.
- Some earlier schedules indicated the ND and Harvard also will be playing on **March 12** (time TBA), but that game is only a **provisional matchup** and would be played only if the Irish have an earlier rainout.
- Times have been announced for the **Florida Gulf Coast University Classic**, with ND facing: Dayton at **6:00 p.m.** on Wed., **March 14**; New York Tech at **1:00 p.m.** on **March 15**; Florida Gulf Coast at **7:30 p.m.** on **March 16**; and Harvard on **March 17** at **4:00 p.m.**
- As a reminder, two BIG EAST series involving ND will be played on a **Thursday-Friday-Saturday** format (due to the Easter holiday and the final week of the regular season): **April 5-7** at Cincinnati and **May 17-19** at home vs. UConn ... two road series will feature a Saturday doubleheader and single Sunday game (April 28-29 at Rutgers and May 12-13 at Louisville).
- All **home night games from April 10** until the end of the regular season will begin at **6:05** (some earlier may have been listed at 5:05).
- Notre Dame football fans are reminded that they can see the Irish baseball team in action on the day of the **Blue-Gold** football intrasquad scrimmage, as ND and West Virginia will play at **3:00** on that day (Sat., **April 21**) at Eck Stadium.
- The series finale vs. **Seton Hall** on **May 6** will start an hour earlier (**12:05**), due to SHU's travel plans.
- Times have been set for the series at **Louisville**, with a **noon doubleheader** on **May 12** and the final game at **1:00 p.m.** on **May 13**.
- The eight-team **BIG EAST Championship** is set to make its debut in 2007 in **Brooklyn, N.Y.**, at **Keyspan Ballpark** – home of the Brooklyn Cyclones, the single-A affiliate (N.Y.-Penn League) of the New York Mets ... the Coney Island amusement park Astroland sits a few blocks from the ballpark, creating a wonderful view over the leftfield fence (especially at night, when lights on the rides are flashing) ... the Atlantic Ocean is visible beyond the rightfield wall and the concourse lights have multicolored shades ... parts of the concourse have angular pavilions and there is a boardwalk connecting the infield seats with the outfield seats ... the stadium lights have giant neon rings around them and the scoreboard features a silhouette of the "Cyclone" rollercoaster ... an old parachute ride that once was a popular attraction still stands beyond the rightfield corner ... the stadium – which opened in 2001 and has a seating capacity of 8,000 – includes the Brooklyn Baseball Gallery memorabilia.
- **NCAA Regional** play will be three or four days (if necessary), from **June 1-4**. The **Super-Regional** round also spans four days (**June 8-11**), with some of those best-of-3 series starting on the 8th and some on the 9th (to accommodate TV).

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- The Notre Dame baseball team recently turned in another impressive semester in the classroom, as the 35 players combined for a 3.06 team GPA in the 2006 fall term (matching the team's cumulative GPA) ... more than half (19) of the players posted a GPA of 3.0 or higher in the '06 fall semester, including 14 at 3.2 or higher and eight at 3.4-plus ... junior SS **Brett Lilley's** impressive 3.91 GPA led the way, as one of four Irish players who topped the 3.6 mark in the 2006 fall semester.

- The consistently high level of academic achievement by Notre Dame baseball players over the past 10-plus years has contributed to a stellar graduation rate, as all 71 of the program's four-year players since 1995 have graduated from ND (14 others who signed professionally as juniors or sophomores have returned to complete or near completion of their degrees) ... the NCAA's most recent release (fall '06) of its Graduation Success Rate numbers – based upon the entering classes from 1996 to 1999 – recognized the ND baseball program with a perfect 100 score in those GSR numbers.

- Lilley is a leading Academic All-America candidate, carrying a 3.78 cumulative GPA as an accounting major ... despite not having the advantage of attending summer school in 2006 - he instead was playing in the prestigious Cape Cod League, with the Cotuit Kettleers – Lilley still shouldered an overloaded schedule of 39 credits spanning the 2006 spring and fall semesters, registering 12 solid A grades and one B-plus in those 13 courses ... his 4.0 in-season GPA during the 2006 spring semester covered an 18-credit courseload while he most recently finished a 21-credit fall term with a 3.91 GPA. ... Lilley's 28 total courses have included 18 A grades and five A-minuses, plus three B-plus grades, one straight B and a B-minus (in a philosophy class during his first semester).

- The ND baseball program's rich tradition of high achievers includes 19 previous players who have combined for Academic All-America honors 24 times ... the current decade alone has seen Irish baseball players combine for 10 Academic All-America honors, most recently by 2006 senior Greg Lopez (who became the program's first shortstop to be so honored) ... should Lilley duplicate Lopez's feat, he would follow in the footsteps of his sister Tricia Lilley, who was a 2006 third team Academic All-American while serving as a fifth-year shortstop with the Purdue softball team (she owned a 3.75 cumulative GPA, as a business management major).

- Several other Irish players could emerge as top Academic All-America candidates in 2007, with those players including graduate student **Matt Weglarz**, junior LHP **Wade Korpi** and sophomore RHP **David Phelps** ... Weglarz – a veteran C/1B – graduated from Missouri State in May of 2006 with a 3.48 cumulative GPA (as a business major) and most recently posted a 3.42 during his first semester enrolled in Notre Dame's highly-regarded MBA program ... Kopri carries a 3.24 cumulative GPA as an anthropology major, following a 3.38 in the '06 fall term, while Phelps is a 3.36 student as a double major in political science and computer applications (he had a 3.27 GPA in the fall of '06) ... senior C **Sean Gaston** (3.38 cumulative GPA/3.47 in '06 fall semester; double major in history and political science) also would have been a leading Academic All-America candidate in 2007, if not for his recent shoulder surgery that will sideline him for the season.

- Others who posted top GPAs in the 2006 fall semester included senior CF **Danny Dressman** (3.73; double major in history and computer applications), senior RHP **Dan Kapala** (3.61; economics major) and freshman OF **Brayden Ashdown** (3.67; all freshman are enrolled in the First Year of Studies) ... the four others who topped the 3.4 mark in the 2006 fall term were Weglarz, Gaston, junior RHP **Joey Williamson** (3.47; political science/computer applications) and freshman IF **Dylan Blake** (3.47) ... six other Irish baseball players registered 2006 fall GPAs above 3.2: Korpi, Phelps, senior LHP/1B **Mike Dury** (3.33; economics/computer applications), freshman RHP **Eric Maust** (3.27) and freshman infielders **Herman Petzold** (3.35) and **Will Harford** (3.20) ... rounding out the 19 Irish players who posted GPAs above 3.0 in the '06 fall semester were junior 2B/C **Ross Brezovsky** (economics/computer applications), junior catcher **Chris Soriano** (science pre-professional studies), sophomore infielder **Jeremy Barnes** (anthropology), sophomore LHP **Sam Elam** (anthropology/computer applications) and freshman catcher **Ryan Smith** ... the players listed above are spread out among the classes, with six freshmen, five juniors, four seniors and three sophomores (plus the grad. student Weglarz).

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WIN STREAK WRAPUP

Longest Single-Season Win Streaks in Notre Dame Baseball History

23*	2006 (March 25 – April 25) ... overall record was 21 from 1906-07
18	1991 (April 7-28, 1991)
17	2003 (March 24 – April 14) and 1907 (April 20 – May 21)
16	2002 (April 11 – May 4), 2001 (April 4-25) and 1988 (April 24 – May 20)
15	1910 (May 4 – June 7)

*Note: the 23-game win streak was one of the longest in ND athletics history, ranking alongside streaks by the softball (33), women's soccer (24), football (23), women's basketball (23) and men's basketball (22) teams.

Recent Double-Digit Win Streaks (1995-2006)

23	2006 (March 25 – April 25)
17	2003 (March 24 – April 14); 3rd-longest in ND history (18, in '91)
16	2002 (April 11 – May 4); tied for 5th-longest in ND history
16	2001 (April 4-25); tied for 5th-longest in ND history
13	1998 (April 8-23)
12	2004 (April 29 – May-21)
11	2004 (March 24 – April 7) ... 1995 (April 13-23)
10	'99 (March 10-28), '98 (March 26 – April 4) and '96 (March 24 – April 6)

TOP WIN STREAKS IN ND SPORTS HISTORY (also see sidebar)

Other ND team-based sports top win streaks (see sidebar for others)

Volleyball – 17 (Oct. 24-Nov. 22, 1986)

Hockey – 14 (Dec. 11, 1987 – Feb. 13, 1988)

Women's Lacrosse - 14 (April 22, 2003 – April 17, 2004)

Men's Lacrosse - 9 (April 1-May 26, 2001 and March 18-May 1, 1992)

(see sidebar for other team-based sports, including football and basketball)

Top winning streaks for ND sports with individual-based competition

• **Men's Fencing** has totaled 15 all-time win streaks of 20-plus dual matches (10 of 24 or better): 122 ('75-'80), 98 ('84-'88), 90 ('00-'04), 50 ('90-'93), 46 ('89-'90), 37 ('97-'98), 37 ('93-'95), 31 ('67-'68), 26 ('73-'74), 25 ('57-'59), 23 ('99-'00), 23 ('81-'82), 22 ('83-'84), 22 ('04-'05) and 21 ('81).

• **Women's Fencing** has seven all-time win streaks of 20-plus (five above 23): 75 ('93-'96), 42 ('86-'88), 41 ('03-'04), 38 ('97-'98), 35 ('90-'92), 26 ('05-'06) and 21 ('89-'90).

• **Men's Tennis** had a 29-match win streak (May 5, 1965 - April 29, 1967) and a 23-match streak from March 28, 1971 – April 9, 1972.

• **Women's Swimming** had a 16-match win streak from Nov. 4, 2000 – Oct. 30, 2002.

• **Women's Tennis:** 20 (Sept. 9, 1979 – Oct. 4, 1980)

• **Men's Swimming:** 11 Feb. 23, 1974 – Feb. 15, 1975

Note: no win streak data for teams that don't typically compete head-to-head (cross country, track and field, golf, rowing)

Longest Winning Streaks in Notre Dame Athletics History

(sports with team-based competition)

33 – Softball
(March 28-May 10, 2001)
ranked #8, ended with 2-1 loss to Seton Hall in BIG EAST Tournament opener

26 – Men's Soccer
(Sept. 20, 1977 – Oct. 3, 1978)
first two seasons,
several games vs. non-Div. I teams

24 – Women's Soccer
(Aug. 27-Nov. 24, 2000)
earned #1 rank early in season,
lost 2-1 to UNC in NCAA semifinals

23 – **BASEBALL**
(March 25-April 26, 2006)
ranked as high as #8,
ended with 11-8 loss to Bowling Green

23 – Women's Basketball
(Nov. 11, 2000-Feb. 17, 2001)
ranked #1,
ended with 54-53 loss at #11 Rutgers

23 – Football (Sept. 10, 1988 – Nov. 25, '89)
ranked #1,
lost 27-10 at #7 Miami in final game of regular season

22 – Men's Basketball
(final 11 games in '32-'33, first 11 in '33-'34)

22 – Men's Basketball
(1908-09)

21 – Football
(Nov. 16, 1946 – Dec. 4, 1948)

20 – Softball
(April 1-27, 2003)

20 – Women's Basketball
(Dec. 11, 1999-Feb. 26, 2000)

20 – Football
(Oct. 5, 1929 – Oct. 10, 1931)

20 – Football
(Oct. 4, 1919 – Oct. 8, 1921)

see other streaks listed at left

**ND Baseball 2007
Summer-League Commitments**

(others TBA)

Sam Elam (LHP, So.) – Cape Cod League (Falmouth Commodores)

Kyle Weiland (RHP, So.) – Cape Cod League (Falmouth Commodores)

Brett Graffy (RHP, So.) – Cape Cod League (Falmouth Commodores)

Jeremy Barnes (IF, So.) – Cape Cod League (Yarmouth-Dennis Red Sox)

Ryan Connolly (OF, So.) – New York League (Amsterdam Mohawks)

Ryan Smith (C, Fr.) – Great Lakes League (Delaware, OH, Cows)

Eric Maust (RHP, Fr.) – Great Lakes League (Delaware, OH, Cows)

A.J. Pollock (3B, Fr.) – New England League (Vermont Mountaineers)

Michael Wright (OF, Fr.) – Texas League (Bryan/College Station team)

Billy Boockford (RHP, Fr.) – Central Illinois League (DuPage Dragons)

Andrew Scheid (RHP, Fr.) – Central Illinois League (Dubois Bombers)

Steven Mazur (RHP, Fr.) – Jayhawk League (Hays, KS, Larks)

David Mills (OF/LHP, Fr.) – Central Illinois League (Dubois Bombers)

HBP NOTES

HBP HIGHWAY RETURNS – The 2006 Notre Dame batters averaged 1.6 times hit-by-pitch per game (10, in 63 GP) ... departed CF **Alex Nettey** led all BIG EAST players with 23 HBPs (9th in nation in 2006 and 3rd in ND history; with his 42 career HBPs 3rd all-time at ND) ... his fellow 2006 senior, RF/C **Cody Rizzo** (14 HBP in '06) ranks 2nd in NCAA history with 84 career HBPs ... current junior SS **Brett Lilley** (21 HBP in '06) already is 2nd in ND history with 53 career HBPs, also 22nd in the ND record book ... Lilley's career avg. of 2.32 games per HBP is 3rd-best among players on the below list (his 4-year pace of 102 HBPs would break the NCAA record by 10) ... three other '06 seniors – SS **Greg Lopez** (34), senior 1B **Craig Cooper** (30) and senior LF/DH **Steve Andres** (24) – rank 7th, 10th and 13th on the ND career HBP list (also 22 for LF **Matt Bransfield**) ... ND players have posted 15-plus HBPs 10 times in a season (8 by players on the 2006 team).

NCAA RECORD BOOK CAREER HIT-BY-PITCH

1. 92.....	Tony Hurtado (San Francisco; 1997-2000)	221 GP	2.40 gms/HBP
2. 84.....	Cody Rizzo (Notre Dame; 2003-06)	233 GP	2.77 gms/HBP
3. 81.....	Gabe Somarriba (Florida Atlantic; 1999-2002)	226 GP	2.79 gms/HBP
4. 74.....	Jeff Ontiveros (Texas; 1999-2002)	258 GP	3.49 gms/HBP
5. 76.....	Mark Muscenti (Cincinnati; 2003-06)	211	2.78 gms/HBP
6. 68.....	Clay Schwartz, Wis.-Milwaukee; 1994-97)	180	2.65 gms/HBP
7. 65.....	Jay Molina, Illinois State; 2003-06)	189	2.91 gms/HBP
8. 62.....	J.R. Revere, Ga. Southern; 1999-2002)	217	3.50 gms/HBP
9. 61.....	Karl Jernigan, Florida State; 1998-2001)	250	4.10 gms/HBP
	61.....Rusty McNamara, Oklahoma State; 1995-97)	194	3.18 gms/HBP
	61.....Lou Donati, Santa Clara; 1991-94)	178	2.92 gms/HBP
12. 58....	Khalil Greene, Clemson; 1999-2002)	272	4.69 gms/HBP
	58....David Bacani, Cal St. Fullerton; 1998-2001)	236	4.07 gms/HBP
14. 57....	Kevin Ibach, La Salle; 1997-2000)	158	2.77 gms/HBP
15. 56....	Brian Dallimore, Stanford; 1993-96)	222	3.96 gms/HBP
16. 55....	Chris Nelson, Southern Utah; 2001-02)	107	1.95 gms/HBP
	55....Billy Gasparino, Oklahoma State; 1997-99)	186	3.38 gms/HBP
	55....David Benham, Liberty; 1995-98)	198	3.60 gms/HBP
19. 54....	B.T. Good, VMI; 2003-06)	181	3.35 gms/HBP
	54....Josh Holliday, Oklahoma State; 1996-99)	256	4.74 gms/HBP
	54....Corky Miller, Nevada; 1997-98)	111	2.06 gms/HBP
22. 53....	Brett Lilley, Notre Dame; 2005-)	123	2.32 gms/HBP

NOTRE DAME CAREER HBP

1. Cody Rizzo (2003-06)	84
2. BRETT LILLEY (2005-)	53
3. Alex Nettey (2003-06)	42
4. Craig DeSensi (1992-95)	38
5. Dan Bautch (1990-92)	36
Greg Layson (1991-94)	36
7. Greg Lopez (2003-06)	34
8. Ed Lund (1988-90)	32
Eric Danapilis (1990-93)	32
10. Craig Cooper (2003-06)	30
11. Paul O'Toole (1999-2002)	28
12. Javi Sanchez (2001-04)	27
13. Steve Andres (2003-06)	24
– Matt Bransfield (2003-06)	22

NOTRE DAME SEASON HBP

1. Brett Lilley (2005)	30
2. Cody Rizzo (2003)	28
3. ALEX NETTEY (2006)	23
4. BRETT LILLEY (2006)	21
Cody Rizzo (2004)	21
Cody Rizzo (2005)	21
7. Greg Lopez (2005)	16
8. Alex Nettey (2005)	15
Eric Danapilis (1993)	15
Javi Sanchez (2004)	15
11. CODY RIZZO (2006)	14
Craig Cooper (2005)	14

NCAA RECORD BOOK PLAYER SEASON HIT-BY-PITCH

1. 33.....	Andrew Slater (Richmond, '97)
2. 32.....	Gary Morris (Elon, '05)
32.....	Steve Dembrowski (Fairleigh Dickinson, '79)
4. 30.....	Brett Lilley (Notre Dame, '05)
5. 29.....	Ryder Mathias (Wake Forest, '05)
29.....	Chris Nelson (Southern Utah, '02)
29.....	Jonah Martin (Arizona State, '00)
29.....	Corky Miller (Nevada, '98)
10. 28.....	Cody Rizzo (Notre Dame, '03)

Note: Lilley and Rizzo are the only players from the same school on the above top-10 list (28-plus HBPs in a season)

NCAA RECORD BOOK TEAM SEASON HIT-BY-PITCH

<u>Team</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Games</u>	<u>HBP (per gm)</u>
1. Notre Dame	2005	63	130 (2.06)
2. Nevada	1997	60	125 (2.08)
3. Long Beach State	1998	67	124 (1.85)
4. College of Charleston	2004	63	122 (1.94)
5. VMI	2006	55	119 (2.16)
6. Cal State Fullerton	2003	66	117 (1.77)
7. Arizona State	2000	59	115 (1.95)
8. Long Beach State	1999	60	114 (1.90)
9. Notre Dame	2004	63	106 (1.68)
– Notre Dame	2006	63	100 (1.59)

Notes: The Irish averaged 1.78 HBPs/game over the past three seasons (336; 189 GP from '04-'06) ... the '05 ND team owns the 3rd-best HBP per game among teams on the above list ... ND (106 in '04; 130 in '05) and Long Beach State (124 in '98, 114 in '99) are the only teams with 106-plus HBPs in multiple seasons.

INNING NOTES

FIRST-INNING FOCUS – Notre Dame’s impressive 1st-inning stats in the 2006 season included a 67-35 scoring margin, with 1st-inning runs in more than half of the games (32) ... the 2006 team had a 7-game scoring streak in the 1st inning, longest by an ND team in the past five seasons (the 2004 team scored in the 1st inning of six straight games, the '05 team in five straight) ... ND entered the 2006 NAAs batting .350 as a team in the 1st inning (28 extra-base hits, 8 HRs) ... the 2006 ND pitchers posted a scoreless first inning in 45 of 63 games ... the first three games of the 2007 season did not produce a 1st-inning run by either team – meaning that the Irish have allowed just 35 runs in the 1st inning over the past two seasons (in 66 games; 0.53/gm).

JUMPING ON TOP – Notre Dame’s best 1st-inning scoring margin since the mid-1990s came in 2001 (+48; 59-11) ... the 2006 streak of scoring 1st-inning runs in seven straight games (March 21-29) was longest by an ND team since that 2001 team scored in eight straight 1st innings, from April 21-29 of that season ... ND’s final +32 scoring margin in the 1st inning (67-35) was nearly four times better than that of the '05 team (+9; 58-49) ... ND has finished with a positive 1st-inning scoring margin every season since 1995, except 1998 (-12), with an average margin of +18 and avg. ratio of 1.9 ... the most 1st-inning scored by an ND team in the past 12 seasons are 75 (in '04; 1.19/gm) while the fewest allowed are 11 (in '01; 0.18/gm) ... ND’s 2006 averages were 1.06 runs/gm and 0.56 runs allowed/gm in the 1st ... here’s a look at 1st-inning production over the past 12 seasons:

1st-Inning				
Year	Runs	Margin	Ratio	Final Record
1995	65-27	+38	2.4	40-21
1996	70-37	+33	1.9	44-18
1997	65-60	+5	1.3	41-19
1998	29-41	-12	0.7	41-18
1999	50-45	+5	1.1	43-18
2000	35-32	+3	1.1	46-18
2001	59-11	+48	5.4	49-13-1
2002	65-49	+16	1.3	50-18
2003	40-35	+5	1.1	45-18
2004	75-29	+46	2.6	51-12
2005	58-49	+9	1.2	38-14-1
2007	67-35	+32	1.9	45-17-1
2006	0-0	+0	0.0	1-2
Average		+18	1.9	

MORE IN FOUR – Notre Dame’s ability in 2006 to make midgame adjustments (at the plate and on the mound) resulted in a dominating 37-3 scoring edge during the 4th-inning of the record-setting 23-game win streak ... the 4th became ND’s most dominating overall inning in 2006 (+48, 68-20).

BUSTING OUT THE BIG INNINGS – Notre Dame posted 5-plus runs in an inning 15 times in the 2006 season, with five of those “big innings” coming in the 4th inning (including two of the season’s top-3 scoring innings: 9 vs. Oakland and 8 vs. St. John’s) ... 10 of the big innings in 2006 broke open tight games (margin of 0-2 runs) before ND’s key offensive explosion ... the Irish were unbeaten in 2006 when scoring 5-plus runs in an inning (15-0) and – backed by strong pitching and defense – went 36-5 overall when scoring at least 5 runs in a game during the 2006 season ... the Irish opened the 2007 season with another big inning, pushing across 6 runs in the 6th inning of the game vs. Prairie View.

EARLY INNING CHECK FOR 2007 – The only major inning stats from week-1 show the Irish with a 4-1 margin in the 2nd and a 6-2 edge in the 6th (all of those ND runs came in the opener vs. Prairie View).

CLUTCH HITTING

FAR & WIDE – Notre Dame's top-12 position player starters hail from 11 states, including two from **Texas** (soph. 1B Jeremy Barnes; fr. OF Michael Wright), plus one each from **Missouri** (grad. C Matt Weglarz), **Maryland** (fr. C Ryan Smith), **Florida** (jr. 2B Ross Brezovsky), **Ohio** (jr. SS Brett Lilley), **Connecticut** (fr. 3B A.J. Pollock), **Arizona** (fr. OF Brayden Ashdown), **New York** (so. OF Ryan Connolly), **California** (sr. CF Danny Dressman), **Illinois** (fr. RF Billy Boockford) and **Indiana** (sr. DH Mike Dury).

STATE ROLL CALL – The Notre Dame list of all-time monogram winners includes players from **44 home states** ... pitchers Brandon Vilorio (Wailuku, Hawaii) in 2000 and Cody Wilkins (Hudson, N.C.) in 2004 became the first players from their respective states ever to monogram with the Irish baseball program ... the only states that have not produced ND baseball letterwinners include Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Vermont ... ND teams over the past 13 seasons have featured players from 36 states, including 19 states on the 2007 roster (see list below):

Texas (5) – Jeremy Barnes (Garland), Sam Elam (Mesquite), Tony Langford (Ft. Worth), Steven Mazur (Round Rock), Michael Wright (Lockhart)

Florida (4) – Ross Brezovsky (Naples), Wade Korpi (Lake Worth), Eddy Mendiola (Miami), Joey Williamson (Lantana)

Michigan (4) – Dan Kapala (Royal Oak), David Mills (Herman Petzold (St. Clair Shores), Evan Sharpley (Battle Creek)

Illinois (3) – Billy Boockford (Glen Ellyn), Brett Graffy (Homer Glen), Will Harford (Chicago)

Indiana (3) – Mike Dury (Indianapolis), Sean Gaston (Brownsburg), John Seabaugh (Granger)

California (2) – Danny Dressman (San Jose), Ryne Intelkofer (Moorpark)

Missouri (2) – David Phelps (Hazelton), Matt Weglarz (Kansas City)

Arizona (1) – Brayden Ashdown (Tucson)

Colorado (1) – Andrew Scheid (Highlands Ranch)

Connecticut (1) – A.J. Pollock (Hebron)

Georgia (1) – Eric Maust (Alpharetta)

Maryland (1) – Ryan Smith (Waldorf)

Minnesota (1) – Dylan Blake (Coon Rapids)

New Jersey (1) – Chris Soriano (Randolph)

New Mexico (1) – Kyle Weiland (Albuquerque)

New York (1) – Ryan Connolly (Binghamton)

Ohio (1) – Brett Lilley (North Canton)

Oregon (1) – Austin Pearce (Lake Oswego)

Virginia (1) – Jess Stewart (Manassas)

CLUTCH HITTING KEY COMPONENT – Three stats that measure clutch offensive production – leadoff on-base pct., batting with runners in scoring position and 2-out batting – show that clutch hitting can overcome a team's dropoff in power numbers ... using a formula that combines those three situational hitting numbers, current junior SS **Brett Lilley** was the 2005 team's runaway team leader with a "clutch hitting" score of 1,402 ... that number can be skewed a bit by the on-base pct. (which has the benefit of including walks and HBPs and thus is higher than the batting avg. stats) ... using an adjustment whereby the leadoff on-base pct. is multiplied by 75%, Lilley still checked in as ND's all-around leader in 2005 clutch hitting with a 1,273 score (.515 leadoff on-base/.386 adjusted, .448 RISP, .439 with 2-outs) ... the 2005 team's overall clutch-hitting score was 908 but the 2006 team then went well beyond that, finishing at 928 thanks to a big jump in leadoff on-base pct. (.406 to .449) and batting with runners in scoring position (.309 to .325) ... one area that the Irish will look to improve on is 2-out batting (.266 in 2006, after batting .294 with 2-outs in '05) ... departed All-America 1B **Craig Cooper** was the runaway leader among the 2006 clutch hitters (1,113), leading all three categories (including a .577 leadoff OB pct.) ... current senior CF **Danny Dressman** ended up second on the 2006 team with a 992 clutch-hitting score – almost 320 points above his 673 in '05, with huge jumps in all three categories (up 218 points in leadoff OB, 89 in batting with RISP and 77 in 2-out hitting) ... Dressman tied Coopers as the 2006 team's top hitters with 2-outs (.327) and was 2nd-best with RBI chances (.365) ... Lilley ended up third on the 2006 team in clutch hitting (971), with his top area being leadoff on-base (3rd, at .472) ... current sophomore 1B **Jeremy Barnes** graded out 6th on the team with a 940 clutch-hitting score, with his top focus on improvement in 2007 being 2-out batting (.230; 10th among the 2006 regulars) ... current junior 2B **Ross Brezovsky** was next on the clutch-hitting list, at 915 (his best area was a .297 avg. with 2-outs, good for 4th on the team).

CLUTCH-HITTING CHART (2006 team rank in parentheses)

	<i>Leadoff On-Base Pct.</i>	<i>Batting w/ RISP</i>	<i>2-Out Batting</i>	<i>Clutch Hit Tot.</i>
Danny Dressman (6)	.400 (.300)	(2) .365	(1) .327	(2) 992
(2005)	(13) .182 (.137)	(8) .286	(9) .250	(10) 673
Brett Lilley (3)	.472 (.354)	(7) .311	(5) .296	(3) 971
(2005)	(3) .515 (.386)	(1) .448	(1) .439	(1) 1,273
Jeremy Barnes (3)	.472 (.354)	(5) .356	(10) .230	(6) 940
Ross Brezovsky (7)	.386 (.289)	(6) .329	(4) .297	(7) 915
(2005)	(10) .298 (.224)	(7) .288	(10) .246	(9) 758
TEAM	.449 (.337)	.325	.266	928
(2005)	.406 (.311)	.309	.294	908
Craig Cooper (1)	.577 (.433 adjust.)	(1) .373	(1) .327	(1) 1,133
(2005)	(5) .419 (.314)	(2) .434	(2) .369	(2) 1,117

EARLY CLUTCH HITTING – Notre Dame hit just .200 in the first week of the 2007 season but the team's on-base pct. was .354, thanks to 17 walks and 5 HBPs (a team's OB typically is 1.3 times the batting avg., which would be just .260 in this case) ... ND's week-1 team clutch-hitting score was .812 (.346 leadoff/.260 adjusted, .333 RISP and .219 w/ 2-outs) ... the Irish had better opening-week clutch hitting than their opponents – overall (opp.'s were 635), with RISP (opp. just .250) and with 2-outs (opp. only .107) but the opposition had the better leadoff OB (.370/.278 adjusted) ... leadoff batter **Brett Lilley** reached on just 1-of-4 total leadoff plate appearances in week-1 ... the team's 6-for-18 batting with RISP included just one player with more than two ABs with RBI chances (**A.J. Pollock**, 1-for-4 with a 3-run HR) ... ND's 7-for-32 batting with 2-outs included five players with more than 2 ABs with 2-outs: **Jeremy Barnes** (0-for-3), **Danny Dressman** (0-for-3), **Mike Dury** (1-for-4), **Pollock** (1-for-5) and **Lilley** (1-for-5).

PLATE DISCIPLINE

LORDS OF DISCIPLINE – The 2006 Notre Dame offense owned a +66 plate-discipline ratio (walks + hit-by-pitch - strikeouts) that was nearly four times better than the 2005 team's PDR (+17) ... the 2006 Irish batters boosted their walks (3.9/gm in '05 to 4.0/gm in '06) while hitting at a .313 clip (18 points higher than in '05) ... the 2006 ND offense also averaged nearly one fewer K per game (4.5) than in 2005 (5.2) ... some of the biggest improvements in PDR were seen by current senior CF Danny **Dressman** (up 25; from -6 to +19) and current junior 2B Ross **Brezovsky** (15; from -21 to -6) ... departed 1B **Craig Cooper** posted a +34 PDR in 2006 that ranks 3rd-best in ND history (best since the late 1980s) ... current junior SS **Brett Lilley** finished +31 in 2005 (now 7th in the ND record book) and then was +23 in 2006 (he now owns a +56 career PDR, in 123 games played).

PLATE-DISCIPLINE CHART

<i>Player</i>	<i>Walks</i>	<i>Hit-By-Pitch</i>	<i>Strikeouts</i>	<i>Plate Discipline (BB+HBP-Ks)</i>
Brett LILLEY ('06)	26	21	24	+23
(2005)	34	30	33	+31
Danny DRESSMAN ('06)	30	5	16	+19
(2005)	5	1	12	-6
Jeremy BARNES ('06)	29	5	38	-4
Ross BREZOVSKY ('06)	20	6	32	-6
(2005)	17	4	42	-21
TEAM TOTALS	247 BB	100 HBP	281 Ks	+66
(2005)	220	125	328	+17
Craig COOPER ('06)	38	10	14	+34
(2005)	33	14	22	+25

* Lilley, Cooper and Matt Edwards (+17) were a combined +70 in '05 (rest of team -53)

EARLY PDR RETURNS – The Irish compiled just a +1 plate-discipline ratio in the opening week of the 2007 season (17 BB + 5 HBP - 21 Ks) while the ND opponents fared even worse (-23; 7 BB + 7 HBP - 23 Ks) ... here's the week-1 PDR rundown:

<i>Player</i>	<i>Walks</i>	<i>Hit-By-Pitch</i>	<i>Strikeouts</i>	<i>Plate Discipline (BB+HBP-Ks)</i>
Ross Brezovsky	3	0	0	+3
Jeremy Barnes	3	0	1	+2
Brett Lilley	1	3	2	+2
Danny Dressman	1	1	0	+2
Michael Wright	3	0	2	+1
A.J. Pollock	1	0	1	-
Mike Dury	2	1	3	-
Matt Weglarz	2	0	3	-1
Brayden Ashdown	0	0	1	-1
Billy Boockford	0	0	2	-2
Evan Sharpley	0	0	2	-2
TEAM	17	5	21	+1
OPPONENTS	7	7	23	-9

Double-Digit Hit Streaks (since 1995)

- 21 – Craig Cooper (2006; Sr., 1B)
- 21 – Mike Amhein (1997; Sr., C)
- 18 – Jeff Felker (1999; Jr., 1B)
- 16 – Steve Stanley (2000; So., CF)
- 15 – Alex Nettey (2005; Jr., CF)
- 15 – Steve Sollmann (2003; Jr., 2B)
- 15 – Jeff Wagner (1997; Sr., C/DH)
- 15 – Brant Ust (1997; Fr., 2B/SS)
- 14 – Steve Andres (2004; So., LF)
- 14 – Brian Stavisky (2000; Fr., RF)
- 14 – Matt Nussbaum (1999; Jr., LF)
- 13 – Craig Cooper (2005; Jr., LF)
- 13 – Steve Sollmann (2003; Jr., 2B)
- 13 – Steve Stanley (2002; Sr., CF)
- 13 – Andrew Bushey (2001; Jr., 3B)
- 13 – Allen Greene (1997; So., LF)
- 12 – Matt Bransfield (2006; Sr., LF)
- 12 – Javi Sanchez (2002; SS, So.)
- 12 – Steve Stanley (1999; CF, Fr.)
- 12 – Jeff Wagner (1998; Jr., C)
- 11 – Danny Dressman (2006; Jr., OF)**
- 11 – Ross Brezovsky (2006; So., 2B)**
- 11 – Steve Stanley (2002; CF, Sr.)
- 11 – Brian Stavisky (2002; Jr., LF)
- 11 – Allen Greene (1998; Jr., CF)
- 11 – Scott Sollmann (1996; Jr., CF)
- 10 – Matt Edwards (2005; Sr., 1B)
- 10 – Matt Macri (2004; Jr., 3B)
- 10 – Matt Edwards (2004; Jr., 1B)
- 10 – Matt Edwards (2003; So., 3B)
- 10 – Steve Stanley (2002; Sr., CF)
- 10 – Steve Sollmann (2002; So., 2B)
- 10 – Steve Stanley (2001; Jr., CF)
- 10 – Ken Meyer (2001; Jr., DH)
- 10 – Steve Sollmann (2001; Fr., 2B)
- 10 – Steve Stanley (2000; So., CF)
- 10 – Brian Stavisky (2000; Fr., RF)
- 10 – Steve Stanley (1999; Fr., CF)
- 10 – Brant Ust (1998; So., 3B)
- 10 – J.J. Brock (1997; Sr., 3B)
- 10 – Randall Brooks (1996; Jr., 2B)
- 10 – J.J. Brock (1996; Jr., 3B)

Most Double-Digit Hit Streaks from 1995-2006

- 8 – Steve Stanley
- 4 – Steve Sollmann
- 3 – Brian Stavisky, Matt Edwards
- 2 – Brant Ust, Allen Greene, Jeff Wagner, J.J. Brock, Craig Cooper

Note: Cooper's earlier 9-game hit streak ended in 2006 after going 0-for-1 with 3 walks and a sac. fly vs. Central Michigan on March 22.

2006 Irish Baseball Honors and Awards

Craig Cooper (Sr., 1B)

- Second Team All-American (*Baseball America, Collegiate Baseball, Rivals*)
- Third Team All-American (Baseball Writers)
- All-American (College Baseball Foundation)
- BIG EAST Player of the Year (1st team all-BE)
- Notre Dame Team MVP
- National Player of the Week, May 23 (*Collegiate Baseball, NCBWA and Rivals.com*)
- NCAA Lexington Regional All-Tournament Team
- BIG EAST POW; CBF Nat'l Team of Week (4/9; 4/23)
- BIG EAST Player of the Week (April 9 and 23)
- MLB Draft Selection – Padres (7th round)

Jeff Manship (Jr., RHP)

- Third Team All-American (*Collegiate Baseball*)
- BIG EAST Pitcher of the Year (1st team all-BE)
- BIG EAST Weekly Honor Roll (April 16)
- Irish Baseball Classic All-Tournament Team
- MLB Draft Selection –Twins (15th round)

Jeff Samardzija (Jr., RHP)

- First Team All-BIG EAST
- MLB Draft Selection - Chicago Cubs (5th round)

Greg Lopez (Sr., SS)

- Third Team Academic All-American
- Second Team All-BIG EAST
- BIG EAST Weekly Honor Roll (April 16)
- Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Award
- Team Co-Captain
- MLB Draft Selection – Blue Jays (33rd round)

Brett Lilley (So., 3B)

- Second Team All-BIG EAST
- BIG EAST Weekly Honor Roll (April 9)

Danny Dressman (Jr., OF)

- Second Team All-BIG EAST
- BIG EAST Player of the Week (March 12)

Kyle Weiland (Fr., RHP)

- Freshman All-American
- Second Team All-BIG EAST
- BIG EAST Weekly Honor Roll (April 30)

Jeremy Barnes (Fr., DH/2B)

- Second Team All-BIG EAST

Matt Bransfield (Sr., LF)

- CoSIDA First Team Academic All-District V
- Third Team All-BIG EAST
- Notre Dame Student-Athlete Award
- CBF National Team of the Week (March 19)
- Irish Baseball Classic MVP
- Free-Agent Signee – Gateway Grizzlies

Tom Thornton (Sr., LHP)

- CoSIDA First Team Academic All-District V
- BIG EAST Pitcher of Week (Feb. 26, March 19)
- Irish Baseball Classic All-Tournament Team
- ND Athletics Kanaley Leadership Award
- ND Athletics Zorich Service Award
- MLB Draft Selection – Tigers (21st round)

Wade Korpi (So., LHP)

- BIG EAST Tournament MVP
- BIG EAST Weekly Honor Roll (April 2 and 30)

Alex Nettey (Sr., CF)

- NCAA Lexington Regional All-Tournament Team
- Irish Baseball Classic All-Tournament Team

Ross Brezovsky (So., 2B)

- Irish Baseball Classic All-Tournament Team

Cody Rizzo (Sr., RF/C)

- Irish Baseball Classic All-Tournament Team

2006 SEASON IN REVIEW – Notre Dame's 2006 baseball campaign truly was a season of streaks, as the Irish set the ND record for consecutive wins (23) – including 14 straight in BIG EAST play (four consecutive 3-0 series sweeps) – en route to winning a fifth straight BIG EAST Tournament title and advancing to the NCAAs for the eighth straight season ... the Irish (45-17-1) fielded an everyday lineup stocked with veterans while trotting out one of the best weekend three-man rotations in the program's history ... ND ended up among the 2006 national leaders in all three major categories – staff ERA (21st, 3.52), fielding pct. (23rd, .972) and batting avg. (40th, .313) – and the offense's focus on plate discipline yielded a triple-digit total in times hit-by-pitch for the third straight season (100) ... the promising and exciting season had a frustrating finish, as ND came out on the wrong end of one of the longest games in NCAA Tournament history (a 16-inning, 5-4 game with the College of Charleston) before seeing its season end with a loss to homestanding Kentucky ... the season of streaks saw two noteworthy marks come to an end that weekend in Lexington, with Notre Dame going 0-2 at a postseason tournament for the first time in 46 years and failing to reach an NCAA Regional final game for the first time since 1999 ... here's a closer look at the record-setting 2006 Notre Dame baseball season:

EARLY CHALLENGES – Notre Dame entered 2006 minus two injured players, junior RHP Dan Kapala (shoulder) and sophomore OF/RHP Tony Langford (elbow), who were sidelined with season-ending surgeries ... a hard-luck start saw the Irish suffer a rare five-game losing streak that included late-game comebacks in Millington, Tenn. – by Memphis (6-7; 10 inn.) and Oklahoma (3-4) – plus the team's first shutout loss in 215 games (0-8 vs. Minnesota, ending the 2nd-longest scoring streak in ND baseball history) and a 10-inning loss to Arizona (0-2, at the Metrodome) ... the Irish rebounded by going 7-1 over spring break (in San Antonio), with highlighted by a late rally to knock off 15th-ranked Texas A&M (5-4).

RECORD ATTENDANCE – Fans flocked to Eck Stadium throughout 2006 as the Irish set Notre Dame records for season overall (60,334) and average (2,514) attendance ... the seven largest attendance numbers in Eck Stadium history – and 14 of the 20 biggest crowds – all came in 2006, including an all-time high of 3,507 for the Friday-night game versus Rutgers on April 21.

ANOTHER 40-WIN SEASON – Notre Dame totaled 40-plus wins for the 17th time in the past 18 seasons while reaching 45 wins for the 12th time in the history of the program ... the 2006 team's 41 regular-season wins havw been bested just three times in Irish history.

REGULAR-SEASON CHAMPS – ND used five 3-0 sweeps to help fashion the 2nd-highest conference win total in BIG EAST history (21-5-1) while claiming the 6th BIG EAST regular-season title in the program's history ... a showdown series at runner-up UConn proved to be the key weekend, with the Irish sweeping the doubleheader (7-6, 7-3) before the finale ended in a 13-inning, 1-1 tie ... a 9th-inning rally helped win the opener, with **Cooper's** walk and **Lilley's** single preceding RBI hits from **Dressman** (double) and **Brezovsky** ... Cooper had the first 5-hit game of his career in game-2 before **Korpi's** rare BIG EAST start (7 IP, R, 6 H, 2 BB, 5 Ks) and a gutsy five innings from freshman closer **Kyle Weiland** (2 H, 2 BB, 7 Ks) helped secure the rare tie ... ND had a cushion in the standings with three weeks to play but Louisville staged late comebacks to win the final two games the next weekend (11-3, 4-5, 6-9), just the fourth time the Irish had lost a BIG EAST home series ... two more close losses followed at Seton Hall (6-7, 14-12, 1-2) but the Irish clinched the title on the road versus Villanova (3-1, 6-2, 12-1) ... there still was drama in the 12-1 game – as Cooper's 3-for-4 game edged him atop the BIG EAST career batting charts (.444).

GOLDEN GLOVES – The 2006 ND defense totaled just 69 errors in the 63-game season while compiling the best season fielding pct. (.972) in ND history.

8TH STRAIGHT NCAA TRIP – Notre Dame advanced to the NCAAs for the 8th straight season in '06, one of 10 teams in the nation to appear in the NCAAs every year since '99 ... the #15 Irish faced a challenging draw as the #3 seed in the regional at Kentucky, losing a 16-inning heartbreaker to #25 College of Charleston (5-4) and dropping a 10-4 game to the #13 hosts ... it marked the first time since 1960 that an ND team had gone 0-2 at a postseason tournament (spanning 36 conference/NCAA tournaments) ... the game with Charleston ranked as one of the longest in NCAA tournament history and featured a courageous outing by **Weiland** (7 IP, 7 Ks, 4 H, BB), who allowed the final run (only score in the final 10 innings).

2006 IN REVIEW

SILVER STREAK – Notre Dame rattled off 23 consecutive wins from March 25-April 25, the longest win streak in the program's 114-year history ... the Irish batted .353 in the streak while compiling a 2.81 staff ERA and making just 24 errors ... ND outscored its opponents by a 110 runs in the win streak, with 12 wins by a margin of 5-plus runs and 14 of the games featuring 1st-inning runs by the Irish ... the win streak was one of the longest in ND athletics history, alongside streaks by the softball (33), women's soccer (24), football (23), women's basketball (23), and men's basketball (22) programs, among team-oriented sports ... ND's won-loss record stood at just 10-8 before the 23-game win streak, which began with a 12-2 victory in the second game of a doubleheader at Georgetown ... the wild finish to a home sweep of Pittsburgh (6-1, 4-3, 9-8) saw both teams score twice in the 8th before Pitt went ahead with three runs in the 9th (8-7) – but the Irish had the final answer, thanks to a **Greg Lopez** single, walks by **Craig Cooper** and **Danny Dressman**, and a 2-run single off the bat of **Jeremy Barnes** to end the game ... the Irish later rallied from a 4-3, 7th-inning deficit vs. Ball State, winning 6-5 thanks to **Matt Bransfield's** RBI double and a 2-run blast by sophomore 2B **Ross Brezovsky** ... a dominant series from Cooper (9-for-14) and **Brett Lilley** (9-for-13) paced the sweep at South Florida (9-5, 10-4, 10-1) and later a home sweep of St. John's (9-2, 13-7, 7-5) ... SJU was poised to end the streak in the series finale – taking a 5-4 lead into the bottom of the 9th – but junior C **Sean Gaston** drew a leadoff walk, Brezovsky followed with a game-tying triple and senior CF **Alex Nettey** became an all-time Eck Stadium hero by depositing the next pitch over the leftfield fence for the game-ending home run ... the streak passed 20 games, after an offensive explosion that swept away BIG EAST rival Rutgers (11-5, 15-3, 14-12) ... Cooper's hot bat yielded an 8-for-12 series vs. RU while an Eck Stadium record crowd of more than 10,000 fans filed in for the series ... sophomore LHP **Wade Korpi's** next start saw him shut down Purdue (7 IP, unearned run, H, BB), striking out 11 for a 2-1 win that featured an early 2-run double from Lopez ... the streak ended in vs. Bowling Green (8-11), with a pair of untimely unearned runs.

FIVE-PEAT A RARE FEAT – The Irish opened at the 2006 BIG EAST Tournament in Clearwater, Fla., with wins over South Florida (3-1) and West Virginia (12-4) before bouncing back from a 10-1 loss to St. John's to beat the Red Storm in a 5-3 elimination game ... ND then claimed its 5th straight BIG EAST title with a 7-0 victory over Louisville ... Oral Roberts (9) is the only team in the nation with a longer active streak of conference tournament titles than ND ... the Irish extended their win streak in the tournament to nine games ('04-'06), longest in the 22-year history of the event (no other team has won more than two straight BIG EAST Tournament titles) ... tournament MVP **Korpi** had the wins in the 3-1 opener over USF (6 IP, R, 4 H, 3 BB, 11 Ks) and in 7-0 title game with Louisville (5 IP, 3 H, 2 BB, 2 Ks) ... home runs by **Bransfield** and **Brezovsky** sparked the game-2 win over WVU (12-4) while senior LHP **Tom Thornton** (7 IP, 2 R, 5 H, 3 Ks) delivered another clutch postseason start, in the elimination-game win over SJU.

CONTROL FREAKS – The 2006 ND pitching staff's pinpoint accuracy yielded a team record for strikeouts (504) and K-to-walk ratio (2.95), plus just 24 wild pitches and 51 hit batters ... the pitchers also allowed only 2.69 walks per 9.0 innings (3rd-best in ND history) and allowed just 18 home runs all season, including a 25-game stretch (nearly 1,000 batters faced) without surrendering a ball over the fences.

ALL-AMERICA SLUGGER – **Cooper** was one of four position players nationwide listed on the top 2006 All-America lists ... the senior 1B led the nation in scoring (1.79 runs/gm; 79 total) and ranked 6th nationally in batting average (.425) while posting nearly a 3-to-1 walk-to-strikeout ratio (38/14) and 17 more extra-base hits (31) than strikeouts ... he became the league's all-time leader for career batting average in BIG EAST games (.444) and claimed an unprecedented third BIG EAST batting title in '06 (.481) ... Cooper led the 2006 offense in 20 categories, including the 3rd-best on-base percentage in ND history (.522) ... he reached base in 55 of 57 games played and tied an Irish record with his 21-game hit streak ... Cooper was named national player of the week in mid-April, after hitting a combined 10-for-19 with 13 RBI (9 R, 4 HR, 2 2B, 5 BB) in a five-game span that included games with Toledo and IPFW and the series sweep of Rutgers.

KING K – **Jeff Manship** joined Cooper in receiving All-America honors, as a third-team honoree from *Collegiate Baseball* ... the junior RHP's 111 Ks in '06 were seven shy of the ND record while his career rate of 10.11 Ks/9 IP was 2nd-best by an ND pitcher in the past 40 years ... Manship finished 4th among the BIG EAST leaders for season ERA (3.26) and was the league leader for wins (9-2) and strikeouts.

SHORTSTOP SCHOLAR – **Lopez** was recognized by the College Sports Information Directors of America as a third team Academic All-American before graduating with a 3.39 cumulative GPA as a double major in pre-professional studies and anthropology ... the senior shortstop's busy final semester included being accepted into medical school while batting .304 with just 12 errors in 58 games played and a .356 batting average with runners in scoring position.

NINE BIG EAST HONOREES – **Cooper** and **Manship** became the fifth set of teammates to sweep BIG EAST player- and pitcher-of-the-year and were joined by junior RHP **Jeff Samardzija** as 1st team all-BIG EAST honorees ... five others were 2nd-team selections: **Lopez**, junior OF **Dressman**, sophomore 3B **Lilley**, **Weiland** and freshman DH **Barnes** ... senior LF **Bransfield** rounded out the all-conference selections (3rd team) ... the nine selections were one shy of the conference's all-time high-water mark set by ND's record-setting 2001 team (10).

SUPER SAVER – **Weiland** finished third in the nation with 16 saves, surpassing the previous ND record by three and placing him just four shy of the career mark ... he went on to earn first team Freshman All-America honors and was invited to the USA Baseball National Team tryouts ... the staff's primary setup man, junior LHP **Mike Dury**, shared in Weiland's record-setting season –with Dury posting a 2.17 ERA to go along with a lowly .208 opponent batting average.

SERVICE HONORS – The baseball program was chosen as the 2005-06 ND team to be honored by the athletics department for community service excellence ... **Thornton** took home two top honors from the athletics department: the Byron Kanaley Award (exemplary student leader) and the Chris Zorich Award (community service) ... former basketball standout Ruth Riley is the only other student-athlete to receive both of those awards.

FEELING A DRAFT – ND's five selections in the 2006 MLB draft were one shy of the team record (6, in '01) ... **Samardzija** (5th round; Cubs) and **Cooper** (7th round; Padres) were selected in early rounds, followed by **Manship** (14th round; Twins), **Thornton** (21st-round; Tigers) and **Lopez** (33rd round; Blue Jays) ... it marked the first time that three ND pitchers were selected in the same Major League draft.

FRESHMAN FOCUS

A new weekly addition to the und.com coverage of the Notre Dame baseball team will be the "Freshman Focus" series, providing a quick insight into the team's newcomers through a short Q&A format ... this offering is similar to the "20 Questions" series that have been posted previously on und.com for several sports ... 3B **A.J. Pollock** kicks off the 2007 Freshman Focus series, with his number of questions (27) fittingly matching the number of outs for a team in a regulation game ... Pollock is the fourth freshman since 1999 to open the season as ND's starting third baseman, following Andrew Bushey ('99), Greg Lopez ('03) and current junior 2B **Ross Brezovsky** ('04) in that distinction.

Freshman Focus #1 – A.J. Pollock (Third Baseman)

Full Name – Allen Lorenz Pollock

Hometown – Hebron, Connecticut (lived there my whole life)

Is there anything unique about your hometown? – There's one traffic light.

High School – RHAM High School

What exactly does RHAM stand for? – Region of Hebron Andover and Marlborough. There are 1,100 students from the three towns who go there. Baseball is the only team at RHAM with a winning record the past 10 years. We won state in '04.

High school's nickname and colors – We are called the RHAM Sachems and we didn't have a football team until my junior year. Our colors coincidentally are blue and gold.

Family members – My parents Allen and Karen both went to Boston College. My sister Rachel is a senior at the University of Vermont.

Something most people don't know about you – Played guitar for five years.

Have you been a longtime Notre Dame fan? – I've always liked ND. When I was six years old, I wrote Notre Dame telling them I wanted to play baseball here. ... they wrote me back.

Favorite thing about coach Schrage – There's a quiet confidence about him and he is an excellent teacher. Another thing that I really appreciate about coach Schrage is you always know what he wants. He never has any hidden agendas.

Favorite thing about coach Lawler – He's very easy to talk to and he's the best-dressed coach on the team.

Favorite thing about coach Clinkscales – He is very easy-going and personal. He always has a positive attitude.

Favorite thing about coach Fitzgerald – He's just like one of the guys. He always seems to have a lot of energy.

Area you want to improve most this season – I want to draw a lot more walks than I did during our fall season.

What do you like most about the team's freshman class? – We have a good variety of players and personalities.

Your number with the Irish – #4, a number that I've worn since my freshman year in high school. I saw Greg Lopez was a senior last year, so things just worked out that I could wear #4 again. I have a lot of respect for Lopez. He was a tremendous fielder and wearing #4 after him will be an honor.

Did you play other sports at a high level? – Soccer and basketball

Favorite sports teams – New York Mets and the New England Patriots

Favorite athlete – Tom Brady

How would you describe adjusting to the college game? – There is a lot more thinking involved in the college game. Everybody is always playing at a high level so if you don't rise to the occasion, then you will be weeded out.

What are your rituals before a game? – I always listen to the same music before the game to calm me down.

What road trip are you most looking forward to this season? – Myrtle Beach trip (besides the trip to Omaha)

What do you do when you're not on the baseball field? – Play guitar

Favorite food – Steak

Favorite TV show – Family Guy

Favorite movie – Wedding Crashers

Favorite actor and/or actress – Jack Black

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL

2007 Quick Facts (updated as of Feb 11, 2007)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of School (Location): University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN, 46556)

Founded (Undergraduate Enrollment): 1842 (8,311)

Nickname (School Colors): Fighting Irish (Gold and Blue)

Home Field (Capacity; Year Opened): Frank Eck Stadium (2,500; 1994)

Surface, Dimensions: Grass, 331-381-401-381-331

Affiliation: NCAA Division I

Conference (Year Joined): BIG EAST Conference (1995-96)

President: Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C. (Notre Dame '76)

Athletic Director: Kevin White (St. Joseph's (Ind.) College '72)

Athletic Department Phone: (574) 631-6107

Ticket Office Phone: (574) 631-7356

HISTORY

First Year of Baseball: 1892

Overall All-Time Record: 2,153 wins – 1,259 losses – 19 ties (.630)

Number of Years in College World Series: 2 (1957, 2002)

Years in NCAAs: 21 (1949, '56-'59, '60, '63, '70, '89, '92-'94, '96, '99-'06)

NCAA Tournament Record: 41-44

Last Postseason Opponent: Kentucky (L, 4-10, 2006 NCAA Lexington Regional)

Regular-Season Conference Titles: 13 (MCC – '87, '88, '90, '92, '93, '94, '95; BIG EAST – '97, '99, '01, '02, '04, '06)

Conference Tournament Titles: 10 (MCC – '89, '91, '92, '93, '94; BIG EAST – '02, '03, '04, '05, '06)

Note: Notre Dame was independent of conference affiliation prior to 1984

COACHING STAFF

Head Coach: Dave Schrage (first season at ND; 20th as a college head coach)

Alma Mater and Year: Creighton '83

Record at School (Years): First Season

Career Record (Years): 476-553 (19)

Career Division I Record (Years): 415-487 (16)

Record at Evansville: 130-108 (4 seasons); 43-22 in 2006 (NCAA Charlottesville Regional finalist)

Baseball Office Phone: (574) 631-6366

Assistant Coach/Duties (Alma Mater): Scott Lawler (Simpson College '00) – hitters, recruiting coordinator

Assistant Coach/Duties (Alma Mater): Sherard Clinkscales (Purdue '94) – pitchers

Volunteer Assistant Coach: John Fitzgerald (Chicago '98) – outfielders, catchers and pitchers

Athletic Trainer: Mike Bean

TEAM INFORMATION

Overall Record in 2006: 45-17-1 (21-4 home, 11-6-1 away, 13-7 neutral)

Conference Record/Finish: 21-5-1/1st (10-2 home, 11-3-1 away)

BIG EAST Tournament: champion (3-1), fifth straight (no other team has won three-plus in a row)

Final 2006 Regular-Season Rankings: 15th per *Baseball America* (16th NCBWA; 19th coaches; 20th CB)

Lettermen Returning/Lost: 18/11

Position Starters Returning/Lost: 5/4

Total Pitchers Returning/Lost (Starters R/L): 9/4 (2/3) ... 10 letterwinning pitchers returning/4 lost

Newcomers: 15 (10 freshman signees, one two-sport freshman, one grad.-student transfer, three freshman walk-ons)

Captains: Danny Dressman (Sr., CF; San Jose, CA) and Mike Dury (Sr., LHP/1B; Indianapolis, IN)

SPORTS INFORMATION (media relations)

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SID Fax: (574) 631-7941

E-Mail: lafleur.4@nd.edu

Home Phone: (574) 231-0578

Mailing Address: 112 Joyce Center, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Website: www.und.com

Sports Hotline: (574) 631-3000 ... see "Irish Alert" link on und.com baseball page for free text-message update service

Eck Stadium Press Box Phone: (574) 631-9018

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL 2006 PLAYER INFORMATION (Gr. indicates 2006 graduate)

Position Players (listed in order of top returning and lost; stats are for 2006 unless otherwise noted)

(Ret./Lost), Pos., Player	Ht./Wt.	Cl.	B/T	GP/GS	Avg./HR/RBI	Other
(R) SS* Brett Lilley	5-8/170	Jr.	L/R	57/57	.320 / 2 / 32	21 HBP, 39 R, 6 2B, 26 BB, 5-10 SB, 15 SAC
(R) C Sean Gaston	6-0/185	Sr.	L/R	55/45	.319 / 1 / 30	27 R, 8 2B, 3B, 20 BB, 4-6 SB, HBP
(R) DH/1B* Jeremy Barnes	5-11/200	So.	R/R	58/55	.294 / 2 / 49	11 2B, 6 3B, 40 R, 29 BB, 5 HBP, 9-14 SB
(R) OF Danny Dressman	5-8/180	Sr.	L/L	53/51	.321 / 0 / 35	38 R, 9 2B, 2 3B, 30 BB, 5 HBP, 6-11 SB, 12 SAC
(R) 2B Ross Brezovsky	5-9/170	Jr.	L/R	56/53	.295 / 4 / 42	35 R, 12 2B, 2 3B, 20 BB, 6 HBP, 11 SAC
(R) DH/OF ... Tony Langford*	5-11/185	Jr.	R/R	44/39	.283 / 3 / 28	7 2B, 16 R, 3 BB, 2 HBP (stats are for 2005)
(R) DH/1B ... Mike Dury	6-5/240	Sr.	L/L	36/5	.240 / 2 / 7	2 2B, 4 R, 2 BB, 2 HBP
(L) 1B Craig Cooper	6-2/220	Gr.	R/R	57/57	.425 / 9 / 41	9-15 SB, 79 R, 19 2B, 3 3B, 38 BB, 10 HBP
(L) SS Greg Lopez	6-0/190	Gr.	R/R	63/62	.304 / 1 / 37	31 R, 9 2B, 3B, 9 BB, 5 HBP, 7 SAC
(L) LF Matt Bransfield	6-1/205	Gr.	R/R	57/53	.333 / 6 / 45	34 R, 19 2B, 3B, 16 BB, 3 HBP, 4-6 SB
(L) CF Alex Nettey	6-1/200	Gr.	R/R	60/59	.298 / 3 / 23	23 HBP, 46 R, 8 2B, 2 3B, 13 BB, 7-10 SB
(L) RF Cody Rizzo	6-1/200	Gr.	R/R	60/50	.261 / 3 / 36	13-19 SB, 14 HBP, 39 R, 11 2B, 3B, 17 BB

* **Notes:** Barnes was a DH/IF (2B/SS/3B) in '06; Lilley was starting 3B for most of '05 and '06; Langford missed '06 (elbow injury)

2006 Position Player Honors (BA-Baseball America; CB-Collegiate Baseball; RR-Rosenblatt Report; NCBWA-baseball writers)

Second Team All-American: Craig Cooper (BA, CB, RR; also third team from NCBWA)

First Team All-BIG EAST: Craig Cooper (player of the year)

Second Team All-BIG EAST: Jeremy Barnes, Danny Dressman, Brett Lilley, Greg Lopez

Third Team All-BIG EAST: Matt Bransfield

Third Team Academic All-American: Greg Lopez

First Team Academic All-District: Matt Bransfield, Greg Lopez

NCAA Lexington Regional All-Tournament Team: Alex Nettey

'06 **Draft (pos. players)** – Craig Cooper (Padres/7th rd), G. Lopez (Blue Jays/32nd rd); M. Bransfield – free agent (Gateway Grizzlies)

Pitchers (listed in order of top returning and lost; stats are for 2006 season unless otherwise noted)

(Ret./Lost), Pitcher	Ht./Wt.	Cl.	B/T	GP/GS	W-L (S)	IP	K / BB / H	OppAvg.	ERA
(R) Wade Korpi (LHP)	5-10/180	Jr.	R/L	14/12	7-2 (0)	76.1	94 / 27 / 55	.204	2.00
(R) Kyle Weiland	6-3/190	So.	R/R	30/0	2-4 (16)	49.1	48 / 20 / 39	.224	3.27
(R) *Dan Kapala ('05 stats)	6-5/215	Sr.	R/R	25/9	7-3 (1)	81.2	41 / 27 / 84	.268	3.20
(R) Sam Elam (LHP)	6-4/210	So.	R/R	11/0	0-0 (0)	12.1	19 / 6 / 8	.178	2.19
(R) Brett Graffy	6-2/195	So.	R/R	11/0	2-0 (0)	26.2	13 / 6 / 23	.245	3.71
(R) Jess Stewart	6-3/215	Sr.	R/R	22/0	4-2 (1)	39.0	21 / 10 / 39	.258	2.31
(R) Mike Dury (LHP)	6-5/240	Sr.	S/L	27/0	3-1 (1)	29.0	17 / 7 / 21	.208	2.17
(R) Joey Williamson	6-1/195	Jr.	R/R	18/0	0-0 (0)	16.2	20 / 6 / 21	.323	6.48
(R) David Phelps	6-3/185	So.	R/R	12/3	2-0 (0)	26.2	23 / 10 / 30	.280	7.09
(R) *Tony Langford ('05 stats)	5-11/185	Jr.	R/R	15/0	2-0 (1)	17.1	13 / 6 / 16	.258	3.63
(L) *Jeff Manship	6-1/195	Draft	R/R	15/14	9-2 (0)	94.0	111 / 28 / 34	.223	3.26
(L) Tom Thornton (LHP)	6-6/220	Gr.	L/L	15/14	7-3 (0)	82.1	58 / 7 / 93	.292	3.94
(L) *Jeff Samardzija	6-5/215	Draft	R/R	15/15	8-2 (0)	97.2	61 / 37 / 101	.272	4.33

* Kapala (shoulder) and Langford (elbow) missed the '06 season due to injury and each has an extra year of eligibility remaining (their stats above are for 2005 season); Samardzija and Manship were drafted/signed as juniors (Manship had two years of eligibility left)

2006 Pitching Honors

Third Team All-American: Jeff Manship (Collegiate Baseball)

Freshman All-American: Kyle Weiland (1st team – BA and RR; Collegiate Baseball)

First Team All-BIG EAST: Jeff Manship (pitcher of the year), Jeff Samardzija

Second Team All-BIG EAST: Kyle Weiland BIG EAST Tournament MVP: Wade Korpi

First Team Academic All-District: Tom Thornton

2006 Draft Picks (pitchers) – Jeff Samardzija (5th round, Cubs), Jeff Manship (Twins/14th round), Tom Thornton (Tigers/21st round)

2007 Preseason First Team All-BIG EAST Selections (per BE coaches) – Kyle Weiland (pitcher of the year) and Wade Korpi ...

Weiland also named BIG EAST preseason pitcher of the year by Collegiate Baseball, Korpi by Baseball America

KEY NEWCOMERS (all are freshmen except Weglarz, who is a current MBA student at ND and 2006 graduate of Missouri State)

Player	Ht./Wt.	Pos.	B	Hometown/Prev. School	Top 2006 Honors (Stats)
A.J. Pollock	6-1/190	IF (3B)	R	Hebron CT/RHAM HS	State player of the year (hit .462 with 27 RBI, 4 HR, 15 SB)
Billy Boockford	6-2/195	OF	R	Glen Ellyn, IL/Glenbard West HS	All-state (team-record .545 batting, 41 RBI, 6 HR, 11 2B)
Eric Maust	6-1/185	RHP		Alpharetta, GA/Blessed Trinity	All-state for state champs (1.34 ERA, 12 wins, 83 Ks, 85 IP)
Brayden Ashdown	6-1/175	OF	R	Tucson, AZ/Catalina Foothills HS	Hit .329 for state runner-up (29 R, .529 on-base)
Matt Weglarz	6-3/220	C/1B	R	Kansas City, MO/Missouri St.	2nd-tm all-MVC in '05 (.333, 49 RBI; .293 career hitter)
Ryan Smith	6-1/210	C	R	Waldorf, MD/Westlake HS	ABCA 3rd team All-American (hit .446 with 7 HR, 36 RBI)
Ryne Intlekofer	5-9/155	IF	R	Moorpark, CA/Moorpark HS	All-Ventura County; also captained football team
Andrew Scheid	6-7/200	RHP		Highlands Ranch, CO/Jesuit HS	3.16 ERA, 53 K, 48.2 IP w/ C. Creek C-Mack (summer '06)

PROBABLE LINEUP (listed in probable batting order): SS Brett Lilley, CF Danny Dressman, 1B Jeremy Barnes, DH Mike Dury/Matt Weglarz, C Sean Gaston, 2B Ross Brezovsky, 3B A.J. Pollock, RF Billy Boockford, LF Ryan Connolly (inj. in '06)/Brayden Ashdown

PROBABLE ROTATION – Wade Korpi, David Phelps, Brett Graffy, Sam Elam, Joey Williamson, Eric Maust; closer: Kyle Weiland/Dan Kapala

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL 2007 ROSTER (as of Feb. 11)

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	B-T	Birthdate	Hometown (Previous School)
1	Michael Wright	Fr.	OF	5-7	160	L-L	10/19/87	Lockhart, TX (Lockhart HS)
2	Brett Lilley**	Jr.	IF (SS)	5-8	170	L-R	7/30/85	North Canton, OH (Hoover HS)
4	A.J. Pollock	Fr.	IF (3B)	6-1	190	R-R	12/5/87	Hebron, CT (RHAM)
5	David Mills	Fr.	OF/LHP	5-9	160	L-L	12/16/87	Battle Creek, MI (Lakeview HS)
6	Danny Dressman*** (C)	Sr.	OF	5-8	180	L-L	12/12/84	San Jose, CA (Archbishop Mitty HS)
7	Ross Brezovsky**	Jr.	2BC	5-9	170	L-R	8/26/85	Naples, FL (Collier HS)
8	Evan Sharpley	So.	1B	6-2	210	L-R	11/4/86	Marshall, MI (Marshall HS)
10	Ryan Connolly	So.	OF	6-0	180	R-R	5/3/87	Binghamton, NY (Binghamton HS)
11	Sean Gaston***	Sr.	C	6-0	190	L-R	2/12/85	Brownsburg, IN (Brownsburg HS)
12	Brayden Ashdown	Fr.	OF	6-1	175	R-R	4/14/88	Tucson, AZ (Catalina Foothills HS)
13	Wade Korpi**	Jr.	LHP	5-10	180	R-L	3/10/86	Lake Worth, FL (Santaluces HS)
14	Eddy Mendiola*	So.	3B/1B/C	6-0	210	R-R	6/22/87	Miami, FL (Palmer Trinity HS)
15	Matt Weglarz	Gr.	C/1B	6-3	220	R-R	12/8/83	Kansas City, MO (Missouri St./Rockhurst HS)
16	Eric Maust	Fr.	RHP	6-1	185	R-R	1/19/88	Alpharetta, GA (Blessed Trinity HS)
17	Billy Boockford	Fr.	OF	6-2	195	R-R	6/16/87	Glen Ellyn, IL (Glenbard West HS)
18	Steven Mazur	Fr.	RHP	6-0	180	R-R	1/29/88	Round Rock, TX (Stony Point HS)
19	John Seabaugh	Sr.	RHP	6-0	205	R-R	5/8/85	Granger, IN (Marian HS)
20	Jeremy Barnes*	So.	IF/1B	5-11	200	R-R	4/13/87	Garland, TX (South Garland HS)
21	Brett Graffy*	So.	RHP	6-2	195	R-R	3/12/87	Joliet, IL (Joliet HS)
22	Dan Kapala**	Sr.	RHP	6-4	215	R-R	9/6/85	Royal Oak, MI (Shrine Catholic HS)
23	Tony Langford*	Jr.	RHP/OF	6-0	185	R-R	8/17/85	Ft. Worth, TX (Ft. Worth Country Day HS)
24	Sam Elam*	So.	LHP	6-4	210	L-L	6/21/85	Mesquite, TX (Poteet HS)
25	Austin Pearce	Fr.	OF	6-2	210	S-R	12/16/87	Lake Oswego, OR (Jesuit HS)
26	Joey Williamson**	Jr.	RHP	6-1	195	R-R	1/28/86	Lantana, FL (Santaluces HS)
27	Chris Soriano*	Jr.	C	6-1	195	R-R	12/24/85	Randolph, NJ (Delbarton HS)
29	Ryne Intlekofer	Fr.	IF	5-9	155	R-R	1/27/88	Moorpark, CA (Moorpark HS)
30	Will Harford	Fr.	IF	6-0	170	R-R	12/31/86	Chicago, IL (N. Dame HS (Niles, IL); Kent (CT) School)
31	Andrew Scheid	Fr.	RHP	6-6	200	R-R	1/12/88	Highlands Ranch, CO (Regis Jesuit HS)
32	Jess Stewart***	Sr.	RHP	6-3	215	R-R	2/6/85	Manassas, VA (Osborn City HS)
33	Kyle Weiland*	So.	RHP	6-3	190	L-R	9/12/86	Albuquerque, NM (Eldorado HS)
34	Dylan Blake	Fr.	IF	6-4	200	R-R	11/17/87	Coon Rapids, MN (Coon Rapids HS)
35	David Phelps*	So.	RHP	6-3	185	R-R	10/9/86	Hazelwood, MO (Hazelwood HS)
36	Herman Petzold	Fr.	IF	5-9	160	R-R	9/7/88	Saint Clair Shores, MI (De LaSalle HS)
44	Mike Dury**	Sr.	LHP/1B	6-5	240	S-R	9/19/84	Indianapolis, IN (Bishop Chatard HS)
45	Ryan Smith	Fr.	C	6-1	210	R-R	4/13/88	Waldorf, MD (Westlake HS)

* – monograms won (prior to 2007)

(C) – captains

Head Coach: #3 Dave Schrage (Creighton '83; first season at Notre Dame)

Assistant Coaches: #9 Scott Lawler, #39 Sherard Clinkscales **Volunteer Assistant:** #28 John Fitzgerald

Pronunciation Guide

Billy BOOK-furd
 Ross Bruh-ZOV-ski
 Mike DURR-ee
 Sam EE-lum
 Sean GAS-tun
 Ryan IN-till-coff-err
 Wade CORE-pee
 Dan Kuh-PELL-uh
 Eric MAHst (rhymes with cost)
 Eddy Men-dee-O-luh
 Herman PET-zold
 A.J. PAH-lick
 Andrew SHIED (like fried)
 John SEE-bah
 Chris Sorr-ee-ON-oh
 Matt WEG-larz
 Kyle WHY-lund

Notre Dame 2007 baseball team heads into first season of Dave Schrage era looking to maintain the program's high standards of success.

When **Dave Schrage** settled in as the Notre Dame baseball coach in the fall of 2006, he coined a simple motto for his Irish baseball program: "Tradition Never Graduates."

As things turn out, that motto is very timely for a 2007 Notre Dame baseball team that features 15 newcomers and three veterans who did not play in 2006 – plus a brand-new coaching staff. But there still is plenty of talent on hand to combine with the traditional expectations in making the 2007 season the latest in a long line of successful Irish baseball campaigns.

"One thing that became clear to me when we started practice last fall is that the players at Notre Dame expect to win," says Schrage. "Each one has a pride in themselves to continue the winning tradition of previous years. The players in this program have their priorities correct, with academics coming first and then baseball."

"This group works extremely hard to make sure that tradition never graduates."

Five position starters returned from the 2006 team that went 45-17-1 and won the program's fifth straight BIG EAST title. The returners include the junior infield duo of **Brett Lilley** (a two-time all-BIG EAST performer who is shifting from third base to shortstop) and second baseman **Ross Brezovsky**, plus senior all-BIG EAST centerfielder **Danny Dressman** and versatile sophomore **Jeremy Barnes** (who could play anywhere in the infield, after earning all-BIG EAST honors in 2006 as a DH).

Senior catcher **Sean Gaston** also was set to return but was lost for the season due to shoulder surgery (he hopes to return for a final year in 2008). That leaves MBA graduate student **Matt Weglarz** – a former player at Missouri State – and freshman **Ryan Smith** as the team's primary catchers heading into the 2007 season.

Weglarz also is an option to fill the big hole at first base, following the departure of graduated All-American Craig Cooper. Others in the first-base mix include Barnes, switch-hitting senior **Mike Dury** and sophomore two-sport star **Evan Sharpley**.

Freshman **A.J. Pollock** has slid into the third-base role while sophomore **Ryan Connolly** and a pair of freshmen – **Billy Boockford** and **Brayden Ashdown** – are leading candidates for the open corner outfield positions.

Junior lefthander **Wade Korpi** and the sophomore righthanded tandem of **David Phelps** and **Brett Graffy** entered the final days of pre-season on the inside track for the spots in a weekend rotation that is wide open in 2007. Other top candidate for starting roles include sophomore lefty **Sam Elam**, junior righthander **Joey Williamson** and freshman righthander **Eric Maust** (who served as a backup punter on the 2006 Irish football team).

The relief corps has considerably more experience, led by the senior setup duo of righthander Jess Stewart and lefty **Mike Dury** along with closer **Kyle Weiland** (a 2006 all-BIG EAST and Freshman All-America honoree). Senior **Dan Kapala** and junior **Tony Langford** – both righthanders – could provide huge boosts to the staff as they return from injury (Langford also could be a top DH option).

Here's a look at the Irish, by position:

INFELDERS

A recent trend in college baseball has seen many of the elite teams feature former high school all-state shortstops at each of the infield positions. That certainly could be the setup for the Irish in 2007, with Pollock, Lilley and Brezovsky each top

candidates to start (respectively at third, short and second) while two leading first-base options – Barnes and Sharpley – also were all-state shorstopps during their prep days.

Lilley and Brezovsky have been linked ever since their freshman season in 2005, when their midseason swap of positions helped spark the team's late-season push. Lilley remained at his new position (third base) in 2006 – as did Brezovsky, at second base. The duo now heads into their junior season as the likely 2007 keystone combination up the middle.

Lilley (North Canton, Ohio) – who played in the prestigious Cape Cod League during the summer of 2006 (with the Cotuit Kettleers) – collected all-BIG EAST honors in each of his first two seasons and now could be poised for national recognition, as a strong candidate for All-America and Academic All-America honors.

The hard-nosed lefthanded hitter enters 2007 with a .327 career batting average and an even more impressive 3.78 cumulative grade-point average. His first five semesters at Notre Dame have included 23 A grades (just five of them A-minuses) among his 28 classes, with his lowest grade being a single B-minus. The accounting major posted a 4.0 in-season GPA during the 2006 spring semester (despite an overloaded 18-credit schedule) and he nearly matched that feat by registering a 3.91 in the '06 fall term – this time while managing 21 credits, reacclimating himself to the shortstop position and adjusting to the new coaching staff.

A master at reaching base in multiple ways, Lilley owns a .473 career on-base percentage that would rank fourth in the Notre Dame record book and second-best by an Irish player since the early 1990s. He was hit-by-pitch 51 times over the course of his first two seasons – putting him on pace to break the NCAA record (92, by late-'90s University of San Francisco player Tony Hurtado) – and he owns more career walks (60) than strikeouts (57). He also displayed his stellar bat control during the 2006 season, setting an Irish record with 15 sacrifice bunts to complement his .320 batting average (his .419 batting in conference games was third-best among 2006 BIG EAST players).

"Brett is coming off an amazing fall season, at the plate and at shortstop," says Schrage of Lilley, who has made 106 of his 120 career starts batting in the 2-hole. "It seemed like he hit .700 through the entire fall and he was a very tough out. Brett has a very advanced approach to hit hitting, with great knowledge of strike zone, ability to use the whole field, good baserunning instincts and an improvement in his speed from last season."

"Defensively, Brett is very quick on the bag, with great range, soft hands, a fast release and a strong arm. He is such a tough competitor and we expect him to be a strong leader of the infield while ranking among the top players in the nation."



Dave Schrage

Fellow lefthanded hitter **Brezovsky** (Naples, Fla.) received 2006 Jayhawk League all-star honors while playing for the Hays (Kan.) Larks, posting a respectable .314 batting average in the wood-bat league. A .279 career batter during his college career (62 RBI), Brezovsky could break out in his third season with the Irish and will be looking to cut down on his strikeouts, after totaling 74 during his first two seasons.

"We will rely a lot on Ross this season, as one of our most experienced starters," says Schrage of Brezovsky, whose six career home runs include several in clutch late-game situations.

"Ross is a steady hitter who has begun to show a boost in his power. His role involves putting the ball in play and moving runners over and he has a smooth, compact swing that can be very effective in the college game. Ross could be due for the best season of his career."

Pollock (Hebron, Conn.) had a strong showing in the 2006 fall season, capped by MVP honors in the Blue-Gold intrasquad series (when he hit 5-for-9 with 5 RBI and the clinching home run in the series finale). His senior season at RHAM High School included a .462 batting average, 27 RBI and 15 stolen bases – leading to him receiving the most votes for the Gatorade player-of-the-year award in Connecticut history (dating back to 1974).

"A.J. emerged as possibly our top all-around newcomer in the fall, due to his tremendous athleticism and defensive versatility," says Schrage. "He has great hands, a strong arm and classic in field instincts while also being a clutch performer who can hit for power, with a linedrive swing and a quick bat. He also is possibly the fastest baserunner on the team, so you can see why we are excited with the many things A.J. brings to the lineup."

Barnes (Garland, Texas) – who likewise has strong athleticism and versatility – headlines the sizable list of candidates to fill Cooper's vacated spot at first base. The likely 3-hole hitter for the Irish in 2007, Barnes collected second team all-BIG EAST honors in '06 after putting up the top all-around offensive numbers by a BIG EAST freshman. His deceiving .294 batting average and low home run total (2) in 2006 were offset by 49 RBI – fourth-most among any of the BIG EAST's returning players. Barnes was the first freshman in nearly 20

were second-most among 2006 BIG EAST players.

"Jeremy is a very talented utility player who saw time at all four infield positions last season and certainly could again this season, in addition to possibly becoming an option in left field," says Schrage.

"We see Jeremy as an emerging leader who carries himself with great poise and character for his age. He combines surehanded defense and high-end athleticism with a stinging linedrive swing and good baserunning. He also has quickly picked up the defensive nuances at first base – so I'm sure we will be pleased with Jeremy's play no matter what position he might be playing."

Two-sport talent **Sharpley** (Marshall, Mich.) is the only pure lefthanded-hitting option at first base and could burst onto the scene in his second season with the Irish. The 6-foot-2, 210-pound corner infielder – who served as the primary backup to quarterback Brady Quinn on the 2006 Notre Dame football team – could provide a key boost to the 2007 baseball team's offensive attack.

"Evan is a tremendous athlete who could give us some much needed power from the left side. He is a player who could solidify the middle of our lineup and make an impact on a lot of games," says Schrage of Sharpley, whose 33 career home runs at Marshall High School rank sixth in Michigan state history.

Sharpley's younger brother Ryan – a righthanded pitcher who also could DH with the Irish – signed with Notre Dame in the fall of 2006 and has been rated among the nation's top-100 overall prospects for the 2007 high school senior class.

The 6-foot-5, 240-pound **Dury** came to Notre Dame as a highly-touted two-way player but has yet to see significant time as an offensive player – totaling just 85 at-bats (4 HR, 17 RBI) in his first three seasons. That all could change for the better in 2007, as the Indianapolis native provides legitimate power from both sides of the plate.

"Mike has provided tremendous leadership for the team, as one of our co-captains, and we all would love to see him end his career with a strong offensive season," says Schrage. "Power hitting is an area of need for our team and Mike certainly is a guy who can fill that void. He also has continued to improve with his defensive play at first base, so you certainly can expect to see him in the mix at that position."

Weglarz would rank among the top righthanded hitting options at first base but may end up playing mostly as a catcher (see comments below), due to the loss of Gaston.

Freshman **Ryne Intlekofer** (Moorpark, Calif.) has emerged as the top backup in the middle infield, primarily at second base. A tough-minded athlete who starred in baseball and football at Moorpark High School, Intlekofer jumped at the chance to follow the lead of various family members who have attended Notre Dame.

"Ryne is a player who brings tremendous hustle and speed to our team, to go along with a quick bat and great baseball instincts. He is one of our top defensive infielders and made strides with the bat in the fall. He could become a key player for us as he gains strength and experience in the college game," says Schrage.

Sophomore **Eddy Mendiola** could be used at either corner infield spot, in addition to serving as a backup catcher. The veteran third baseman saw limited time as a freshman – hitting .296 in 22 games played, while backing up the all-star Lilley – but he showed flashes of being a key slugger in the Irish lineup. The Miami native then had a memorable 2006 summer with the Florida Collegiate League's Altamonte Springs Snappers, starting at third base for a team that nearly won the FCL title.

"Eddy is a hard worker who could be a key factor in our team's chemistry, due to his ability to play

schrage. He is a surehanded defensive player, with keen instincts and a good arm. He also has a short, powerful stroke with power to both gaps – so you could see him be a key extra-base hitter for us this season."

Three walk-on members of the team – freshmen **Herman Petzold** (Saint Clair Shores, Mich.), **Will Harford** (Chicago) and **Dylan Blake** (Coon Rapids, Minn.) – round out the infield group and could develop into contributors as the season progresses.

CATCHERS

Gaston (Brownsburg, Ind.) was poised to direct the young Irish pitching staff but now must shift his focus to a lengthy rehabilitation process, in hopes of returning for a fifth year of eligibility in 2008. A .307 career batter with the Irish, Gaston struck out just 11 times in his junior season and would have been a leading candidate for 2007 Academic All-America honors due to his 3.38 cumulative GPA, as a double major in political science and history.

"You always hate to see kids work hard in preparation for their senior season and then be unable to play due to injury," says Schrage in reference to Gaston, whose past two summers playing with the Cotuit Kettleers included being a 2005 all-star selection in the prestigious Cape Cod League.

"Sean is a very strong defensive catcher and a clutch lefthanded hitter. We will miss his daily presence tremendously and certainly hope that he is able to return in 2008."

Weglarz (Kansas City, Mo.) could be a pivotal player in the 2007 season, as the most experienced option behind the plate. After missing the 2003 season due to a foot injury – although he was able to attend the 2003 College World Series, cheering on his teammates (then known as Southwest Missouri State) – Weglarz played three healthy seasons at SMS/Missouri State while compiling a .293 career batting average (103 RBI, 11 home runs, 39 doubles). He overcame two separate hand injuries to bat .272 in the 2006 season (25 RBI, 3 HR), one year after earning second team all-Missouri Valley Conference honors in '05 (.333, team-best 48 RBI, 4 HR, 18 2B).

"Matt is a player who I was all too familiar with during my days at Evansville," says Schrage, who watched Weglarz bat 8-for-18 versus the Aces in the 2006 season, with Missouri State finishing second to Evansville in both the regular season and MVC Tournament.

"During his career at Missouri State, Matt was the catcher for some elite pitchers, including Brett Sinkbeil, who was drafted last year by the Marlins in the first round. He is a quality catcher with a good arm, great power potential and plenty of big-game experience. Matt obviously has become a very important player for this season but I think he is up to the challenge and will do a great job working with our talented group of pitchers."

Weglarz – who hit the first home run at the Bourne Braves' new ballpark, during the 2006 Cape Cod League season – was a tight end and defensive end for the Rockhurst High School football team that won the 2000 state title (current Notre Dame receiver D.J. Hord also played for that RHS team). A strong candidate for Academic All-America honors, Weglarz graduated from Missouri State with a 3.48 cumulative GPA (as a business major) and then posted a 3.42 GPA in his first semester of MBA studies at Notre Dame.

Smith (Waldorf, Md.) will contend for the starting catcher spot, following a 2006 senior season at Westlake High School that garnered him third team All-America honors from the American Baseball Coaches Association (the top two catchers on that list both signed as first-round draft picks). He batted .446 during that '06 season, with 37 RBI and nearly twice as many home runs (7) as strikeouts

(opposing basestealers were just 3-0-0).

"Ryan is a very spirited competitor at the catcher position, as an outgoing leader with strong communication skills," says Schrage of Smith, who launched a home run into the dead-center batter's eye during the 2006 Blue-Gold Series.

"We saw Ryan make some all-around improvements during the fall while working with our elite pitching staff. He is a physical player with a strong arm and is a developing offensive threat who can consistently hit the ball hard. Ryan has a great opportunity in front of him and he will be one of the most important freshmen on our roster this season."

Brezovsky has proven to be a quick study at the catcher position and could play a key role in helping pace the season-long rest for Weglarz and Smith. **Mendiola** also continues to make solid progress in his training at the new position while junior walk-on **Chris Soriano** (Randolph, N.J.) returns after earning a monogram in 2006, when he filled the key bullpen catcher role.

OUTFIELDERS

Dressman (San Jose, Calif.) is the runaway leader for being the elder statesman in the outfield, having logged 73 career starts spread between the three positions. **Langford** is the only other veteran member of the primary outfield group – but he did not play at all in 2006 and may be relegated to DH duty, pending the recovery of his arm. Langford made only 22 outfield starts in the 2005 season and the other top six outfielders on the 2007 roster have yet to play in a college game.

The 2006 season saw Dressman honored as a second team all-BIG EAST pick, after ranking as the team's third-leading hitter (.321) in a season that included 35 RBI, 38 runs scored, 30 walks and just 16 strikeouts. The team co-captain and lefthanded contact hitter heads into 2007 as a .295 career batter (72 runs, 18 doubles, 53 walks, 24 sac. bunts) and is the heir apparent to 2006 graduate Alex Nettey in the center-field role.

"Danny will be counted on for his experience and leadership and we likely will use him as a lead-off or 2-hole hitter," says Schrage of Dressman, who has plenty of experience hitting at the top of the order, in addition to owning 31 career starts in center field.

"He is a strong defensive outfielder who handles the bat well and is a good bunter. Danny gives us



Brett Lilley



Danny Dressman

great baseball instincts all over the field and is a great opposite-field threat at the plate. We really look for him to finish his Notre Dame career with a strong season."

The 6-foot-2, 195-pound **Boockford** (Glen Elyn, Ill.) has emerged as the top candidate to start in right field, where his strong arm could make up for the loss of the graduated Cody Rizzo from that position. A three-sport standout at Glenbard West High School – where he captained the baseball, football and basketball teams – Boockford set the school record by batting .565 as a senior, with 41 RBI and six home runs.

"Billy made steady all-around strides in the fall and I think you will really see him take off as the season unfolds. He is a tremendous athlete who can hit for average, with power and good baserunning for his size," says Schrage.

The most competitive outfield position may be in left, between the righthanded-hitting duo of Connolly and Ashdown.

Connolly (Binghamton, N.Y.) – who missed all of the 2006 season, following shoulder surgery – returned to active play during the summer of 2006, with the Amsterdam Mohawks of the New York Collegiate League. A tremendous athlete who also starred in football and hockey as a prep, the converted catcher could help spark the outfield unit as the 2007 season approaches.

"Ryan is a high-energy player who is making strides as he transitions to the new position of outfield," says Schrage. "He has improved his throwing accuracy and route running, can hit with power and is one of the fastest runners on the team. Ryan is a guy you love to have on the team because he is such a hard worker and feisty competitor who will be a quality leader for any role."

Ashdown (Tucson, Ariz.) is an athletic newcomer who was inducted into the Catalina Foothills High School baseball hall of fame, after a stellar four-year career that included being named defensive MVP of the 2006 national-ranked Falcons team.

with quickness and good route running," says Schrage. "He has made some strides at the plate and uses his long, lean frame for a short, compact swing that can produce strong linedrives and gap-to-gap power. He should continue to improve his all-around game as he gains strength and experience on the college level."

Freshman **Michael Wright** (Lockhart, Texas) hit .500 as a senior at Lockhart High School, ranking among the top batters in central Texas. Dubbed by Perfect Game as "captain of its all-time hustle team," Wright combines with Dressman to give the Irish two quality options in center field.

"Michael is an electric competitor who plays full-speed in all areas of his game," says Schrage. "He is a classic lefthanded leadoff option who can spark the offense with his bunting and linedrive ability to all fields, plus great plate discipline and the havoc he creates when on the bases. Irish fans are going to love the way this kid plays the game."

Fellow newcomer **David Mills** (Battle Creek, Mich.) is a corner outfield option who also will serve as a situational lefthander on the Irish pitching staff. Mills played a lead role in Lakeview High School's 2006 state championship season, setting team single-season records for hits (51), runs scored (95), strikeouts thrown (103) and ERA (0.49; top-15 in state's history). The all-state selection also hit .408 with 26 stolen bases and was 10-0 on the mound while limiting opposing batters to a .130 batting average.

"David is a very intense player, with a quick lefthanded stroke to all fields. His speed on the bases also could be a bonus for us this season," says Schrage.

Yet another freshman has joined the outfield rotation, as former prep two-sport standout **Austin Pearce** (Lake Oswego, Ore.) will compete for time in left field. The 6-foot-2, 210-pound switch-hitter batted .494 as a senior at Jesuit High School (5 HR) while also quarterbacking the JHS football team to the 2005 state title.

"Austin is a physical and strong player who uses his big frame for power from both sides of the plate. He has excellent leadership qualities and could make key strides, due to his strong work ethic and a new one-sport focus for him this year," says Schrage.

Langford also could return to left field – where he made 20 starts in 2005 – but his main offensive role likely will be as a DH (see below).

DESIGNATED HITTERS

Plenty of options exist at the DH position, which could be a pivotal role for a 2007 Irish team in search for a power boost. **Dury** and **Pearce** both provide switch-hitting convenience (and long-ball ability from both sides) while **Sharpley** could be the top candidate among the pure lefthanded hitters.

Weglarz also could DH on days when he is not catching, while **Langford** (Fort Worth, Texas) could provide a spirited righthanded bat to the DH role. The hard-hitting Langford was Notre Dame's fifth-leading extra-base threat (.384 slugging pct.) in 2005, also ranking fourth on the team in RBI (28) while displaying his crunch-time potential with a pair of home runs that led a Notre Dame late-game rally at Rutgers.

"Tony swings one of the quickest bats on the team and has improved patience at the plate. He has made a name for himself as a clutch performer and really can spray the ball around the park. He loves to play the game full-speed and could give us a big lift from that DH spot," says Schrage.

STARTING PITCHERS

Korpi (Lake Worth, Fla.) will be looking to build off his strong 2006 season while anchoring the 2007 rotation. Named to the 2007 preseason watch lists

and the Roger Clemens Award (pitcher of the year), the lefthander also was tabbed by *Baseball America* as the 2007 BIG EAST Conference preseason pitcher of the year. He is slotted second on BA's list of the BIG EAST's top prospects for the 2007 Major League draft.

"Wade commands the zone with all three of his pitches and features a tough changeup that will attract plenty of attention from Major League clubs," says Schrage. "He is a strike thrower who is able to lead with his fastball, curve or changeup. Wade is a very coachable player and quick worker who also does a great job controlling the running game."

"His leadership, consistency and moxy on the mound will set the tone for our staff and Wade should be on the short list of the top lefthanders in the country this season."

Korpi (3.44 career ERA, 11-5 record, 126 Ks, 60 BB in 130.2 IP) was the standout fourth starter on a 2006 staff that produced three draft picks from the weekend rotation. He ranked 17th nationally in ERA (2.00) and 15th in strikeout rate (11.1/gm; 94 total) while holding opponents to .204 batting and allowing just one home run.

His 2006 season highlights included posting three 11-K games and being named MVP of the BIG EAST Tournament, after winning the opener and the title game. The Academic All-America candidate (3.24 cumulative GPA; anthropology major) then turned in a strong 2006 summer season with the Staunton (Va.) Braves (1.43, 3-3, .209, 49 Ks), helping his team nearly win the Valley League post-season tournament.

Phelps (Hazelwood, Mo.) could be the surprise of the 2007 staff, after enduring some growing pains in his freshman season (7.09, 2-2, 12 GP/3 GS, 26.2 IP, 23 Ks, 10 BB, 5 hit batters). A 2006 summer-league player in Alaska with the Mat-su Miners, Phelps enters 2007 as a strong Academic All-America candidate due to his 3.36 cumulative GPA as a double major in political science and computer applications.

"David's confidence steadily grew in the fall and he worked hard at finishing hitters with his low-90s fastball while also finetuning his breaking ball and changeup," says Schrage.

"He reported in excellent physical condition for the fall and has been highly focused on the task at hand. David is one of the hardest throwers on the team, with movement on both sides of the plate, and can bring that bulldog mentality to the mound. We are excited to watch him progress this season."

Graffy (Homer Glen, Ill.) – who pitched during the summer of 2006 with the DuPage County Dragons of Central Illinois Collegiate League (32 Ks, 10 BB) – has a projectable 6-2, 195-pound frame to go along with the rare commodity of having good command of four pitches. The winning pitcher in the decisive third game of the 2006 Blue-Gold Series (5 IP, 3 R/2 UER, 5 IP, 6 Ks, 3 BB), Graffy earlier showed glimpses of his ability during Notre Dame's 2006 season. He finished with the sixth-best ERA on the '06 staff (3.71; in 11 relief appearances and 26.2 IP) and won both of his decisions, in addition to owning the staff's fifth-best opponent batting average (.245), twice as many strikeouts (13) as walks (6), the best groundout rate on the staff (12.5/9 IP) and a low walk average (2.03/9 IP) that was second-best among the Irish pitchers.

"Brett separated himself in the fall with his consistency and pitch quality," says Schrage. "His four pitches are headlined by a hard, boring fastball and a tight slider – complementing his quick arm, clever pitching approach and aggressive presence on the mound. He can throw his pitches for strikes in any count and really knows how to set up hitters. It will be great to see Brett emerge this season."

top starters, as the hard-throwing **Elam** (Ft. Worth, Texas) will combine with Korpi for a potentially dominant pair of lefthanders. Elam is projected by *Baseball America* as the BIG EAST's top prospect for the 2008 draft and *BA* also rated him as the top prospect in the 2006 summer Jayhawk League (his pitcher-of-the-year resume included leading the league with a 0.95 ERA, 5-0 record and 42 Ks, plus only 7 walks in 28 innings of league play). The 6-foot-4 fireballer pitched just 12.1 innings on the veteran 2006 Irish staff but his 2.19 ERA was third-best among the Irish pitchers and he also limited opposing hitters to .178 batting (19 Ks, 6 BB).

"We believe Sam will have a breakout season this spring," says Schrage. "He has worked hard on synchronizing his delivery, in order to maximize his mid-90s fastball and breaking ball. Sam has tremendous physical gifts - with great arm strength, a high release point and a lively fastball - and he can use that talent to be a dominant force in the college game."

Williamson (Lantana, Fla.) served mostly in a setup role in his first two seasons (6.44, 1-1, 42.1 IP, 38 Ks, 17 BB) while proving to be an effective strikeout and groundball pitcher. He now finds himself in the mix for a starting role, following repeated strong outings in the fall season. Williamson - who played with the Anchorage Glacier Pilots in the summer of '06 - ranked among Notre Dame's 2006 leaders in strikeout average (10.8/9 IP), groundout rate (11.3/9 IP) and K-to-walk ratio (3.3) but struggled at times with closing out innings, yielding a 6.48 in his 18 appearances and 16.2 innings.

"Joey's confidence and consistency have increased exponentially in the past few months," says Schrage. "He has worked hard on staying tall in his windup and driving through the zone. His improved flexibility conditioning - coupled with the quality of his high-80s fastball and tight slider - should pay big dividends this spring."

Maust (Alpharetta, Ga.) is an impressive two-sport talent whose athleticism includes high-level play at multiple positions (pitcher and center field in baseball; quarterback and punter in football). He led Blessed Trinity High School to the 2006 state title, after setting team season records for ERA (1.35), wins (12) and strikeouts (83) while his .496 batting average was second-best in BTHS history. A product of the elite East Cobb club programs, Maust's exploits on the football team include setting school records for career passing yards (1,743) and season punting average (39.8).

"Due to his football commitment, Eric was able to pitch only once a week in the fall but he impressed us enough that we gave him a start in the Blue-Gold Series," says Schrage. "He brings a competitive presence and strong leadership to the mound while effectively locating a mid-80s fastball and solid changeup. Eric also does a good job controlling the running game and fielding his position - we're excited to have him add to an already talented, yet young, pitching staff."

RELIEF PITCHERS

In addition to some of the pitchers mentioned previously, two sophomore righthanders - **Steven Mazur** (Round Rock, Texas) and **Andrew Scheid** (Highlands Ranch, Colo.) - could fill the middle-relief roles in 2007.

Mazur - who had a pair of strong outings for the victorious Gold in the 2006 fall intrasquad series (1-0, 4 IP, 3 H, 5 Ks) - averaged 13.0 strikeouts per 9.0 innings during his career at Stony Point High School while setting team season records in '06 for ERA (1.17), strikeouts (85) and wins (6).

"Steven made some adjustments in his delivery to get a more consistent release point, allowing his mid-80s fastball and slider to be more repeatable. His confidence and pitch quality will be a big boost to our bullpen," says Schrage.

team (0-0, 200) and was a highly-rated prospect during his prep career at Regis Jesuit High School and with Cherry Creek Connie Mack.

"Andrew has shown promise with his mid-80s fastball and hard, downer breaking ball from his high arm slot," says Schrage. "We made some minor adjustments with his stride and directional that should enable him to be a viable relief option."

Mills rates as an option for lefthanded middle relief or situational matchups. "David has solid deception, with a low-80s fastball that is complemented by a good breaking ball. He will tandem with Mike Dury as our top lefthanded relievers," says Schrage.

The 6-foot-3, 215-pound **Stewart** (Manassas, Va.) is a battle-tested reliever who can enter tough late-game situations or turn in long relief stints with equal efficiency. A workhorse with a solid track record, his 2.97 career ERA is just shy of a top-10 spot in the Irish record book while his career stats also include just 2.49 walks per 9.0 innings, a 12-4 record and save in 41 appearances (11 starts, 94 IP, 45 Ks, 26 BB, .268 opp. avg.). Stewart finished third on the 2006 team with a 2.31 ERA and his high groundout rate (12.46/9 IP) was just off the team lead (also 4-2 with 21 Ks, 10 BB).

"Jess will be a stabilizing force on our staff, as a strike-thrower and bulldog on the mound. He has advanced mechanics and a clean, fluid delivery, with a heavy, tailing two-seam fastball to go along with a quality slider and changeup," says Schrage.

Dury enters his final season with a 1.82 career ERA that is on pace to break a nearly 50-year-old record set by All-American Nick Palihnich (2.36). A steady control pitcher, he also rates among the program's all-time leaders in low career walk rate (2.34 BB/9 IP), with his career stats also including a 6-1 record, 44 Ks, 18 walks and 60 hits allowed in 69.1 innings and 62 appearances. His strong 2006 season produced the second-best ERA on the staff (2.17), with a lowly .208 opponent batting average in 27 appearances.

"Mike gives us leadership and flexibility out of the bullpen. He can keep lefthanded and righthanded hitters off-balance with his mid-80s fastball and deft breaking ball. A pitcher like Mike can be extremely valuable to the long-term success of your entire staff," says Schrage.

Weiland (Albuquerque, N.M.) is regarded as one of nation's top young pitchers, as one of 14 sophomores named to the watch list for the Roger Clemens Award. A first team Freshman All-American in 2006, he also was named second team all-BIG EAST and was invited to the USA National Team try-outs. The 6-foot-3, 190-pounder's 16 saves (in 17 chances) blew past the Notre Dame record and ranked third nationally, with his other impressive season stats including a 2.37 ERA and .240 opponent batting average in 30 appearances and 49.1 innings (49 Ks, 20 BB).

Tabbed the BIG EAST preseason pitcher of the year by both the league coaches and *Collegiate Baseball* magazine, Weiland is a highly projectable talent who was slotted behind only Elam on *Baseball America's* list of the BIG EAST's top prospects for the 2008 draft. Despite his dominating success as a closer, he also has the talent to pitch in the weekend rotation - as evidenced by two successful prolonged outings in the 2006 season.

his enforcer arm action on a low-90s fastball and hard biting breaking ball make Kyle one of the top pitchers in the country this year," says Schrage.

"When you watch Kyle pitch, you can't help but notice his outstanding poise and competitive moxy. He comes right at opposing hitters and uses his lanky frame for an effective arm whip. He's the young leader of our staff and I'm just glad he's on our team."

The 6-5, 215-pound **Kapala** (Royal Oak, Mich.) - who has the option to apply for a fifth year of eligibility in 2008 - could be the "X factor" of the staff, with the versatility and veteran presence to be a top starter or even a closer. His impressive 2005 season included shifting from a setup to starter role and he finished the year as one of the BIG EAST's top pitchers (3.20, 7-3, 41 Ks, 81.2 IP).

"Dan has made a tremendous recovery from his surgery by developing great mobility in his arm. He has worked hard to streamline his delivery to use more of his lower half, producing more consistency and less torque on his backside," says Schrage. "This creates more leverage on his fastball and increases his stamina. Dan is a very exciting pitcher who throws downhill with a nasty arm action. We hope all his hard work pays off for him this season."

Langford emerged as a key late-game reliever in 2005 (3.63, 2-0, save, 13 Ks, 6 BB, 17.1 IP) and could fill a similar role this season. "Tony has shown good mechanics and great arm motion, with the ability to keep the ball low on his fastball and changeup. He appears ready to throw with good velocity and has the competitiveness you want in those late-game guys," says Schrage.

Local product **John Seabaugh** (Granger, Ind.) - who boasts an improving changeup - rounds out the pitching staff as a senior walk-on, in his second year on the team.



David Pheps



Dave Schrage

Head Coach
20th Year Overall
First Year at Notre Dame
Creighton '83

Dave Schrage – whose 19 previous seasons as a college head coach include 16 at the Division I level, most recently with an Evansville squad that ranked among the nation's hottest teams in the 2006 postseason – was introduced July 18, 2006, as the 19th head coach in the history of the Notre Dame baseball program. Schrage completed his fourth year at Evansville in 2006 while guiding the Aces to the most successful season in the program's history, highlighted by winning the Missouri Valley Conference regulareason and tournament titles, reaching the NCAA regional championship round, and earning a final national ranking of 19th by *Collegiate Baseball* magazine.

Already regarded as one of the nation's top coaches, Schrage hit the ground running at Notre Dame in the summer of 2006 and proceeded to hire an impressive group of assistant coaches before signing a recruiting class that was rated by *Student Sports* as the 13th-best in the nation. The class ultimately could be ranked even higher when they arrive at Notre Dame in the fall of 2007, as baseball recruiting rankings typically wait until the following fall to evaluate each team's signee group.

The first class of the Schrage era at Notre Dame includes 10 talented high school seniors, headlined by three pitchers who each are rated by Perfect Game among the nation's top-40 pitching prospects and the nation's fifth-rated prep shortstop. Schrage's final class at Evansville – the current Aces freshmen – also was rated high on a national scale, after being ranked 21st on *Baseball America's* list of the top recruiting classes (for players embarking on the current season).

The four previous stops in Schrage's head coaching career – most recently at Northern Illinois (2000-02) and Northern Iowa (1991-99), prior to Evansville – have seen him mold unproven teams into record-setting units, with several seasons spent rebuilding underfunded programs while earning him top honors on the

lifelong fan of Notre Dame's athletic teams and a former standout centerfielder at Creighton, the Chicago native now tackles a new challenge as he takes over the reins of one of the nation's top baseball programs. Notre Dame owns Division I baseball's fourth-best winning percentage during the current decade (.728; 324-120-3 from 2000-06) and the Irish are one of just 10 teams to advance to the NCAAs every season since 1999.

Schrage [pronunciation rhymes with bag] is highly-regarded as a consummate student of the game, with a vast baseball knowledge contributing to his skills as a developer of talent and teacher of the game. His teams traditionally have been founded on pitching and defense while playing with a scrappy, aggressive approach that has helped build confidence and a winning tradition among former players.

After inheriting an Evansville team that had won only 22 games in 2002, Schrage guided the Aces in making steady strides while building the program's victory total each season: 24-31 in 2003, 28-32 in '04, 35-23 in '05 and most recently a 43-22 mark in 2006 that represents the second-most wins in the program's history. The 45-year-old Schrage ranks second on the Evansville career victories list, at 130-108.

Only 21 teams in all of D-I baseball totaled more wins in 2006 than upstart Evansville, which claimed the MVC regular-season and tournament titles before stunning double-digit NCAA regional wins over host Virginia and an NCAA-veteran South Carolina squad. It marked the first time Evansville ever had reached an NCAA regional title game and was just the third NCAA trip in the program's history.

Evansville's performance at the 2006 MVC Tournament included a key 14-3 victory over homestanding Wichita State. The strong season turned in by the Aces caused longtime Wichita State coach Gene Stephenson to concede in his postgame comments that Evansville had become the "class" of the MVC.

Four seasons at Evansville have prepared Schrage for the high level of academic expectations that exist at Notre Dame. Evansville – a private liberal-arts university with an enrollment of only 2,500 – is rated among the top schools in the Midwest and is noted for selective admissions criteria. Schrage showed the ability at Evansville to recruit academic-minded players who went on to excel at the collegiate level. Most notably, catcher Gabe Bauer and pitcher Zach Grage received the Missouri Valley Conference's prestigious Presidents' Award, presented to graduating seniors with grade-point averages of 3.8 and higher.

Bauer – who later was accepted to Notre Dame's accelerated master's in accountancy program – graduated with a 3.91 cumulative GPA as an accounting major while Grage compiled a 3.82 GPA en route to receiving his degree in secondary education. Bauer earlier joined teammates Adam Rogers (3.46; sport studies/management), Robbie Minor (3.29; accounting) and Kasey Wahl (3.04; athletic training) in receiving MVC Scholar-Athlete honors, with the four players representing the most from any MVC baseball team. Two others, Mitch Prout (3.40; accounting) and Kyle Smith (3.15; sport studies/management), earned honorable mention MVC Scholar-Athlete status.

Schrage is one of just five coaches in the history of Missouri Valley Conference baseball who have been named MVC coach of the year three or more times, with only WSU's Stephenson (11) and for-



Dave Schrage (right) matched wits with South Carolina's Ray Tanner at the 2006 NCAA Charlottesville Regional, as his upstart Evansville team came within one win of advancing to

mer Southern Illinois coach "Itchy" Jones (4) receiving that honor more times than Schrage. Longtime Missouri State skipper Keith Guttin and the recently-retired Bob Warn of Indiana State also have been three-time MVC coaches of the year.

The MVC rates as one of the nation's top college baseball leagues, led by perennial national power Wichita State, Missouri State – which advanced to the 2003 College World Series (as Southwest Missouri State) – and Schrage's alma mater Creighton. During the past four years alone (2003-06), four different MVC teams have advanced to the NCAAs and all nine current MVC teams have made NCAA appearances.

There are nearly 300 teams (293) currently competing in D-I baseball but only a small portion – roughly 10 percent (33 teams) – have totaled more victories in the past two seasons ('05-'06) than Evansville's 78. Notre Dame's 83 wins from 2005-06 are 20th-most in the nation during that two-year span.

The Schrage File

- Hire Date:** July 18, 2006
 - Career Record:** 476-553 (.463, 19 seasons)
 - Career D-I Record:** 415-487 (16 seasons)
 - At Evansville:** 130-108 (.546, 4 seasons)
 - Birthdate:** April 29, 1961
 - Hometown:** Chicago
 - Education:**
 - 1983** – bachelor of science degree in business administration from Creighton University
 - 1987** – master's in sports administration from Biscayne College/St. Thomas University
 - Coaching Awards**
 - National Coach of the Year Finalist** – 2000 (*Collegiate Baseball* magazine)
 - Missouri Valley Conference Coach of the Year** – 1995, 1997, 2006
 - Milestone Victories**
 - **Win No. 1:** 1988 season opener Waldorf College defeated Southwestetn (IA) CC
 - **Win No. 100:** April 6, 1993 Northern Iowa 6, at Upper Iowa 2
 - **Win No. 200:** April 2, 1997 Northern Iowa 10, at Iowa State 4
 - **Win No. 300:** March 14, 2001 Northern Illinois 8, St. Xavier 7 (at Stetson)
 - **Win No. 400:** Feb. 13, 2005 Evansville 13, at Arkansas-Little Rock 10
- see p. 67 for year-by-year coaching resume

cess that mirrors recent Notre Dame teams. His Evansville squads were built around the traditional core of pitching and defense, yielding a 3.39 staff ERA and .975 team fielding percentage in 2006 that both ranked 12th in the final NCAA rankings. Cal State Fullerton was the only other team in the nation ranked among the top-12 in both pitching (1st) and defense (6th) for 2006. Notre Dame was one of eight teams among the national top-25 in 2006 for both pitching (21st) and fielding (23rd).

Several Evansville players ranked among 2006 national leaders. Ben Norton (9-3) finished one victory outside the top-50 on the national wins list (68th) while fellow junior righthander Matt Brinkmann ended up just outside the nation's top-100 ERA leaders (110th; 2.97). Wahl, a junior first baseman, batted .371 to nearly finish among the nation's top-100 hitters (114th) while sophomore outfielder Jim Viscomi fueled the running game, ranking 10th nationally with 34 stolen bases.

The Aces' stellar middle infield in 2006 included a second baseman (Kyle Smith) who played error-free over the final 42 games of the season and a slick-fielding shortstop (Robbie Minor) who is rated the MVC's top player at his position for 2007.

Evansville's emergence as the class of the conference can be seen in both its championship finishes and statistical leaders. In 2006 MVC play, Evansville led the league in batting (.295) and fielding (.978; 20 errors in 24 games) while ranking second with a 3.33 league ERA. The Aces also led the MVC during 2006 league play with .420 slugging and 144 runs while the pitching staff yielded the fewest walks (51) and wild pitches (7) and second-fewest home runs (9) during MVC games.

Other noteworthy stats for Evansville in 2006 MVC games included ranking second in on-base percentage (.370) and stolen bases (29), plus third in home runs (14), doubles (42) and low opponent batting (.256). The Aces also led the conference in overall ERA (3.39) and fielding (3.39) while ranking second in on-base (.370), runs (395), stolen bases (98), walks drawn (236), sacrifice bunts (70) and opponent batting (.256).

Schrage earned his third career Missouri Valley Conference coach-of-the-year honor in 2006, after guiding Evansville to the first MVC title in the program's history. The Aces then had a memorable third day at the NCAA Charlottesville Regional, knocking off the host team Virginia in a 15-4 elimination game and coming back to stay alive with a similar 15-5 win over South Carolina. That game saw Evansville stunningly send 18 men to the plate while scoring 12 times in the third inning – but the Gamecocks won the decisive game, 5-1.

Schrage earlier helped develop Evansville's first MVC batting champ (Luke Miller, in 2003) and first MVC newcomers of the year (Cody Strait in '04; Ben Norton in '06). His Evansville players combined for two Freshman All-America honors, a first team Summer All-America honor and 17 spots on the all-MVC team (including six in 2006).

Schrage's 20th season as a college head coach in 2007 will correspond with the 115th season of Notre Dame baseball, as he becomes just the sixth individual to lead the Irish baseball program since the mid-1930s.

Schrage came to Evansville after a three-year stint at Northern Illinois, where he took a team that was 4-51 the year prior to his 2000 arrival and helped transform it into a Mid-American Conference Tournament team. Virtually the same Northern Illinois team that won four games in 1999 rebounded to win 24 in 2000, prompting *Collegiate Baseball* magazine to recognize Schrage as runner-up for its 2000 national coach-of-the-year award. *Baseball America* also took notice, selecting Schrage as one of the nation's "top-10 up-and-coming coaches."

Schrage spent nine seasons as head coach at Northern Iowa. He took a UNI program that had only one scholarship in his first season (1991) and transformed it into a perennial contender in the MVC. Schrage was named Missouri Valley Conference coach of the year in 1995 and again in '97, when he guided the Panthers to one of the best marks in school history at 32-23.

Since 1991, Schrage has developed 53 all-conference selections and 23 players who have moved on to professional baseball – most notably first baseman Erik Lis, a ninth-round selection of the Minnesota Twins in 2005. He has coached eight Freshman All-Americans and also tutored the 1997 MVC player of the year, Brian Jergenson.

Schrage's standout playing career at Creighton included all-MVC honors in 1982, after leading the conference with a .400 batting average. He then raised that mark to .433 as a senior and received 1983 CoSIDA Academic All-America honors. Schrage is the only individual to gain all-MVC baseball accolades as a player and later earn the league's coach-of-the-year honor.

Former Notre Dame head coach Paul Mainieri gave Schrage his first job in coaching when he hired him to his 1984 staff at St. Thomas University (located in Miami and also known as Biscayne College). Schrage spent the 1983-84 season as a graduate assistant at Biscayne/St. Thomas before returning to Creighton to work two seasons ('84 and '85) with current Chicago Cubs general manager Jim Hendry, who ultimately coached the Bluejays to the 1991 College World Series. Schrage was instrumental in signing the 1985 Creighton recruiting class that featured three future professional players and was rated fifth-best in the nation.

Schrage coached overseas in 1987-88 with the Mt. Gravatt Eagles Club in Brisbane, Australia, and returned to direct the baseball team at Waldorf Junior College (now a four-year college, in Forest City, Iowa) for three seasons (1988-90) before taking over at Northern Iowa.

A two-sport standout in baseball and basketball at Chicago's Fenwick High School – where his basketball teammates included the son of former Notre Dame football Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Lattner – Schrage later received his bachelor of science degree in business administration from Creighton ('83) and a master's in sports administration from Biscayne/St. Thomas.

His father Jack Schrage was a high school football player at Quincy (Ill.) Notre Dame High School and later served in the Korean War before marrying his wife Carolyn, a professional dancer in Las Vegas and later at the Palmer House in downtown Chicago. Schrage's younger brother, Greg, played basketball and baseball at Loras College in the mid-1990s (when current Notre Dame athletics director Kevin White was the Loras AD) and finished his baseball career in South Carolina, at Francis Marion.

Schrage and his wife Jody – who passed away on Jan. 9, 2007, following a brief battle with cancer – met during their days as student-athletes at Creighton. A standout prep softball player who was inducted into the Iowa High School Hall of Fame, the future Jody Schrage was a leading player for the Creighton softball teams that played in three straight College World Series (1980-82). She later coached high school softball in Iowa while her husband was directing the baseball team at UNI.

The Schrage daughters – Kaitlyn (16) and Brianne (13) – have followed in their parents' footsteps, as Kaity is a volleyball and softball player while Bri plays basketball and softball. Each also is musically inclined, as Kaity plays the clarinet and Bri the violin.

What They've Said About Dave Schrage

"The same record of achievement that Dave enjoyed as a student-athlete has followed him in his coaching career. He has built competitive teams at each of his previous stops by focusing first on identifying – then developing – quality young men. That same fundamental approach is a perfect fit for now sustaining the national excellence that marks the Irish baseball program. I consider myself fortunate to have competed against him as an undergraduate, worked with him as an administrator, and now cheer for him as an alumnus."

Rick Chryst

*Commissioner of Mid-American Conference
Former Notre Dame baseball player ('83)*

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"I was very impressed with coach Schrage's Evansville ballclub in the NCAA Regional at our stadium. They had the best offensive output of any team we faced all year – and that is saying something when you consider our schedule. That regional performance showed coach Schrage's ability in making his players respond to his coaching and execute his gameplan.

"To quickly bring Evansville from the bottom to the top of the Missouri Valley Conference is amazing. I played in the MVC and for them to win the regular season and the tournament – in a tough environment at Wichita State – shows his ability to recruit and to get players performing at the needed level.

"Having coached before at Notre Dame and understanding what it takes to win championships there, I believe coach Schrage has the ability to coach, communicate and get players to play the game the right way – in order to continue the great success that Notre Dame has experienced in recent years."

Brian O'Connor

*University of Virginia head coach
Former ND associate head coach (1995-2003)*

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"Without question, Evansville has become the class of [the Missouri Valley Conference]. We have been the class of the league for a long time, but they have retaken that, no doubt about it. They play the game the way it is supposed to be played. They are well-coached, their players get good pitches to hit, they play very good defense, and their pitchers can command the strike zone and throw three pitches for strikes."

Gene Stephenson

*Wichita State head coach
(postgame comments on May 26, 2006,
after Evansville defeated Wichita State,
14-3, at the MVC Tournament)*

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"We called everybody in college baseball – everybody we could find – to identify the right group of individuals that would make sense to attract to Notre Dame. Dave's name came up over and over again, as somebody who made a whole lot of sense. Of course, when we had a chance to sit down with Dave, it resonated pretty clearly for us that he was a tremendous fit for Notre Dame."

Kevin White

Notre Dame Director of Athletics

General Coaching Philosophy

“I really feel that the sense of mission in what Notre Dame is all about meets my philosophy – that is, developing the student-athlete not only as a player, but spiritually, academically, athletically and as a total person. When I go and recruit a player in his living room, I tell him that our goals will be: to have a championship ring on his finger; to have a diploma in his hand; and to have a great heart and feeling for the experience he will have at Notre Dame.”

Team Goals

“Our expectations are to get to Omaha and to win a national championship. We want to put ourselves in that position every year and be one of the major programs in the country. Our goal at Notre Dame is not to be good – we want to be great in life, in the classroom, and especially on the field. The players here at Notre Dame have an intense desire to become better every day and it is very evident that these players are winners.

“On a smaller scale, in the past we have set 15 goals for every game: five offensive, five defensive and then five team goals. The players need to have some goals in front of them to stick by, especially game goals. We will keep the goals in front of the players so they can see that they are important and stay focused on the team.”

A Foundation Built On Trust

“I’m the kind of coach who is going to get to know each player as a person. I need to know what they have inside, what makes them tick. Some need to be motivated more than others, based on his personality. The main thing is to have that trust among the players. They need to trust us and we need to get to know them more as people. At the same time, the players need to learn the staff’s expectations of them as people, students, and baseball players.

“I’ll do what it takes to motivate them to win. You have to know your players on a personal basis, know what buttons to push for motivation. You need to find out what is important to them and what they want to do with their lives. That all goes hand-in-hand with them producing.”

“There has been an eagerness with the players because everyone is on a clean slate. They have the chance to prove themselves to a new coaching staff.”

Long-Term Commitment

“Notre Dame is not a stepping-stone for me. This is the pinnacle for me. If I’m here for the next 20 years of my life, this is where I want to be. I couldn’t have a better fit. It’s the university I admired growing up. It’s close to my family and where I grew up. It’s an outstanding program with great leadership. This is my dream come true.”

Coaching Style

“I’ve always tried to adapt my style to personnel and I’ve always built teams around pitching and defense. Our teams have always been well-prepared. I’m a hands-on coach and I’m really going to teach the game and make players better on the field. There’s nothing more painful than making mental errors in a game. The more we teach, the less the mental errors will occur.”

“We are going to put a lot of time in practice on defending. That really helps you win games: make the other team earn runs. If teams hit groundballs and you can’t defend, that’s how you get beat. Teams that have better pitching and defense are going to win.

“Throwing to the right base keeps the double-play intact and if you have strong guys up the middle, you can turn the double plays. If that happens, pitchers believe in their defense and keep the ball down, strike guys out and relax a little more. Our catcher also has to take charge and be a quarterback.

“To turn around a popular saying: the best offense is a good defense.”

Offensive Focus

“Generally, teams don’t spend a lot of time defending. So from an offensive standpoint, we have to put guys in motion and see if they can defend against us. You never want to be an easy team to play where the opponent can sit back and relax. You want to make the other team have to be ready for a lot of things. You want to get the opposing pitcher out of his rhythm, so he’s worried about the guys on base and not focused on the batter – that’s where you win a lot of games.

“I gauge offensive philosophy based on personnel. If you don’t have speed, you can’t just run for the sake of running. We may have to manufacture more through hit-and-run. I think hitting is contagious and it rolls throughout your team. It takes one or two guys to get hot and everybody else starts falling in behind.”

Pitching Depth

“It’s really important in our recruiting philosophy to have pitching depth. We need five good starters. It’s also important to develop a staff that gives opposing teams different looks. I like matchups, so we will need to have a lot of quality pitchers ready to go to in the bullpen.”

Recruiting Corner – with Dave Schrage and Scott Lawler

Schrage – “With Scott and I having worked together previously for five years, we know the type of player that we’re looking for. Your recruiting coordinator is very key, especially at Notre Dame, to identify kids who truly are interested in your program. Scott does a great job throughout the entire process of identifying the right kids. We could be the greatest coaches in the world, but you have to have talent to win.

“Every year, you need to bring in pitching and our recruiting will center around pitching. Generally speaking, we obviously have to recruit on a national basis and generally locate the right kids that fit with Notre Dame.

“Chicago is a great recruiting area. It’s in our backyard and Chicago is becoming a Notre Dame town again. Scott and I both are from the Chicago area and we have great recruiting ties there. We intend to get in there and try to get the best players out of that area.”

“I want players on the bench to be into the game by paying attention and being enthusiastic. It’s important to give guys roles during the games, because they all are used to playing. You aren’t going to win games with selfish players, guys worried about where they’re going to get drafted or focused on stats. All of that is contagious too – in a bad way. You have to make sure they are focused on the ultimate goal: getting to Omaha.

“Our teams will play hard. I’m big on how we run to first base and in general running hard. We will sprint off the field. I want the other team to know that we are there to play today and they need to take notice of our effort.

“We aren’t just going through the motions, and that’s hard to do over the span of a 56-game college season. It’s up to us as a coaching staff to keep on the players – so they understand the style that we are going to play every inning.”

Community Service

“We need our players out in the community and they need to be visible in that way. I’ll be out in the community getting people fired up for our season. We want a family-type atmosphere at the ballpark. It’s important that our players give back and that the community knows who they are – so they’ll want to come cheer for those guys.”

Notre Dame Visit

“I had a great experience as a player at Creighton. My senior year, we came to Notre Dame for a three-game series in the fall and we went to the first night football game when the Irish played Michigan. I got to room with Rick Chryst from Notre Dame – we were both outfielders and they put us together. Rick and I have had a great relationship ever since and he has done a great job as commissioner of the Mid-American Conference. Just by that experience, our paths crossed.”



Building a Staff

One of the first orders of business for first-year Notre Dame head baseball coach Dave Schrage during the summer of 2006 was assembling an impressive coaching staff. Schrage's comments follow below, discussing the process in general and each member of the staff:

Coaching Chemistry

"All of our coaches have the same general philosophy – although we definitely are four individuals with unique personality strengths. We all are in this to try to develop the team as baseball players and individuals. That's going to be a great thing for our kids to experience.

"You will find all the coaches on our staff are loyal to each other, to the players and to the University. They all are team-oriented coaches and have a great feel about what Notre Dame is all about. Each of the assistants are great communicators and tremendous teachers of the game of baseball. It's a great group and I'm excited to start coaching next to them this spring.

"I don't want four versions of me on the staff. I want different personalities that the players can relate to. I don't want a bunch of clones or 'yes-men.' I want them to shoot ideas at me and not be afraid to tell me things."

Scott Lawler

"Scott is a rising star in coaching, with great passion for the game. He communicates and teaches the game very well. He's not afraid to learn the next technique and always wants to improve as a coach. Scott is fun to be around and keeps the guys loose, which is good because sometimes I'm too into the games and he breaks the ice.

"Scott is very knowledgeable about coaching and comes from a great baseball family. He's not afraid to tell me that we should look at doing something different and I need that type of assistant – that's how you become better as coaches and as a staff. A lot of things are second nature between us and Scott does a great job of evaluating talent as it relates to our needs."



Notre Dame's 2007 baseball coaching staff includes (from left) Scott Lawler, John Fitzgerald, Dave Schrage and Sherard Clinkscales.

Sherard Clinkscales

"Sherard brings a unique perspective through his involvement in professional baseball and background in the Midwest. He is a great fit with Notre Dame – in terms of his outgoing and energetic personality – and has a tremendous amount of contacts throughout the country.

"Having been in the Braves organization and around Leo Mazzone, Sherard has some of the same pitching philosophies and some very unique thoughts on what goes into being a pitching coach. He knows what is needed to develop strong pitchers and staffs on the college level – in addition to having that insight about developing players into quality pro prospects.

"Sherard believes the good things in college athletics – including the academic standards at Notre Dame. He is a caring individual who wants to develop his staff as total student-athletes.

"Sherard had amazing references and we had great reports about his potential as a coach, his work ethic and the type of person he is. Those are people whose opinions you're going to respect."

John Fitzgerald

"John is extremely bright and has tremendous computer skills, plus he has been a head coach. We're going to involve him more than the volunteer has been in the past. He basically will be a full-time coach and will be very valuable. He also will be running our various baseball camps and pre-season dinner and will be an office organizer, in addition to helping coach the team. He is an extremely organized guy and hard worker.

"The thing that impressed me about John – although he can't recruit off-campus for us – is that he always was at games recruiting for Illinois Tech. His work ethic stands out and he was someone I'd met before on the recruiting trails. I always respect guys who outcoach their resources and John is definitely one of those guys.

"Illinois Tech is right across from U.S. Cellular Field where the White Sox play. The campus life at Illinois Tech is so-so and it's extremely tough to get guys in because it's a tremendous academic school. He was able to find his niche with kids and really develop that program."

Schrage's Coaching Record

Yr.	School	Record	Pct.	Notes/Honors
1988	Waldorf Junior College	16-26	.381	
1989	Waldorf Junior College	21-20	.512	Team reached the junior college sub-regional championship game
1990	Waldorf Junior College	24-20	.546	Team reached the junior college sub-regional championship game
3-year Waldorf Totals		61-66	.480	Saw two of his Waldorf players selected in the Major League draft
Yr.	School	Record	Pct.	Notes/Honors
1991	Northern Iowa	12-44	.214	
1992	Northern Iowa	22-34	.392	Oversaw program's transition from the Mid-American to Missouri Valley Conference
1993	Northern Iowa	12-39	.235	100th career victory
1994	Northern Iowa	24-32	.429	
1995	Northern Iowa	28-27	.509	Missouri Valley Conference Coach of the Year; UNI's first winning season since 1987
1996	Northern Iowa	26-32	.448	MVC Tournament participant
1997	Northern Iowa	32-23	.603	MVC Coach of the Year; team-record win total; coached MVC player of the year Brian Jergenson
1998	Northern Iowa	28-26	.519	
1999	Northern Iowa	26-30	.464	
9-year UNI Totals		210-287	.423	Two-time MVC coach of the year; third-winningest coach in UNI baseball history
Yr.	School	Record	Pct.	Notes/Honors
2000	Northern Illinois	24-33	.421	National coach of year finalist (<i>Collegiate Baseball</i>); boosted team's win total by 20; MAC Tournament
2001	Northern Illinois	28-27	.509	300th career victory
2002	Northern Illinois	23-32	.418	
3-year NIU Totals		75-92	.449	Elevated the NIU program to a competitive position in the Mid-American Conference
Yr.	School	Record	Pct.	Notes/Honors
2003	Evansville	24-31	.436	Coached program's first MVC batting champ (Luke Miller)
2004	Evansville	28-32	.467	MVC Tournament 3rd-place finisher; coached program's first MVC rookie of the year (Cody Strait)
2005	Evansville	35-23	.603	Spent most of season in national top-30 (narrowly missed NAAs); UE's third-most wins since 1995
2006	Evansville	43-22	.662	MVC Coach of the Year; NCAA Charlottesville Regional finalist; MVC reg.-season/tournament champs
4-year Evansville Totals		130-108	.546	Aces improved on their win total every season of the Schrage era
19-Year Head Coaching Record: 476-553 (.463)		16-Year Division I Coaching Totals: 415-487 (.460)		