

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL GAME NOTES – vs. SETON HALL (APRIL 19, 2003)

The Notre Dame baseball team (27-8, 8-2 BIG EAST) – ranked as high as 13th in the national polls – will look to maintain its spot atop the BIG EAST standings with Saturday's noon doubleheader vs. Seton Hall ... the Irish have dropped two of their last three games, after a 17-game win streak (one shy of tying the team record) ... ND opened 2-4 vs. a challenging schedule but is 25-4 in its last 29, with two extra-inning losses ... the Irish split Thursday's games vs. Pittsburgh (5-2, 3-5).

Probable Pitching Matchups

Game 1: ND – sr. RHP **Ryan Kalita** (3.89, 4-0, 39.1 IP, 29 Ks, 20 BB, 35 H, .240 opp. avg.)
SHU – fr. LHP **Matt Irwin** (3.44, 4-4, 34.0 IP, 46 Ks, 21 BB, 22 H, .177 opp. avg.)

Game 2: ND – soph. RHP **John Axford** (2.20, 7-0, 49.0 IP, 51 Ks, 21 BB, 39 H, .220 opp. avg.)
SHU – sr. RHP **Elvys Quezada** (5.44, 2-3, 44.2 IP, 44 Ks, 24 BB, 54 H, .309 opp. avg.)

John Axford – Career Stats

Year	ERA	W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB
2002	3.95	5-2	17/12	0	0	70.2	59	45	31	59	64	15-2-1	324/.231	7	6
2003	2.20	7-0	8/8	0	0	49.0	39	14	12	21	51	7-4-2	204/.220	6	2
Totals	3.23	12-2	25/20	0	0	119.2	98	59	43	80	115	22-6-3	528/.227	13	8

John Axford – 2003 game-by-game

Date	Opponent	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	HR	WP	HB	GO	Score	W-L	ERA
2/22	vs. Newman	6.0	8	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	11	15-5	W	3.00
3/2	vs. Wake Forest	7.0	4	1	1	2	4	0	1	0	8	2-1	–	2.08
3/10	vs. Navy	5.0	6	3	2	1	7	0	0	0	6	7-3	W	2.50
3/15	vs. Creighton	6.0	5	2	2	2	8	1	3	0	3	10-3	W	2.62
3/23	at Villanova	5.0	2	1	1	4	7	0	0	0	5	3-2	W	2.48
3/29	Georgetown	6.0	3	2	1	5	8	0	1	0	2	13-3	W	2.31
4/9	Western Michigan	7.0	6	1	1	0	12	1	0	2	6	7-1	W	2.14
4/14	Central Michigan	7.0	5	2	2	5	4	0	0	0	7	8-3	W	2.20
Totals		49.0	39	12	10	16	47	2	6	2	48		7-0	2.20

Axford's Situational Pitching in 2003: .182 opp. batting with runners on base, .286 with 2 outs, 41% of leadoff batters reached base (3.7 per 9 IP)

Axford's Situational Pitching in 2002: .237 opp. batting with runners on base, .275 with 2 outs, 46% of leadoff batters reached base (3.7 per 9 IP)

Axford's Nine-Inning Averages in 2003: 7.2 hits, 3.9 walks, 9.4 Ks, 8.8 groundouts (6.1 IP per start)

Axford's Nine-Inning Averages in 2002: 7.5 hits, 7.5 walks, 8.2 Ks, 9.6 groundouts (4.2 IP per start)

SOPHOMORE SURGE

* Second-year RHP **John Axford** has shown no effects of a sophomore slump, with one of his most noteworthy improvements coming in a lowered walk total ... Axford averaged 7.5 walks per nine innings as a freshman but has dropped his **BB average to 3.9** in 2003 ... he owns a 12-2 career record and already has bested his 2002 win total (5-2 in '02, 7-0 in '03) while nearly slicing his ERA in half (3.95 in '02, 2.20 in '03).

* Since suffering a 13-6 loss in the first BIG EAST weekend of the 2002 season (at UConn), Axford has **won his last 11** decisions ... during that span of 20 appearances (18 starts), he has allowed more than two earned runs only three times.

* Only Rice's Jeff Niemann and N.C. State's Vern Sterry (both 9-0) entered the week with a better undefeated record than Axford (seven others also were 7-0) while his 2.20 ERA is just shy of the NCAA top-50 leaders (2.09 in the cutoff).

* Axford posted a .231 opponent batting average in 2002 (10th best by an ND pitcher since 1991) but has done even better this season (.220, would be 8th-best since '91) ... opponents are batting just .182 vs. Axford with runners on base.

* One measure of a quality pitching performance is the combined total of strikeouts and groundball outs (20-plus per 9 IP generally is a solid average) and Axford joins many of his teammates in grading out well in that area – averaging **18.3 outs per nine innings via Ks (9.4) or groundouts (8.9)**.

* Axford's eight starts have included just one run allowed in the **2nd inning** (5 H, .185 opp. batting) while he has clamped down to allow no runs in the **4th-6th** innings this season (19 IP, 27 Ks, 8 BB, 10 H, .137 opp. batting).

* Axford is the 17th ND pitcher ever to post **12-plus Ks** in a game (vs. WMU) and is just the fourth to do so since 1980, joining Darin Schmalz (12 in 9 IP at Georgetown, in '96), Brad Lidge (12 in 7 IP vs. Pittsburgh, at Three Rivers in '98) and Aaron Heilman in that distinction ... Heilman posted 12-K games in 2000 (vs. Georgia in the Metrodome, 8 IP) and 2001 (vs. Rutgers in the BIG EAST Tournament, 9 IP), in addition to an historic 18-K game at West Virginia in 2000 (10 IP).

MEDIA COVERAGE – All of Notre Dame's 2003 regular-season and postseason games again will be broadcast by South Bend-based WDND 1620 AM (and its sister station, WNDV 1490) ... the broadcasts are available via the internet at www.und.com (College Sports Pass subscription required) ... und.com also provides GameTracker livestats on the website's main page, for all home games and select road games.

BIG EAST STANDINGS – The BIG EAST standings continue to remain jumbled and likely will take several weeks to sort out, due to several games that have been lost to weather and the staggered bye weeks ... the final BIG EAST standings (and four BIG EAST Tournament spots) will be based on conference winning pct. (not "games back") ... Notre Dame and surprising West Virginia head into Saturday's games atop the standings at 8-2, followed closely by Rutgers (8-3), Virginia Tech (8-4), St. John's (7-5) and Pittsburgh (8-7) ... three other teams – UConn (7-7), Seton Hall (7-7) and Boston College (5-5) – remain in the running with .500 records ... Saturday's other doubleheaders include BC at Rutgers, Virginia Tech at UConn, St. John's at Villanova (2-12) and Pittsburgh at Georgetown (1-15).

BIG EAST STATS – ND is batting .297 in 10 BIG EAST games this season, with a 2.31 staff ERA and .963 fielding pct. ... top ND hitters in BIG EAST action have included Craig Cooper (.400, 8-for-20, 6 R, 2 RBI, 4 BB, SB), Cody Rizzo (.355, 11-for-31, 15 R, 6 RBI, HR, 3B, 3 2B, 4 BB, 4 HBP, SB) and Matt Edwards (.333, 13-for-39, 8 R, 14 RBI, 2 HR, 3B, 3 2B, 5 BB) while Ryan Kalita (0.86, 3-0, 21 IP, 17 Ks, 66 BB, .171 opp. batting), John Axford (1.64, 2-0, 11 IP, 15 Ks, 9 BB, .135) and Chris Niesel (2.63, 3-0, 27.1 IP, 28 Ks, 3 BB, .262) have formed a dominating rotation in BIG EAST games.

Ryan Kalita – Career Stats

Year	ERA	W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB
2000	0.00	0-0	1/0	0	0	1.0	0	0	0	2	1	0-0-0	.000	1	0
2001	2.45	2-0	4/2	0	0	11.0	10	4	3	8	9	0-0-1	.238	5	0
2002	3.16	5-0	16/4	1	0	42.2	45	19	15	14	36	6-2-2	188 /.278	1	2
2003	3.89	4-0	7/6	0	0	39.1	35	20	17	20	29	8-0-2	173 /.240	5	4
Totals	3.35	11-0	28/12	1	0	94.0	90	43	35	44	75	14-2-5	.257	12	6

Ryan Kalita – 2003 game-by-game (relief vs. Minnesota)

Date	Opponent	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	HR	WP	HB	GO	Score	W-L	ERA
2/23	at Arizona State	3.2	4	4	3	6	3	0	1	1	4	8-14	–	7.36
3/1	vs. Minnesota (M'dome)	3.1	6	3	3	3	0	0	0	1	4	2-8	–	7.71
3/11	at North Florida	7.0	3	1	1	1	6	0	2	1	12	6-1	W	4.50
3/24	at Villanova	8.0	5	1	1	3	7	0	1	0	13	5-1	W	3.27
3/30	Georgetown	6.0	2	0	0	3	6	0	0	0	8	12-5	W	2.57
4/6	at St. John's	7.0	6	2	1	0	4	0	0	0	14	18-3	W	2.31
4/13	at Creighton	4.1	9	9	8	4	3	2	1	1	4	13-12	–	3.35
Totals		39.1	35	20	17	20	29	2	5	4	59		4-0	3.35

Kalita's Nine-Inning Averages in 2003: 8.0 hits, 4.6 walks, 6.6 Ks, 13.5 groundouts (6.0 IP per start)

Kalita's Nine-Inning Averages in 2002: 9.5 hits, 2.3 walks, 7.6 Ks, 9.5 groundouts

Kalita's Situational Pitching in 2003: .212 opp. batting with runners on base, .178 with 2 outs, 30% of leadoff batters reached base (2.7 per 9 IP)

Kalita's Situational Pitching in 2002: .215 opp. batting with runners on base, .237 with 2 outs, 42% of leadoff batters reached base (3.8 per 9 IP)

SECRETS TO HIS SUCCESS – Senior RHP **Ryan Kalita** ranks as one of ND's top situational pitcher this season, allowing just 30% of leadoff batters to reach while limiting the opponents to .212 batting with runners on and .178 with 2 outs ... Kalita also owns nearly a 3-to-1 groundout-to-flyout ratio (59/21) and has recorded 75% of his outs (88 of 118) via Ks (29) or GOs – with a 9-inning average of 20.1 outs on Ks or GOs.

KALITA NOTES

* His last BIG EAST outing came in the 18-3 win at St. John's, when he averaged just 10 pitches per inning while recording all 21 of his outs via Ks (4), groundouts (14), popups (2) or runners caught stealing (1) ... he allowed three runs (just one earned) on six hits and no walks, with 56 of his 71 pitches going for strikes while his ERA dropped to 2.31.

* Has been particularly tough in the 2nd (1.50 ERA, 1 R in 6 IP, 4 H, .190 opp. avg.) and 4th innings (0 R, 5.2 IP, 1 H, .059) this season.

* Since moving to the weekend rotation in place of injured classmate **Peter Ogilvie**, he has gone 3-0 in three BIG EAST starts with an 0.86 ERA and .171 opp. batting in those games – with his 63 outs in that BIG EAST stretch including 35 groundouts, 17 Ks, five popups, three caught stealing and just three flyouts (with 8 BB).

* Owns an 11-0 career record and could become 5th ND pitcher to win 14 straight ... he needs five more decisions to qualify for ND career win pct. list.

THE ND-SHU SERIES – Notre Dame owns a 17-6 series edge vs. Seton Hall – including a 2002 sweep at SHU (9-4, 4-2, 6-1) – with ND winning the last eight games in the series by a 62-17 margin ... the Irish hold a 10-1 edge at Eck Stadium, with the Pirates posting a 7-1 win at ND in 1999 ... Seton Hall was one of the most successful teams vs. ND during its first few seasons in the BIG EAST, posting an 8-6 record vs. the Irish from 1996-99.

SERIES RARITY – Notre Dame opened 1997 BIG EAST play by dropping all three games at Seton Hall, which remained the only time that the Irish had been swept in a three-game BIG EAST series until last season's three losses at UConn to open the 2002 BIG EAST season ... those two series represent two of just four times that the Irish have been swept in any BIG EAST doubleheader (also by West Virginia in 1996, at ND, and in 2001 at Virginia Tech) ... since the pair of losses to WVU in 1996, the Irish have played 31 consecutive BIG EAST doubleheaders at Eck Stadium without being swept by the opponent.

SERIES RARITY, PART II – ND's wins at Seton Hall last season marked the third time in a span of five BIG EAST three-game series away from Eck Stadium that the Irish pulled off the tough three-game road sweep (also at Rutgers and St. John's in 2001).

FRIEND OR FOE – Three Notre Dame players – senior RHP **Ryan Kalita**, senior 1B **Mike Holba** and junior LHP **Cody Wilkins** – played for the 2002 Waynesboro Generals summer-league team alongside current Seton Hall closer **Chris Noonan** and OF **Casey Grimm** (plus former Pirates SS Chris Carter).

RECAPPING THE 2002 ND-SHU SERIES

* **Game 1 (9-4)** – **Paul O'Toole** continued his recent offensive barrage by hitting two more home runs (including his second grand slam in as many games) while **John Axford** had a solid showing in his longest outing of the season (7.2 IP, 24 BF, 4 R, 6 H, 6 BB, 7 Ks) ... the teams were limited to one game due to a lengthy rain delay ... Axford faced just one batter over the minimum (24), thanks to four double-play balls and a runner caught stealing (his 121-pitch outing included 12 groundball outs, two popups and just one flyout) ... Matt Skrypack, coming off a shutout win over Rutgers, suffered the loss (6 IP, 7 R/6 ER, 10 H, 4 BB, 5 Ks).

* **Games 2 and 3 (4-2, 6-1)** – Top hitters for the Irish in the doubleheader included **Steve Sollmann** (5-for-7) and **Brian Stavisky** (4-for-9; RBI triple and solo HR in the first game, RBI single and two runs scored in the series finale) ... **Grant Johnson** (5 IP, 2 R, 5 H, 2 BB, 6 Ks) won the first game, with a rare four Ks in the first inning, while **J.P. Gagne** recorded the final six outs for the first save of his ND career (5 BF, pickoff) ... **Peter Ogilvie** (8 IP, UER in 8th, 5 H, 3 BB, 8 Ks) won the final game, after dueling with Chris Noonan (7 IP, 3 R/1 ER, 6 H, 3 BB) in a game that was scoreless heading into the 6th ... the tainted run came after a controversial umpire call on a one-out flyball off the bat of Santiago Chi ... CF Steve Stanley, who had not made an error in 50 games, appeared to catch the flyout but he dropped the ball after transferring it to his throwing hand and attempting to send it back to the infield (causing the umpire to rule no catch) ... Elvys Quezada (5.1 IP, 4 R/3 ER, 6 H, 2 BB, 5 Ks) suffered the earlier loss.

* **2002 Series Stats** – ND enjoyed a .308-.212 batting edge in the SHU series, led by Sollmann (7-for-11, 2 RBI, 4 R, 2B, 2 BB, SB), Stavisky (6-for-13, 5 RBI, 5 R, HR, 3B, BB) and **Kris Billmaier** (4-for-11, 2 RBI, 2 BB) ... the ND pitchers posted a 2.16 ERA in the series (26 K, 11 BB, 18 H in 25 IP) while the Irish made just two errors in the three games (.981 fielding pct., with one of the errors made by a pitcher).

ND CAREER STATS VS. SHU

Steve Sollmann – 6 GS, .546 (12-for-22), 3 RBI, 7 R, HR, 2B, 2 BB, 3 Ks, 1-1 SB

Kris Billmaier – 6 GS, .368 (7-for-19), 6 RBI, 2 R, 4 BB, 2 Ks

Javi Sanchez – 4 GP/3 GS, .250 (3-for-12), RBI, 3 Ks

Joe Thaman – 6 GS, .191 (4-for-21), 2 R, BB, 5 Ks, 0-1 SB

Zach Sisko – 0-for-1, K

Mike Holba – 0-for-2, 2 Ks

John Axford – GS, 1-0, 4.70, 7.2 IP, 4 R, 6 H, 6 BB, 7 Ks

Scott – 0-for-2 (4-6-3, BB, KS, BB)

Grimm – 0-for-2 (BB, 4-6-3 GDP, KS, BB/RBI)

Pahuta – 0-for-3 (6-4-3 GDP, KS, KL)

Santangelo – 2-for-3 (2B-9, KL, 1B-MI)

Chi – 1-for-3 (F-9, 1B-5/CS, P-3)

(ND CAREER STATS VS. SHU, cont.)

J.P. Gagne – 4 GP/2 GS, 1.50, 15.1 IP, 2 R, 13 H, 6 BB, 11 Ks, WP

Schuck – 0-for-3 (FF-3, P-4, FC)

Grimm – 1-for-3 (BB, F-9, 1B-7/RBI, BB, 4-3, BB, CS)

Bascom – 1-for-5 (6-3, F-8, 1B-MI, BB, 5-3, P-3)

Chi – 0-for-2 (FF-4, KL)

Pahuta – KS

Santangelo – KS, KS

Scott – F-9

Brueckner – P-3

Peter Ogilvie – 1 GS, 1-0, 0.00, 8 IP, UER, 5 H, 3 BB, 8 Ks, WP, HB

Chi – 1-for-4 (1B-7, KS, F-8, E8D/R)

Grimm – 1-for-2 (1B-RS, KL, HBP)

Scott – 0-for-3 (KS, BB, F8-3 DP, F-8)

Santangelo – 1-for-2 (BB, 4-3, 1B-9)

Pahuta – 1-for-3 (1B-MI, F-9, KS)

Cutruff – 2B-LL/RBI

Matt Laird – 1 GP, 0.00, 1.1 IP, 2 H, 2 Ks

Bascom – 6-3

Chi – KL

Brandon Vilorio – 1 GP, 1 IP

Santangelo – 1-3

Pahuta – F-8

SHU CAREER STATS VS. ND

Casey Grimm – .450 (9-for-20), 5 RBI, 6 BB, HBP, 4 Ks

Lou Santangelo – .300 (3-for-10), R, 2B, BB, 3 Ks

Matt Cuttruff – 1-for-2, RBI, 2B, 2 GP

Santiago Chi – .177 (3-for-17), 2 R, 7 Ks, 0-1 SB, 2 Es

Tim Pahuta - .125 (1-for-8), 3 Ks

Joey Scott – 0-for-9, R, 4 BB, 4 Ks, 2 Es

Matt Brueckner – 0-for-3, K

Mike Bascom (dnp in '03 series) – .177 (3-for-17), R, 2 BB, K, 2-3 SB

Josh Schuck (dnp in '02 series) – .167 (2-for-12), RBI, 4 Ks, 2 Es

Chris Noonan – GS (0-1), 7 IP, 3 R/1 ER, 6 H, 3 BB, 4 Ks

Sollmann – 2-for-4 (6-3, F-8, 1B-6, 1B-9)

Billmaier – 0-for-2 (P-4, BB, F-9)

Sanchez – 1-for-3 (KS, 1B-RS, 4-3)

Thaman – 0-for-3 (5-3, KS, KS)

Elvys Quezada – GS (0-1), 5.1 IP, 4 R/3 ER, 6 H, 2 BB, 5 Ks, HB

Sollmann – 2-for-2 (1B-8/RBI, BB, 2B-9)

Billmaier – 1-for-3 (KS, KS, 1B-8)

Sanchez – KL, F-8/SF/RBI

Thaman – HBP/CS, P-6

Mike Santmyer – 1 GP, 2.1 IP, 2 R, 4 H, 2 BB

Sollmann – 1-4-3

Billmaier – 1B-MI

Sanchez – 643 GDP

Thaman – 4-3

Barrow – 1 GP, 4 IP, 2 H, BB, K ('01)

Thaman – 1B, F-7

Sollmann – 1B-9, 5-3

Billmaier – 5-3

Haggerty – 1.2 IP ('01), H, K, HB

Billmaier – FC

Thaman – 3U

Sollmann - KL

Joey Scott – 2 IP, 3 R, 7 H, K ('01)

Sollmann – 1B-MI, 1B-9

Sanchez – P-5

Billmaier – 1B-8/R

Holba – K

QUICK NOTES ON THE ND HITTERS (in probable batting order)

(1) Steve Sollmann (Jr., 2B; Cincinnati, OH ... preseason All-American; all-BIG EAST in '01, '02)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'01	.362	61/61	221	52	80	9-2-5	36	108/.489	30	4	29	0	.440	4	6	23-34	21 (.928)
'02	.362	59/57	213	53	77	8-4-2	47	99/.465	22	3	18	3	.420	5	6	6-6	8 (.969)
'03	.385	35/35	143	41	55	8-4-3	27	80/.559	16	0	10	1	.444	1	4	21-27	4 (.977)
Tot.	.367	155/153	577	146	212	25-10-10	110	287/.497	68	7	57	4	.434	10	16	50-67	33 (.955)

- * Owns **.546 career** batting avg. (12-for-22) in six previous games **vs. SHU** (3 RBI, 7 R, HR, 2B, 2 BB, 3 Ks, 1-1 SB)
- * **Leads team in seven** categories – batting avg. (.385), runs (41), hits (55), total bases (80), walks (16), stolen bases (21) and leadoff on-base pct. (.564) ... also 2nd in eight other categories – slugging (.559) and on-base pct. (.444), home runs (3), triples (4), RBI (27), 2-out batting (.364), 2-out RBI (10) and pct. of runners advanced (.618) – plus 3rd in batting with runners in scoring position (.386) and sac. bunts (4)
- * Entered week ranked **16th in nation with 0.61 stolen bases** per game (now 0.60, 21 total) ... also ranks 8th among BIG EAST players in batting avg., plus 1st in runs, SBs and TBs, 2nd in hits and 3Bs, 9th in slugging
- * Carries **8-game hitting streak** into SHU series and has hits in 17 of last 18 games (his 8-game streak ended vs. WMU).
- * **Situational hitting:** leads team in leadoff on-base pct. (.564), 2nd in pct. of runners advanced (.618) and 2-out batting (.364), 3rd in batting with runners in scoring position (.386)
- * Batting **.310 in 2003 BIG EAST** games (13-for-42, 12 R, 14 RBI, 2 HR, 3 2B, 5 BB, 5 SB)
- * Has gone **hitless in consecutive games just once** in '03 (in Villanova doubleheader), **with hits in 29 of 35** games.
- * Owns **19 multi-hit** games in 2003 (five 3-hit games, plus 4-for-4 in game 2 vs. Georgetown)
- * Already 7th in ND history **with 50 career stolen bases** (21 in '03), four behind former teammate Paul O'Toole
- * Picked up 200th career hit at St. John's (now 212; ND record for hits by junior is Steve Stanley's 267)
- * Joins classmate Javi Sanchez (11 BB/8 Ks) as only ND starters with **more walks (16) than Ks (10)** in 2003
- * Shifted to **leadoff spot** on Spring Break trip, after batting in No. 2 spot for most of his ND career
- * Twice **BIG EAST player of the week** (8-for-17 in week one, then 11-for-23 in first six games of Spring Break trip)
- * Hit **3-run inside-the-park HR** in 3-2 win over Eastern Illinois
- * Rated BIG EAST's **top defensive 2B** for 2003 (per *Baseball America*)

(2) Brennan Grogan (Fr., CF; Tequesta, FL)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'03	.312	31/29	109	25	34	1-5-0	18	45/.413	6	2	8	1	.359	0	7	9-11	1 (.973)

- * First on team in triples (5), sac. bunts (7), 2nd in stolen bases (9) and batting with runners in scoring position (.395), 2nd in 2-out RBI (10), 3rd in runs (25) and 2-out batting (.344), 4th in pct. of runners advanced (.592)
- * Leads BIG EAST in overall triples, 12th in SBs ... entered week ranked **13th in nation for triples** (0.18 per game)
- * Batting **.317 in BIG EAST** games (13-for-41, 11 R, 9 RBI, 4 3B, 4 BB, 3 SB) ... went 0-for-7 vs. Pittsburgh
- * Made switch to CF and **2-hole** (26 starts batting 2nd) on Spring Break trip, **shifted to LF** in last six games
- * Hit go-ahead triple in 13th inning of 3-1 win over Vanderbilt
- * Owns **nine multi-hit** games and **five multi-RBI** games ... posted 9-game hit streak from March 11-25

(3) Matt Edwards (So., 3B/1B; Mechanicsville, VA)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'02	.290	9/8	31	3	9	1-0-0	4	10/.323	3	1	6	1	.371	0	0	1-1	6 (.806)
'03	.357	34/34	129	23	46	10-1-6	41	76/.633	13	3	19	4	.422	2	0	1-4	4 (.977)
Tot.	.344	43/42	160	26	55	11-1-6	45	86/.570	16	4	25	5	.412	2	0	2-5	10 (.951)

- * **First on team in seven** categories – home runs (6, the last four being CF blasts), slugging pct. (.589), doubles (10), RBI (41), 2-out batting (.400), 2-out RBI (16) and batting with runners in scoring pos. (.415) – plus 2nd in batting avg. (.357), hits (46), total bases (62) and walks (13), 3rd in pct. of runners advanced (.593) and 4th in on-base pct. (.422)
- * Ranks 10th among BIG EAST players in overall batting avg., plus 1st in RBI, 4th in TBs, 7th in hits and 8th in HRs
- * Entered week ranked **19th in nation for RBI** (1.30 per game), but 0-for-9 with no RBI in last three games
- * Batting **.333 in BIG EAST** games (13-for-39) with 14 RBI)8 R, 2 HR, 3B, 3 2B, 5 BB)
- * Already has totaled **13 multi-RBI** games, including four 3-RBI games and 4 RBI in second game vs. Georgetown.
- * Also owns **13 multi-hit** games (five 3-hit games, plus 4-for-5 in nightcap at St. John's)
- * Saw 9-game hitting streak end in doubleheader vs. Chicago State and Bowling Green (0-for-4)
- * Named BIG EAST **player of the week** (3/31-4/6) after leading ND during 4-0 week in hits and batting average (9-for-14, .643), RBI (10) home runs (3), total bases (21) and slugging pct. (1.500), plus 7 R, 2 BB, 3B, SB and just one K ... hit 6-for-9 in the doubleheader sweep at St. John's, with five RBI and a pair of booming HRs to dead-center field.
- * Has made 16 starts at 1B, with the first coming on Spring Break trip, with 27 total starts batting in the 3-hole
- * Missed most of 2002 season due to broken leg (vs. USC in Round Rock, ninth game of '02)

(4) Kris Billmaier (Sr., RF; Woodinville, WA)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'00	.354	33/21	82	18	29	3-0-4	19	44/.537	8	1	10	0	.413	1	0	0-2	0 (.000)
'01	.257	56/55	183	34	47	9-0-3	37	65/.355	30	9	15	0	.382	3	2	4-6	2 (.970)
'02	.313	65/62	230	34	72	8-1-3	41	91/.396	14	7	33	4	.369	1	11	2-2	8 (.927)
'03	.276	35/34	134	25	37	9-1-3	24	57/.425	13	4	14	4	.346	5	1	1-1	1 (.984)
Tot.	.294	189/172	629	111	185	29-2-13	121	257/.409	65	21	72	8	.374	10	14	7-11	11 (.954)

* Second on team in doubles (9), home runs (3) and walks (13), 3rd in hits (37), RBI (24), runs scored (25), total bases (57) and hit-by-pitch (4), 3rd in leadoff on-base pct. (.484)

* Owns 11 multi-hit an five multi-RBI games

* Carries a **.368 career batting avg. vs. SHU** in six games (7-for-19), 6 RBI, 2 R, 4 BB, 2 Ks

* Made switch from right to center field in last three games ... has hit cleanup in 27 games this season

* Batting .231 in 2003 BIG EAST games (9-for-39, 4 R, 5 RBI, 3 2B, 4 BB)

* Looking to snap out of 1-for-20 (.050), 2-RBI slump in last six games ... has gone 12 games without multiple hits

(5) Javi Sanchez (Jr., C; Miami, FL)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'01	.000	9/2	13	0	0	0-0-0	0	0/.000	1	0	2	0	.071	0	0	0-0	1 (.750)
'02	.281	66/65	231	50	65	7-3-5	29	93/.403	24	5	32	3	.360	1	8	1-1	28 (.902)
'03	.316	30/30	114	22	36	8-1-1	14	49/.430	11	3	8	1	.388	1	0	2-2	5 (.978)
Tot.	.282	105/97	358	72	101	15-4-6	43	142/.397	36	8	42	4	.359	2	8	3-3	34 (.935)

* Fourth on team in batting avg. (.316) and hits (36), 5th in leadoff on-base pct. (.414)

* Carries 8-game hitting streak into SHU series, including four games before missing four due to back spasms

* Has gone hitless in consecutive games just once all season (vs. Detroit and Valparaiso)

* Hit .250 (3-for-12) in four previous games played vs. SHU (RBI, 3 Ks)

* Batting .278 in 2003 BIG EAST games (10-for-36, 6 R, 3 RBI, 3B, 2B, 5 BB)

* Owns 12 multi-hit games in 2003 (3rd-most on team), with three multi-RBI games

* Has hit five of his six career home runs with the Irish away from home, including 3-run blast to tie 2002 CWS opener vs. Stanford (3-3, 4-3 loss)

* Joins classmate Steve Sollmann (16 BB/10 Ks) as only ND starters with more walks (11) than Ks (8) in 2003

* Prep 2B who started at SS in 2002 after injuries to Matt Macri and Matt Edwards

(6) Matt Macri (So., SS; Clive, IA ... preseason All-American)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'02	.206	17/16	68	10	14	3-0-1	13	20/.294	7	0	24	0	.273	2	0	1-2	1.000
'03	.294	33/33	119	24	35	9-3-2	20	56/.471	13	3	21	0	.378	0	5	2-3	11 (.926)
Tot.	.262	50/49	187	34	49	12-3-3	33	76/.406	20	3	45	0	.340	2	5	3-5	11 (.931)

* Second on team in walks (13) and doubles (9), 3rd in triples (3), sac. bunts (5) and batting with runners on base (.365), 4th in total bases (56), 5th in slugging pct. (.471), RBI (20), runs scored (24) and hits (35)

* Has hits in seven of last eight games, batting .444 in that stretch (12-for-27, 8 RBI, 6 R)

* Fourth in team with 11 multi-hit games, plus four multi-RBI games

* Batting .265 in 2003 BIG EAST games (9-for-23, 7 R, 3 RBI, 3B, 3 2B, 5 BB)

* Has made most of his starts batting in the 6-hole, after opening season as leadoff hitter

* Missed most of 2002 season due to "Tommy John" reconstructive elbow surgery

* Nation's No. 2-rated college SS prospect for 2003 draft (per *Baseball America*)

(7) Cody Rizzo (Fr., DH/LF; Temecula, CA)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'03	.337	30/29	101	33	34	9-1-3	23	54/.535	5	15	20	3	.439	2	1	1-1	3 (.9510)

* Leads team in hit-by-pitch (15, tying ND record), 2nd in home runs (3) runs scored (33), doubles (9) and leadoff on-base pct. (.528), 3rd in batting avg. (.337), slugging (.535) and on-base pct. (.439), 4th in RBI (23) and batting with runners in scoring position (.351), 5th in total bases (54) and 2-out RBI (8)

* Batting just .191 (4-for-21) with no multi-hit totals in previous five games

* Has hit .355 (11-for-31) in BIG EAST games (15 R, 6 RBI, HR, 3B, 3 2B, 4 BB, SB)

* Classic utility player who has made starts at CF (4), LF (13), DH (6)and C (3) and now RF (3), also batting in leadoff spot early in season

* Second on team with seven multi-RBI games, plus 10 multi-hit efforts

* Excellent baserunner who was rare 2-sport star in soccer/baseball as a prep (California HS soccer is played in the fall)

(8) Steve Andres (Fr., DH; Napa, CA)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'03	.288	25/17	52	16	15	1-2-2	11	26/.500	10	6	10	0	.456	5	1	1-1	1 (.984)

* Leads team in on-base pct. (.456), 2nd in hit-by-pitch (6), 4th in slugging pct. (.500) and 2-out batting (.333)

* Has totaled just two hits in team's last 10 games (12 ABs), after batting 5-for-10 in three-game stretch

* Batting 3-for-12 in BIG EAST games (3 R, 2 RBI, 5 BB)

* Owns four multi-hit and two multi-RBI games

* Sparked ND offense in first three games vs. Dayton, Newman and ASU (6-for-11, 2 RBI, 7 RBI, HR, 3B, 2B)

or Craig Cooper (Fr., LF/DH; Plainview, NY)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'03	.312	31/24	96	20	30	5-2-0	12	39/.406	12	2	21	2	.400	0	0	8-11	1.000

* Third on team in stolen bases (8), 4th in leadoff on-base pct. (.450) and 2-out RBI (9), 5th in overall on-base pct. (.400), batting avg. (.312) and walks (12)

* Leads team with .400 batting average in BIG EAST games (8-for-20, 6 R, 2 RBI)

* Did not play in Pittsburgh doubleheader, after batting 1-for-8 in midweek vs. CMU and EMU

* Owns seven multi-hit and four multi-RBI games

(9) Greg Lopez (Fr., 3B; Upper Arlington, OH)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'03	.263	27/22	76	11	20	1-0-0	16	21/.276	3	3	12	5	.310	2	3	0-1	4 (.926)

* Effective situational hitter who has 16 RBI (despite totaling just 20 hits), also leading team in pct. of runners advanced (.654) and 5th in sac. bunts (3)

* Looking to snap out of 2-for-17 slump in last six games

* Owns five multi-hit and three multi-RBI games

* Batting .286 (4-for-14) in BIG EAST games (4 R, 4 RBI, 2B, 3 BB)

or Joe Thaman (Jr., 1B; St. Louis, MO)

Yr.	Avg.	GP/GS	AB	R	H	2B-3B-HR	RBI	TB/SLG	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB	E (FLD%)
'01	.284	61/60	208	29	59	15-1-2	25	82/.394	10	2	31	0	.318	3	3	1-3	6 (.990)
'02	.272	62/58	180	43	49	6-0-6	33	73/.406	24	5	40	3	.370	2	13	2-5	9 (.984)
'03	.197	27/18	71	5	14	4-1-0	14	20/.282	4	1	22	2	.250	0	5	0-0	1 (.996)
Tot.	.266	150/136	459	77	122	25-2-8	72	175/.381	38	8	93	5	.329	5	21	3-8	16 (.988)

* Second on team in sac. bunts (5), 5th in 2-out batting (.318)

* A .191 career batter vs. SHU ((4-for-21), 2 R, BB, 5 Ks, 0-1 SB)

* Batting 3-for-5 in 2003 BIG EAST games (R, 4 RBI, 3B, 2 BB)

* Hit 2-for-4 with pair of 2-run, bases-loaded singles in second game at St. John's, ending 1-for-22 slump

* Hit game-winning single to beat Wake Forest in 13-inning battle (2-1)

* Owns four multi-hit and three multi-RBI games in 2003

* Rated BIG EAST's top defensive 1B in 2002 and '03 (per *Baseball America*)

DEFENSIVE-MINDED – Notre Dame's .969 season fielding pct. remains on team-record pace, with the Irish totaling just 42 errors in 35 games (1.2 Es per game) ... ND has posted 12 error-free games, 11 one-error games and just six games with three-plus Es ... prior to making two errors in both games of the Pittsburgh doubleheader, the Irish had totaled just three Es in the previous five games ... the current eight starting position players have combined to make less than one error per game (32 in 35 GP), with two of freshman RF Cody Rizzo's errors coming as the backup catcher (sophomore Matt Edwards has made two of his four Es at his new position of 1B) ... unearned runs have provided the margin of defeat for the Irish just once this season, in the 14-8 loss to Arizona State (6 UER).

HR BINGES – Notre Dame launched six home runs in the season-opening trip to Arizona State (4 total GP, vs. Dayton, Newman and ASU twice) but then totaled just two HRs in the next 19 games (not counting a Steve Sollmann inside-the-park variety) ... the home run drought ended in a three-game stretch with multiple HRs vs. Valparaiso (2) and in both games at St. John's (3 and 2), with the Irish then totaling just four HRs in the last nine games ... the ND pitchers gave up home runs in four straight early-season games (six total in that stretch) but then surrendered just six HRs in the next 24 games – with six more opponent homers in the last six games.

WHAT A RELIEF – Here's a look at some of Notre Dame's top bullpen pitchers' game-by-game stats (Doherty started vs. Toledo and Thornton's numbers include starts vs. Navy/gm 2, Detroit, Bowling Green and Pittsburgh) ... numbers indicate **IP-H-R-ER-BB-K**:

	Doherty	Jones	Laird	Gagne	Thornton	Viloria
Day	0.2-4-5-5-2-0			1.0-1-0-0-0-1		1.1-0-0-0-0-0
New						
ASU			1-2-4-4-4-2			
ASU				0.2-6-9-4-3-0	2.1-3-1-1-1-0	1.1-0-0-0-0-0
NEB	0.2-0-0-0-2-2				4.0-3-1-0-1-1	
MINN						
WFU				6.0-4-0-0-1-2		
VAN				2.0-0-0-0-0-4		
Navy			1.0-0-0-0-1-1		1.0-0-0-0-2-0	2.0-0-0-0-0-1
UNF				2.0-2-0-0-0-1		
Jack.				0.2-2-3-3-1-0	1.0-1-0-0-0-1	
EIU		0.2-0-0-0-1-1		0.1-0-0-0-0-1		
Navy	2.0-2-0-0-0-4	3.0-5-2-2-0-5			4.0-3-0-0-0-0	
Cr.			1.0-1-1-1-1-1			1.0-1-0-0-0-1
Vill				5.1-6-1-1-2-4		
Vill						2.0-3-1-0-0-2
Vill		1.0-1-0-0-0-0				
Tol	4.0-2-2-0-1-7		1.0-1-0-0-0-2			
Pur		1.0-1-2-1-1-1	1.0-0-0-0-2-1	1.0-0-0-0-0-1	5.0-5-3-1-0-2	1.0-1-0-0-0-1
GU						
GU			1.0-3-3-3-2-1	1.0-1-0-0-0-3		1.0-1-0-0-0-1
Det					5.0-5-1-1-0-4	
Val		1.0-0-0-0-0-1	1.0-0-0-0-0-2	1.0-2-1-1-0-1		
SJU			1.0-0-0-0-0-2			
SJU				2.0-0-0-0-0-0		
WMU				2.0-1-0-0-0-4		
ChSt	2.0-0-0-0-1-3	2.0-0-0-0-0-4				
BG				1.1-0-0-0-2-1	5.0-3-2-1-2-2	0.2-1-0-0-0-2
Cr.				2.1-1-0-0-1-1		0.2-1-0-0-0-1
Cr.		0.0-1-0-0-0-0	3.1-3-3-3-0-6	1.1-1-1-1-0-0		
CMU					0.2-0-0-0-2-2	1.1-2-1-1-0-0
EMU	2.0-0-0-0-0-5		1.0-0-0-0-0			
Pitt						
Pitt			1.0-0-0-0-1	2.2-5-2-2-2-0	5.1-9-3-3-0-3	

Relief Wins and Saves

Gagne – wins vs. Wake Forest, Vanderbilt and Bowling Green; saves vs. Dayton, North Florida, Eastern Illinois, Purdue, Western Michigan and Creighton (games 2 and 3)

Viloria – win vs. Dayton; save vs. Villanova (gm 1)

Jones – wins vs. Purdue and Chicago State

Laird – win at Creighton (gm 3)

Inside The Notre Dame Bullpen (stats for relief appearances only)

Pitcher	ERA	W-L	Rel. GP	SV	IP	H (Avg., HR)	R/ER	K/BB	WP	HBP	Inher.	R's Sc.	1st Batters
Arminio	0.00	0-0	2	0	2.1	0 (.000, 0)	0/0	1/1	0	0		0	0-for-1
Viloria	0.68	1-0	11	1	13.1	11 (.224, 0)	2/1	10/0	0	0		0-of-7	2-for-10, 4 K
Thornton	1.12	0-0	4	0	8.0	6 (.231, 0)	2/1	3/6	0	2		1-of-3	1-for-2, K, BB, HB
Gagne	3.31	3-3	17	7	32.2	32 (.254, 2)	17/12	24/12	2	0		1-of-7	3-for-15, 2 K, BB
Jones	3.38	2-0	6	0	8.0	8 (.250, 0)	4/3	11/1	0	0		0	1-for-6, K
Ogilvie	4.50	0-0	1	0	2.0	2 (.250, 0)	1/1	2/0	0	0		0	0-for-1
Doherty	6.14	0-0	5	0	7.1	6 (.231, 0)	5/5	14/5	1	1		0-of-1	0-for-4, 2 K, BB
Laird	7.07	1-0	12	0	14.0	10 (.196, 3)	11/11	20/11	3	1		1-of-1	1-for-10, 5 K, 2 BB
Vergara	7.36	0-0	5	0	11.0	11 (.250, 2)	11/9	8/9	2	3		0	0-for-5, 3 K
Kalita	8.10	0-0	1	0	3.1	6 (.545, 0)	3/3	0/3	0	1		0	BB
Wilkins	9.00	0-0	3	0	4.0	10 (.500, 1)	6/4	5/1	0	0		0	1-for-3, K
Bickford	18.00	0-0	1	0	2.0	4 (.364, 0)	4/4	2/3	1	0		0	0-for-1, K
Totals	4.50	7-3	68	8	108.0	106 (.258, 8)	66/54	100/52	9	8		3-of-19	9-for-58 (.155) 6 BB, 20 K

BULLPEN BOUNCES BACK – The Notre Dame relief pitchers had some rocky outings in the first few weeks of the season but have lowered the bullpen ERA to 4.50 in recent weeks ... the bullpen has allowed just 3-of-19 inherited runners to score (including one in the 5-3 loss to Pittsburgh) while the first batters facing the ND relievers have combined to hit just .155 (9-for-58) with six walks and 20 Ks.

Top Relievers Career Stats

J.P. Gagne – Career Stats

Year	ERA	W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB
2000	4.46	7-1	19/13	0	0	72.2	98	40	36	25	44	0-0-6	.333	4	2
2001	5.35	5-5	17/13	1	0	70.2	79	47	42	21	47	17-2-6	.280	1	5
2002	3.14	9-4	28/7	1	6	94.2	86	40	33	16	69	23-1-7	390/.245	4	12
2003	3.31	3-3	17/0	0	7	32.2	32	17	12	12	24	4-0-2	141/.254	2	0
Totals	4.09	24-13	81/33	2	13	270.2	295	144	123	75	184	44-3-21	.280	11	19

<i>Tyler Jones</i>	W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB	
2002	4.00	1-0	4 /1	0	1	9.0	9	5	4	9	6	0-0-0	46/.243	1	0
2003	5.25	2-1	7/0	0	0	12.0	13	8	7	1	13	1-1-2	50/.265	0	0
Totals	4.71	3-1	11/1	0	1	21.0	22	13	11	10	19	1-1-2	96/.256	1	0

<i>Matt Laird</i>		W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB
2000	3.83	5-2	15/9	0	0	47.0	55	32	20	15	34	0-0-2	.284	6	9
2001	3.09	5-1	22/0	0	4	32.0	23	11	11	15	28	5-0-1	.209	4	6
2002	5.73	0-0	12/0	0	1	11.0	14	9	7	9	9	0 -1 -0	58/.292	3	0
2003	7.07	1-0	12/0	0	0	14.0	10	11	11	11	20	2-0 -3	64/.196	3	1
Totals	4.24	11-3	61/9	0	5	104.0	102	63	49	50	91	7-1 -6	.253	16	16

Brandon Vilorio	W-L	GP/GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K	2B-3B-HR	BF/B/Avg	WP	HB	
2000	3.18	0-0	11/1	0	0	17.0	19	6	6	1	15	0-0-0	.284	1	1
2001	3.32	3-1	12/0	0	2	21.2	21	10	8	5	8	7-0-1	.241	0	2
2002	2.45	2-1	16/0	0	3	22.0	16	10	6	5	8	0-1-1	88/.203	0	1
2003	0.68	1-0	11/0	0	1	13.1	11	2	1	0	10	4-0-0	50/.224	0	0
Totals	2.55	6-2	50/1	0	6	74.0	67	28	21	11	41	11-1-2	.238	1	4

MAKING STRIDES – Here's a comparative look at ND's 35-game stats (27-8) compared to the 23-12 start in 2002:

Category	2002	2003	Improvement (Dropoff)
Record	23-12	27-8	4
One-Run Games	6-4	6-1	
Batting Average	.313	.308	(-.005)
Runs	226	258	32
Extra-Base Hits	104	110	6
Slugging Pct.	.449	.449	-
Home Runs	24	20	(-4)
Triples	10	21	11
Doubles	71	69	(-2)
Walks	126	113	(-13)
Batters' Strikeouts	175	182	(-7)
Hit-By-Pitch	25	44	19
On-Base Pct.	.386	.383	(-.003)
Stolen Bases	36	45	9
Errors	57	42	15
Fielding Pct.	.958	.969	.011
Double Plays	30	26	(-4)
ERA	3.48	3.58	(-0.10)
Walks	106	117	(-11)
Strikeouts Thrown	243	270	27
Opp. Batting Avg	.265	.243	.022
Hits Allowed	309	283	26
Wild Pitches	22	28	(-6)
Hit Batters	25	20	5

SECOND-STRIKE WEAPON – Notre Dame's offense has totaled just 13 runs and a .213 team batting average in the first inning this season but the Irish have erupted for 49 runs and .358 team batting in the second inning ... ND has been outscored 17-13 in the first inning but quickly has turned the tables in the second for a whopping 49-7 scoring edge ... here's a look at ND's offense, by inning:

1st	13 runs, .213 batting	2nd	49 runs, .358 batting	3rd	38 runs, .345 batting
4th	30 runs, .301 batting	5th	34 runs, .356 batting	6th	40 runs, .335 batting
7th	20 runs, .267 batting	8th	24 runs, .301 batting	9th	7 runs, .222 batting
Ex. Inn.	2 runs, .282 batting				

Here's a look at the runs allowed, by inning:

1st	17 runs, 4.11 ERA	2nd	7 runs, 1.80 ERA	3rd	29 runs, 4.89 ERA
4th	8 runs, 1.54 ERA	5th	14 runs, 2.57 ERA	6th	25 runs, 4.63 ERA
7th	31 runs, 6.69 ERA	8th	15 runs, 3.86 ERA	9th	4 runs, 1.50 ERA
Ex. Inn.	4 runs, 3.86 ERA				

Notre Dame Inning-By-Inning											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	EX	Total
Notre Dame	13	49	38	30	34	40	20	24	7	3	258
Opponents	17	7	29	8	14	25	31	15	4	4	154

EVEN STEVEN – Notre Dame's scoring dominance in the 2nd inning this season (49-7) has nearly been matched by the team's scoring edge two innings later in the 4th (30-8) ... the Irish own a scoring edge in every inning but the 1st (13-17) and the 7th (20-31).

WINNING BIG & SMALL – Notre Dame is 6-1 this season in one-run games while already posting 15 "big wins" (margin of five-plus runs) ... by comparison, the 2002 ND team was 9-8 in one-run games and totaled 21 wins by 5-plus runs.

HIT DOGS LOOKING TO BITE BACK – Notre Dame's offense has managed just a .209 team batting average (18-for-86) during the last three games, with hit totals of six, eight and four in those games ... prior to those games, the Irish had posted 10-plus hits in 10 games of the 17-game winning streak.

LINEUP TAKES SHAPE – Notre Dame's lineup has solidified as the Irish prepare for another run at the BIG EAST title ... positionally, the Irish have opted to go with the shift of sophomore **Matt Edwards** from 3B to 1B (where he has made 16 starts) while freshman **Greg Lopez** now has made 19 starts at the hot corner ... junior 2B **Steve Sollmann** (35 starts) and sophomore SS **Matt Macri** (32) – who both earned preseason All-America honors – are entrenched at the middle infield spots while junior **Javi Sanchez** has made a solid transition from the middle infield to catcher ... four different freshmen already have started at CF but the spot now is occupied by senior **Kris Billmaier**, a prep infielder who started in LF during the 2000 and '01 seasons before starting in RF the past two seasons – with freshman **Brennan Grogan** now in left and his classmate **Cody Rizzo** in right ... freshman **Steve Andres** is the leading candidate for lefthanded DH duty ... the top five spots in the lineup have been fairly consistent, with Sollmann in the leadoff role (28 starts), followed by Grogan (26), Edwards (27), Billmaier (27) and Sanchez (22, injured for three games).

FEARSOME FRESHMAN FIVESOME – Five freshman position players – DH/LF **Cody Rizzo**, CF **Brennan Grogan**, 3B **Greg Lopez**, DH **Steve Andres** and LF/DH **Craig Cooper** – continue to make key contributions this season ... those five players have combined to make 121 starts while batting a combined .307 (133-for-434) ... their biggest statistical contributions include 64% of ND's times hit-by-pitch (28 of 44), 48% of the team's triples (10 of 21) and 41% of the runs scored (105 of 258) – plus 39% of the sac. bunts (11 of 28), 40% of the stolen bases (18 of 45) and 36% of the RBI (80 of 226) ... the above five players also have combined for 36% of the team's hits (133 of 374), 32% of the walks (36 of 113), 25% of the doubles (17 of 68) and five of the team's 20 home runs (25%).

PUSHING 30 – By sweeping the Seton Hall doubleheader, the 2003 squad could become the second-quickest Notre Dame team ever to 30 wins (the 2001 team went 30-5-1, the 1989 squad went 30-8).

APRIL SHOWERS OF WINS – Notre Dame has dominated in April during the nine-year Paul Mainieri era (**170-38**, .817), including **50-6** (.893) in April during the past three seasons (20-2 in '01, 19-2 in '02, 11-2 in '03) ... ND's only April losses in that stretch: vs. Ball State (3-4) and Valparaiso (3-7) in '01, vs. St. John's (3-4) and Pittsburgh (5-7) in '02 and vs. Eastern Michigan and Pittsburgh in '03.

ND ALUMS EMBARK ON PRO SEASONS – Three former Notre Dame baseball players were on 40-man rosters for MLB Spring Training: IF **Craig Counsell** (Arizona), RHP **Brad Lidge** (Houston) and LHP **Tim Kalita** (Detroit) ... Counsell and Lidge both made the big-league rosters (Kalita is with the double-A Erie Sea Wolves) ... three others were non-roster invitees to Big-League Camp: RHPs **Aaron Heilman** (rated by *Baseball America* as the No. 3 prospect in the New York Mets organization; with triple-A Norfolk Tides) and **Christian Parker** (Yankees; triple-A Columbus Clippers) and LHP **Chris Michalak** (Colorado Springs Sky Sox) ... several other former ND players have embarked on their minor-league seasons: catcher **Paul O'Toole** (Cubs; single-A Daytona), 3B/C **Andrew Bushey** (Colorado, single-A Asheville Tourists), Oakland A's OFs **Steve Stanley** (double-A Midland, Rockhounds) and **Brian Stavisky** (single-A Kane County Cougars), IF **Brant Ust** (Detroit; double-A Erie), RHP **Danny Tamayo** (Kansas City; double-A Wichita Wranglers) and OF **Matt Bok** (Los Angeles, single-A Ogden Raptors) ... Tamayo and Stanley both are competing in the Texas League while Heilman and Parker both are pitchers in the International League ... here's a look at ND's alums currently in pro ball (stats as of April 13):

Matt Bok, C (Ogden Raptors, Dodgers single-A, Pioneer League) ... yet to play a game in '03

Andrew Bushey, C/IF (Asheville Tourists, Rockies single-A, South Atlantic League)
0-for-8, 4 GP, RBI, 3 BB, K, three starts at C, one at 1B

Craig Counsell, IF (Arizona Diamondbacks)256, 11-for-43, 13 GP, 3B, 2B, 4 R, 2 RBI, 8 BB, 7 Ks, has made just one error while splitting time at SS and 3B (.967 fielding pct.)

Aaron Heilman, RHP (Norfolk Tides, Mets AAA, International League)
3-0, 1.80 ERA, 3 GS, 20 IP, .200 opp. batting avg. (14-for-70), 4 R, HR, 5 BB, 17 Ks

Tim Kalita, LHP (Erie Sea Wolves, Tigers AA, Eastern League)
7.11 ERA, 4 GP, 6.1 IP, .345 opp. avg. (10-for-29), 5 R, BB, 4 Ks

Brad Lidge, RHP (Houston Astros) ... 2-0, 0.82 ERA, 8 GP, 12.2 IP, 9 H, 4 R/3 ER, HR, 5 BB, 5 Ks

Chris Michalak, LHP (Colorado Springs Sky Sox, Rockies AAA, Pacific Coast League) ... 2-1, 3.06 ERA, 3 GS, 17.2 IP, .294 opp.avg. (20-for-68), 6 R/3 ER, 10 BB, 13 Ks ... also has hit 2-for-6 (R, 2 RBI)

Paul O'Toole, C/IF/OF (Daytona Cubs, Cubs single-A, Florida State League)
4-for-10, 4 GP, R, 2B, 2 RBI, 3 BB, K

Christian Parker, RHP (Columbus Clippers, Yankees AA, International League) ... yet to pitch in '03

Steve Stanley, OF (Midland Rockhounds, Athletics AA, Texas League)
.262 (11-for-42), 11 GP, 5 R, 7 RBI, SAC, 3 BB, 4 Ks, E

Brian Stavisky, OF (Kane County Cougars, Oakland single-A, Midwest League)
.319 (15-for-47), 13 GP, 11 R, 7 RBI, 3B, 4 2B, SAC, 2 HBP, 9 BB, 11 Ks, E

Danny Tamayo, RHP (Wichita Wranglers, Royals AA, Texas League)
0-2, 2.89 ERA, 2GS, 9.1 IP, .324 opp. avg. (11-for-34), 5 R/3 ER, 5 BB, 3 Ks

Brant Ust, IF (Erie Sea Wolves, Tigers AA, Eastern League)
.143 (4-for-28), 8 GP, 3 R, 3 RBI, 4 2B, BB, 9 Ks, SB, starts at SS (5) and 2B (3)

EXPECTING ECK'S-ELLENCE – The 11-0 loss to Rutgers on May 5, 2002, ended ND's team-record scoring streak at 231 games ... the Irish then went **unbeaten in 19 consecutive games at Eck Stadium after that loss to Rutgers**, outscoring the opponents 218-88 in those games (average score of 12-5) ... ND now is **32-3 in its last 35 home games**, dating back to the 7-5 loss to Pittsburgh on April 11, 2002 ... now celebrating its 10th year of play at Eck Stadium, the Irish own an all-time record of 231-51 in the facility (.820) ... ND had defeated 21 consecutive non-conference teams that visited The Eck before last week's loss to Eastern Michigan.

WINNING STREAK NOTES – Despite winning a pair of one-run games vs. Creighton (ND's first one-run games since the first game of the winning streak), the Irish won most of the games in the recent 17-game winning streak by comfortable margins ... the average margin of victory in the 17-game streak was 5.9 runs, including 11 wins by five-plus runs, five by eight-plus and three double-digit victories ... the three one-run games (also 3-2 at Villanova) were the only games in the streak decided by fewer than three runs ... the Irish posted a .337 team batting average, 2.58 staff ERA and .968 fielding pct. (20 errors) in the streak ... top hitters in the streak included **Matt Edwards** (.413, 26-for-63, 28 RBI, .788 slugging pct., 5 HR, 3B, 6 2B, 8 BB) and the freshman outfield/DH trip of **Craig Cooper** (.400, 18-for-45, 6 RBI, 15 R, 2 3B, 2 2B, 8 BB, 4 SB), **Brennan Grogan** (.389, 21-for-54, 10 RBI, 17 R, 4 3B, 2B, 5 BB, 5 SB) and **Cody Rizzo** (.373, 19-for-51, 17 RBI, 23 R, 2 HR, 3B, 6 2B) ... after a slow start at the plate, **Matt Macri** hit .352 (19-for-54) during the winning streak with 11 RBI and 13 runs scored (HR, 3 3B, 2 2B, 8 BB) ... **John Axford**'s four starts in the win streak (4-0) yielded a 1.80 ERA, a .182 opponent batting average, 31 Ks and 14 walks in 25 innings.

ROAD WARRIORS – Notre Dame's trip to Omaha last week represented the team's seventh weekend on the road in the first eight weeks, followed by three straight home weekends and then the season-ending BIG EAST series at Rutgers and Virginia Tech ... the Irish now are in the midst of a 12-game homestand, followed by the annual ND-Michigan game in Grand Rapids and four more home games (before heading to Rutgers).

MAINIERI HITS WIN NO. 700 – Ninth-year ND head coach **Paul Mainieri** – now in his 21st overall season – picked up his 700th career coaching victory in the 6-2 series-opening win over Georgetown on Sat., March 29, just 135 games removed from his 600th win (ND's 99 combined wins in '01 and '02 were third-most in nation, behind Florida State's 107 and South Carolina's 106) ... Mainieri's **713-429-1 career record** (.624) includes 180-121 at St. Thomas ('83-'88), 152-158 at Air Force ('89-'94) and 381-150-1 (.717) at ND ('95-'03) ... his ND career includes five BIG EAST titles and five NCAA trips with the Irish ('96, '99-'02), the program's first No. 1 ranking in 2001 and first CWS trip since '57 (in '02) ... he was the nation's only coach to repeat as ABCA regional coach of the year (Mideast), in 2002, and his squads have extended ND's streak of seasons with 40-plus wins to 14 (nation's 4th-longest active streak) ... 31 of his ND players have moved on to pro ball, including 12 drafted in the first 10 rounds and pair of first-round pitchers (Brad Lidge in '98, Aaron Heilman in '01) ... every ND player in the Mainieri era who has completed his eligibility with the Irish has graduated from Notre Dame (46 of 46) while the eight who were signed after their junior seasons have returned to complete or near completion of their graduation requirements (including two-time Academic All-American Brian Stavisky) ... Mainieri owns the best BIG EAST winning pct. in the conference's history (.750, 129-43) ... in 68 BIG EAST series spanning eight seasons, the Irish have won 53 with eight splits and just seven series wins by the opponent (just two of them being 3-game sweeps) ... the Irish have been swept just four times in 66 all-time BIG EAST doubleheaders (40 ND sweeps, 22 splits).

BIG-INNING BOPPERS – Notre Dame opened the season by posting three “big innings” (5-plus runs) in the first four games but then went 16 games without 5-plus runs in any inning ... that drought ended with a vengeance in games 21-29, when the Irish erupted for **10 big innings** (in all but one of those games, the finale of the Georgetown series) ... the big innings have included three 9-run eruptions (vs. ASU, Georgetown and Detroit) and 6-run innings vs. Newman and St. John's ... the **2nd inning has produced four “big innings”**, with three in the 6th, two in the 3rd and one each in the 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th – with the Irish failing to post 5-plus runs in only the 1st and 9th innings this season (ND has totaled just 13 first-inning runs all season) ... the big innings in the three midweek games on April 8-9 accounted for 18 of ND's 23 total runs (78%) in those games ... here's a look at ND's big innings in 2003:

Gm #	Opponent	Big Inning	Final Score
1	Dayton	5 runs in the 7th	W, 10-9
2	Newman	6 runs in the 3rd	W, 15-5
4	Arizona State (gm 2)	9 runs in the 6th	L, 8-14
21	Georgetown (gm 2)	9 runs in the 6th	W, 13-3
23	Detroit	9 runs in the 2nd	W, 15-5
24	Valparaiso	5 runs in the 2nd	W, 13-4
24	Valparaiso	5 runs in the 5th	
25	St. John's (gm 1)	6 runs in the 3rd	W, 11-3
26	St. John's (gm 2)	5 runs in the 2nd	W, 18-3
26	St. John's (gm 2)	5 runs in the 4th	
27	Western Michigan	5 runs in the 8th	W, 7-1
28	Chicago State	8 runs in the 2nd	W, 9-3
29	Bowling Green	5 runs in the 6th	W, 7-2

MIDSEASON CHECKUP

With 32 games in the books, here's a look at how Notre Dame has answered 10 major preseason questions:

Who would emerge as the new leadoff hitter, at a spot held the previous four seasons mostly by Steve Stanley (and fellow 2002 grads Ken Meyer and Paul O'Toole)?

Sophomore SS Matt Macri and freshman OF Cody Rizzo were tried at the leadoff spot in the first seven games before ND moved junior 2B Steve Sollmann up from the 2-hole into the top spot ... Sollmann has responded by batting .386 as the leadoff hitter (44-for-114, 35 R, 25 RBI, 3 HR, 3 3B, 7 2B, 12 BB, 17 SB) and reaching base in 54 percent of his leadoff plate appearances (any inning) since the lineup shift (he leads the team with a .564 overall leadoff OB pct.).

Who would fill the gap in center field, where Stanley started all 254 games from 1999-2002?

Freshmen Craig Cooper and Cody Rizzo were tried in center during the first two weeks of the season before their classmate Brennan Grogan settled in at the position, starting 21 of the next 22 games at CF ... another freshman, Alex Nettey, then started three games at CF while senior Kris Billmaier (the starter at RF) now appears to be the choice in center after starting the last three games in Eck Stadium's spacious CF.

Who would step into the No. 3 spot in the batting order, occupied in 2002 by LF Brian Stavisky (who signed as a junior 6th-round pick of the Oakland A's)?

Junior corner IF Matt Edwards has made 27 starts in the 3-hole while ranking as one of the team's most pivotal players in 2003 ... Edwards – who missed most of the '02 season with a broken leg – is batting .357 with 41 RBI and 6 home runs in 31 games played, with those numbers comparable to Stavisky's 2002 production (.394, 57 RBI, 9 HR in 50 GP).

How would sophomores Matt Macri (SS) and Matt Edwards (3B/1B) return from their respective injuries that held them out for most of the 2002 season:

Edwards (see note above) has been arguably the key factor to ND's first-half success (with Steve Sollmann's production again meeting his usual high standard) while Macri – who missed most of '02 with ACL elbow surgery – has overcome a slow start by hitting .359 and making just five errors in the last 20 games (he made four Es in the first four games and was batting just .211 in late March, now .294 overall) ... Macri also has showcased his arm strength to throw out several batters

Who would meet the challenge as the staff's No. 3 starter, after the preseason surgery to ace Grant Johnson?

Ryan Kalita has stepped up as the No. 3 starter in the past few weeks, helping overcome the loss of both Johnson and Kalita's fellow senior RHP Peter Ogilvie (who just returned after missing a month due to a sore shoulder) ... Kalita (11-0 in his ND career) is 4-0 with a 3.89 ERA and .240 opp. batting avg. this season (29 Ks, 20 BB, 35 H in 39.1 IP).

Would the Irish experience a dropoff in power, after the loss of O'Toole (11 HRs in '02) and Stavisky (9)?

The 2003 team's current home run total (20) actually is on a par with the 35-game HR total by the '02 squad (24) but the Irish may not have a double-digit HR hitter on the '03 squad, with Matt Edwards (6) the current long-ball leader ... ND's current 25-4 run is all the more noteworthy when considering that cleanup hitter Kris Billmaier has not homered in the last 33 games.

Would the Irish have speed and good basestealing ability, after the loss of Stanley and O'Toole?

The return of sophomore SS Matt Macri and the addition of freshmen such as Brennan Grogan, Cody Rizzo, Craig Cooper and Greg Lopez has added some quality baserunners to the 2003 lineup – with the current SB total (45) well ahead of the 2002 team's SBs (36) at the 35-game point ... the combination of junior 2B Steve Sollmann (21), Grogan (9) and Cooper (8) give the Irish three players who are close to swiping 10-plus bases (Stanley's 32 and O'Toole's 11 were ND's only double-digit SB players in '02) – but no other player on the 2003 squad has more than two SBs

How would junior Javi Sanchez handle the position switch from the middle infield to catcher?

Sanchez – a prep 2B who filled in at SS in '02 – has made an impressive transition behind the dish while doing a solid job batting in the 5-hole (.316, 22 R, 14 RBI, HR, 3B, 8 2B) ... Sanchez is looking to cut down his passed balls (12) and has made major strides in throwing out attempted basestealers, due to his strong arm and agility behind the plate.

How quickly and to what degree would the freshman position players make an impact?

Five freshman position players – DH/LF Cody Rizzo, CF Brennan Grogan, 3B Greg Lopez, DH Steve Andres and LF/DH Craig Cooper – played key roles in the first half of the 2003 season, combining to make 99 starts (after 29 games) while batting a combined .318 (114-for-358) ... their biggest first-half statistical contributions included 62% of ND's times hit-by-pitch, 50% of the team's triples, 43% of the stolen bases and 42% of the runs scored (94 of 224).

Would the offense do its share to complement the talented core of veteran pitchers?

The 2003 team (.308) – which has taken on a more righthanded slant (after the departure of five lefthanded-hitting position starters) – now is batting five points lower than the 2002 team (.313) at the 35-game point ... the most impressive number has been the team's 10 "big innings" (5-plus runs) in the last 14 games ... seven of the team's nine starting position players currently are batting above .290.

STRONG IN ALL AREAS – Notre Dame is the only team that entered the week ranked among the BIG EAST's top three in overall team batting avg. (**3rd, .315**), ERA (**2nd, 3.53**) and fielding pct. (**1st, .970**) ... the only other team that entered the week ranked in the top five of all those categories is Virginia Tech (1st in ERA, 4th in fielding, 5th in batting).

GOOD FOR 40 – Notre Dame owns **14 straight seasons with 40-plus wins**, led by the 50-18 season in 2002, 49 wins in '01, 48 in '89 and '92, 46 in four seasons ('90, '93 '94, '00), 45 in '91 and 44 in '95 ... that's the fourth-longest active 40-win streak in Division I baseball, behind Florida State (25), Wichita State (25) and Clemson (17).

TWO-YEAR TEAR – Notre Dame's combined victory total from the 2001 (49-13-1) and 2002 (50-18) seasons represented the third-most wins (99) in Division I baseball during that two-year span, trailing only Florida State (107) and South Carolina (106) ... ND's three-year **record from 2001-03 now stands at 126-39-1 (.762)**.

BIG SHADOWS – Notre Dame's 2003 roster includes some big bodies, with eight players 6-4 or taller – led by freshman RHP **Ryan Doherty** (7-1, 230), senior 1B **Mike Holba** (6-8, 240), freshman LHP **Tom Thornton** (6-6, 205), sophomore RHPs **Grant Johnson** (6-6, 220) and **John Axford** (6-5, 180), and sophomore 1B **Joe Thaman** (6-4, 215).

STRONG UP THE MIDDLE – Notre Dame boasts the only pair of middle infielders who each received 2003 preseason All-America honors, with junior 2B **Steve Sollmann** earning a second-team nod from the National College Baseball Writers Association while sophomore SS **Matt Macri** (who saw most of his freshman season cut short by an elbow injury that ultimately required "Tommy John" reconstructive surgery) was a Baseball America third team preseason All-American ... BA and the BIG EAST coaches forecasted Sollmann as the 2003 BIG EAST player of the year while Collegiate Baseball magazine predicted Macri for that honor ... three other second basemen and five shortstops were named to at least one of the three major preseason All-America teams (which featured 10 total middle infielders) ... Southern University 2B Rickie Weeks and Florida State SS Stephen Drew were unanimous first-team picks (also Collegiate Baseball) while Texas 2B Tim Moss was the only other middle infielder named to all three teams ... middle infielders cited on two of the preseason teams also included Georgia Tech SS Eric Patterson, Eastern Michigan 2B Brian Bixler and Louisiana State SS Aaron Hill ... two other shortstops - Richmond's David Reaver and USC's Anthony Lunetta - also received preseason All-America honors.

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL 2003 PRESEASON HONORS AND RANKINGS

John Axford (So., RHP) – Nation's #19 college prospect (11th pitcher) for 2004 draft (Baseball America/Perfect Game, 12/15/02), BIG EAST's #5 overall prospect (BA)

Craig Cooper (Fr., CF) – BIG EAST's #2 newcomer and nation's #50 newcomer (BA)

Matt Macri (So., SS) – Preseason third team All-American (BA), preseason BIG EAST player of the year (Collegiate Baseball), nation's #40 college prospect (#2 among SS) for 2003 draft (BA/Perfect Game, 12/15/02), preseason all-BE (BA), BE's #3 overall prospect and best IF arm (BA)

Chris Niesel (So. RHP) – Preseason all-BIG EAST (BA), nation's #49 college prospect for 2004 draft (BA/Perfect Game, 12/15/02), preseason all-BIG EAST (BA), BE's #6 overall prospect, best breaking ball (BA)

Steve Sollmann (Jr., 2B) – Preseason second team All-American (National College Baseball Writers), preseason BIG EAST player of the year (BIG EAST coaches and BA), #124 college prospect for 2003 draft (BA Prospects Plus, 12/15/02), preseason all-BIG EAST (coaches; BA), BE's #7 overall prospect (BA), best defensive 2B (BA)

Joe Thaman (Jr., 1B) – BIG EAST's best defensive 1B (Baseball America)

Martin Vergara (So., RHP) – Nation's #78 college prospect for 2004 draft (BA/Perfect Game, 12/15/02), BIG EAST's #8 overall prospect (BA)

Grant Johnson (So., RHP; inj.) – Nation's #5 college prospect for 2004 draft (BA/PG, 12/15/02), preseason third team All-American (Collegiate Baseball magazine, NCBWA), preseason all-BIG EAST (coaches, BA), BE's #1 prospect and best control pitcher (BA)

RIGHT STUFF – ND's lineup – predominantly lefthanded the past four seasons – has taken on a decidedly righthanded slant in 2003, following the graduation of four lefthanded starters (CF and leadoff batter **Steve Stanley**, 3B/cleanup/#5 hitter **Andrew Bushey**, C **Paul O'Toole** and DH **Matt Bok**) and the pro signing of junior LF/3-hole hitter **Brian Stavisky** ... those five players were among the teams' top hitters from 2000-02, with Stanley, Bushey and O'Toole also playing in 1999 alongside fellow lefthanded hitters **Jeff Felker** (1B, '97-'00), **Ben Cooke** (IF/OF, '98-'01) and **Jeff Perconte** (IF/OF, '97-'00) ... junior 1B **Joe Thaman** is the only lefthanded hitter among the returning starters, with 2B **Steve Sollmann**, RF **Kris Billmaier** and C **Javi Sanchez** (the '02 SS) all hitting from the right side.

TOP TOOLS – *Baseball America* rated several Notre Dame players among its "top tools" list for the 2003 BIG EAST Conference ... ND sophomore RHPs **Chris Niesel** ("best breaking ball") and **Grant Johnson** ("best control") joined Boston College sophomore RHP Chris Lambert ("best fastball") as the pitchers cited on BA's list for BIG EAST top tools.

ELITE E.R.A. – Notre Dame – which entered the week ranked 27th in the nation for ERA – has finished in the top-16 of the national charts for team ERA in four of the previous five seasons, owning the nation's best team ERA during portions of 2000 and '01 ... the 2000 staff surged atop the national ERA charts in late April (2.72) and finished 16th (3.93) ... the Irish then returned to the top spot among the 2001 team ERA leaders for three weeks in April, finishing fifth at 3.22 (best at ND since '92, third-best since '75) ... ND went on to finish 13th in the 2002 ERA rankings (3.57), joining Texas and Rice as the only teams ranked among the nation's top-20 ERA leaders in 2000, '01 and '02 ... the Irish also finished 12th in the final 1998 team ERA rankings (4.02) while the first eight ND staffs led by pitching coach **Brian O'Connor** ('95-'02) averaged a 4.10 team ERA.

CLOSING WITH THE CLOSER – Current senior RHP and closer **J.P. Gagne** had some rocky moments early in the 2002 postseason but managed to post an amazing ratio of strikeouts (15) to walks (1) in 18 innings of 2002 postseason action ... his best two outings came at key times, retiring nine straight to close the 10-4 opening win at Florida State before coming on to strike out the side in the 9th inning of the 3-1 clincher in that three-game NCAA Super-Regional series.

SENIOR SAVERS – Notre Dame's senior class includes three righthanders – **J.P. Gagne** (13), **Brandon Vilorio** (6) and **Matt Laird** (5) – who each have totaled five-plus saves in their ND careers ... Laird and his 3/4 delivery produced four saves in the closing role with the 2001 team that climbed to the No. 1 national ranking ... his more noteworthy saves that season included the first of two wins on opening week at Mississippi State (7-5, 0.2 IP) and the final two innings to cap a 3-0 shutout of Cleveland State ... he also went 7-2 in his final nine decisions of the 2002 season.

FAR & WIDE – The Notre Dame list of all-time baseball monogram winners includes players from 43 home states ... current senior RHP **Brandon Vilorio** (Wailuku, Hawaii) in 2000 became the program's first letterwinner from the island state while current junior LHP **Cody Wilkins** (Hudson, N.C.) could become the first from the Tar Heel state ... the only other states that have not produced ND baseball letterwinners include Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Vermont ... the nine-year **Paul Mainieri** era has featured players from 34 states/provinces (see p. 33 of media guide), including 19 states represented on the 2003 squad: California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Ontario, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Washington.

TEAM GAME HIGHS

At-Bats: 47 vs. Villanova (3/23)	Runs Scored: 18 vs. St. John's (4/6)
Hits: 18 vs. Dayton (2/21), St. John's (4/6) and Creighton (4/13)	Doubles: 8 vs. Creighton (4/13)
RBI: 17 vs. St. John's (4/6)	Home Runs: 3 vs. St. John's (4/6)
Triples: 2 (6 games)	Walks: 8 vs. Georgetown (3/29)
Total Bases: 31 vs. Creighton (4/13)	Sac. Bunts: 3 vs. Villanova (3/23 and 3/24)
Batters Strikeouts: 13 vs. Wake Forest (3/2)	Runners LOB: 15 vs. Villanova (3/23)
Stolen Bases: 4 vs. Wake Forest (3/2), Georgetown (3/29) and Bowling Green (4/10)	Hit into DP: 3 vs. North Florida (3/11), Eastern Illinois (3/13) and Detroit (4/1)
Caught Stealing: 2 vs. Navy (3/14) and Bowling Green (4/10)	
Hit-By-Pitch: 4 vs. Newman (2/22)	
Errors: 4 vs. Eastern Illinois (3/13)	Passed Balls: 3 vs. Georgetown (3/30)
DPs Turned: 3 vs. Minnesota (3/1)	

Strikeouts Thrown: 16 vs. Western Michigan (4/9)	
Fewest Hits Allowed: 2 vs. Eastern Illinois (3/13) and Chicago State (4/10)	
Wild Pitches: 4 vs. Arizona State (2/22)	Hit Batters: 2 (4 games)

INDIVIDUAL GAME HIGHS

Hits: 4 by Sollmann vs. Georgetown (3/29), Edwards vs. St. John's (4/6) and Creighton (4/13), Brennan Grogan vs. Creighton (4/13)	Walks: 3 by Steve Andres vs. St. John's (4/6)
RBI: 6 by Kris Billmaier vs. Newman (2/22)	Doubles: 3 by Kris Billmaier vs. Georgetown (3/29)
Home Runs: 2 by Kris Billmaier vs. Newman (2/22)	
Runs Scored: 4 by Javi Sanchez vs. Purdue (3/26), Steve Sollmann vs. Georgetown (3/29), Matt Edwards vs. St. John's (4/6)	
At-Bats: 7 by Brennan Grogan vs. Villanova (3/23)	
Total bases: 9 by Kris Billmaier vs. Newman (2/22) and Matt Edwards vs. St. John's (4/6)	
Sac hits: 2 by Joe Thaman vs. Villanova (3/23), Greg Lopez vs. Villanova (3/24) and Brennan Grogan vs. Creighton (4/12)	
Stolen bases: 3 by Steve Sollmann vs. Georgetown (3/29)	
Hit by pitch: 2 by Cody Rizzo vs. Newman (2/22) and Detroit (4/1), Craig Cooper vs. Villanova (3/24)	
Fielding Assists: 7 by Matt Macri vs. Wake Forest (3/2)	
Innings pitched: 8.0 by Chris Niesel vs. Vanderbilt (3/8) and Eastern Illinois (3/13), Ryan Kalita vs. Villanova (3/24)	
Strikeouts: 12 by John Axford vs. Western Michigan (Apr 09, 2003)	

RECORD BOOK WATCH – With Notre Dame's season passing its midpoint, several individual and team records are within reach ... here are some career and season record-book projections (based on 60 games):

Junior 2B Steve Sollmann

- * His .367 career batting avg. would rank 7th in ND history (his brother's .372 ranks 4th)
- * 55 hits, on pace for 94 and could become 3rd ND player to break 100-hit plateau (Dan Peltier had 115 in 1989, Steve Stanley 102 in 2001 and 118 in '02) ... also on pace for 251 career hits after '03 (would be 8th; needs 86 hits in '03 to crack career top-10)
- * 41 runs, on pace for 71 (would be close to his brother Scott's '95 total of 73 for 7th in ND record book) ... also on pace for 176 career runs at end of '03 (needs 61 runs in '03 to crack ND career top-10)
- * 21 stolen bases, on pace for 36 (could join his brother, 52 in '96, as only ND players with 40-plus) ... already 7th in ND history with 50 SBs, four back of former teammate Paul O'Toole ... on pace for 65 career SBs at end of '03 (needs 68 for 5th)
- * His 10 career triples (4 in '03) are three shy of ND top-10 (five back of 3rd)
- * .746 career stolen-base pct. (50-of-67) ranks 8th
- * Already 8th in career fielding assists (431), on pace for 510 (4th)

Freshman CF Brennan Grogan

- * His 5 triples project out to 9 for the season, which would be two back of Scott Sollmann's ND record ('95)
- * 7 sacrifice bunts, on pace for 12 (two shy of ND record held by three players)

Sophomore 3B/1B Matt Edwards

- * 41 RBI, on pace for 70 and shot at ND top-10 (last ND player with 70-plus RBI was Mike Amrhein's 71 in 1997; could become 8th ND player with 70-plus RBI in a season)

Senior RF Kris Billmaier

- * On pace for 230 at-bats and 725 in his career (needs 729 to crack ND top-10)

Freshman DH/OF Cody Rizzo

- * 15 times hit-by-pitch on pace for 26, already has tied the ND record of 15 (by Eric Danapilis, in '93)

Senior RHP J.P. Gagne

- * 17 appearances, on pace for 29 (would best his '02 total of 28 for 4th in ND record book) ... also on pace for 93 career appearances, which would be one better than Chris Michalak's ND record (now 3rd at 81, behind Aaron Heilman's 83)
- * Already has joined Michalak (34-13, 12 SV) and Heilman (43-7, 12 SV) as only ND pitchers to post 20-plus wins (24) and 10-plus saves (13)
- * On pace for 56-inning season, which would push his career total to 294 (8th in ND history; now 9th at 270.2)
- * On pace for 5-win season and 26 career wins (would rank 8th, now 10th with 24)
- * 7 saves on pace for 12 (which would best John Corbin's record 11) ... also on pace for 18 career saves (2nd to Corbin's 20; now 2nd with 13)
- * On pace for 41 Ks and 201 in his career (would rank 9th)
- * His career walk avg. of 2.42 BB per 9 IP would rank 9th in ND record book

Sophomore RHP John Axford

- * 2.20 season ERA would tie for 17th (10th-best since '69)
- * 7-0 record in eight starts, on pace for possible 13-win season (Aaron Heilman went 15-0 in '01, Tom Price 14-5 in '94) ... only five ND pitchers ever have started a season at least 9-0
- * .220 opp. batting avg. would rank 8th in ND record book (since '91)
- * 51 strikeouts on pace for 87 (would rank 12th)

Sophomore RHP Chris Niesel

- * .228 opp. batting avg. would rank 10th in ND record book (since '91)
- * 55 strikeouts on pace for 94 (would rank 7th)
- * Season walk average of 1.67/9 IP would rank 11th ... his 1.98 career walk avg. is 5th (best since '94)
- * 5.00 season K-to-walk ratio would rank 5th ... his 4.04 career K-to-BB ratio (107/26) is ahead of Alan Walania's ND record (4.00)

Senior RHP Ryan Kalita

- * 11-0 career record, could become 5th ND pitcher to win 14 straight ... needs five more decisions to qualify for career win pct. list

Senior RHP Brandon Vilorio

- * Yet to walk a batter in 13.1 IP (top ratio in ND record book is Tom Price's 0.49 BB per 9 IP, in '94)
- * 2.55 career ERA would rank 5th in ND history (3rd since 1961, behind Aaron Heilman's 2.49 and Larry Mohs' 2.52)
- * His career walk avg. of 1.34 BB per 9 IP (11/74) is below the standing ND record (1.64, by Alan Walania)

Team

- * 10.69 hits per game, would rank 4th
- * 21 triples, on pace for 36 (would rank 2nd, record is 41 in '94)
- * 44 times hit-by-pitch, on pace for 75 (would tie record set in '93)
- * 28 sac. bunts, on pace for 48 (would rank 3rd)
- * 270 strikeouts thrown, on pace for 463 (would rank 3rd, record is 483 in '02)
- * .969 fielding pct. ahead of ND record .965 ('82, '92, '00)

2003 Notre Dame Baseball Results

Date	Opponent	Result	ND Line	Opp. Line	Pitcher of Record	Notes
2/21	vs. Dayton	W 10-9	10-18-1	9-11-3	Viloria	
2/22	vs. Newman (7)	W 15-5	15-17-1	5-12 -2	Axford	
2/22	at Arizona State	L 3-16	3-6-3	16-10-3	Ogilvie	
2/23	at Arizona State	L 8-14	8-13-3	14-13-1	Gagne	
2/28	vs. Nebraska	L 1-7	1-6-1	7-12-2	Niesel	
3/1	at Minnesota	L 2-8	2-6-0	8-12-2	Ogilvie	
3/2	vs. Wake Forest (13)	W 2-1	2-11-0	1-8-2	Gagne	
3/8	vs. Vanderbilt (10)	W 3-1	3-7-3	1-3-2	Gagne	
3/10	vs. Navy	W 7-3	7-11-0	3-6-2	Axford	
3/11	at North Florida	W 6-1	6-11-0	1-5-7	Kalita	
3/12	at Jacksonville (10)	L 6-9	6-10-0	9-14-6	Gagne	
3/13	vs. Eastern Illinois	W 3-2	3-9-4	2-2-0	Niesel	
3/14	vs. Navy	W 11-2	11-16-1	2-10-4	Thornton	
3/15	vs. Creighton	W 10-3	10-14-1	3-7-2	Axford	
3/23	at Villanova (13)	L 2-3	2-10-0	3-11-3	Gagne	
3/23	at Villanova (7)	W 3-2	3-7-2	2-5-1	Axford	
3/24	at Villanova	W 5-1	5-7-1	1-6-3	Kalita	
3/25	Toledo	W 8-3	8-11-1	3-7-1	Doherty	
3/26	Purdue	W 8-5	8-9-3	5-7-4	Jones	
3/29	Georgetown (7)	W 6-2	6-12-0	2-6-2	Niesel	
3/29	Georgetown	W 13-3	13-11-2	3-7-3	Axford	
3/30	Georgetown	W 12-5	12-14-3	5-7-0	Kalita	
4/1	Detroit	W 15-5	15-17-1	5-9-3	Thornton	
4/2	Valparaiso	W 13-4	13-15-1	4-9-0	Vergara	
4/6	at St. John's (7)	W 11-3	11-7-0	3-9-0	Niesel	
4/6	at St. John's	W 18-3	18-18-2	3-6-2	Kalita	
4/9	Western Michigan	W 7-1	7-8-0	1-7-2	Axford	
4/10	Chicago State (7)	W 9-3	9-11-2	3-2-2	Jones	
4/10	Bowling Green (7)	W 7-2	7-8-1	2-4-3	Gagne	
4/12	at Creighton	W 2-1	2-7-0	1-6-3	Niesel	
4/13	at Creighton	W 13-12	13-18-1	12-14-2	Laird	
4/14	Central Michigan	W 8-3	8-11-0	3-7-1	Axford	
4/15	Eastern Michigan	L 3-5	3-6-0	5-7-2	Jones	
4/17	Pittsburgh (7)	W 5-2	5-8-2	2-8-0	Niesel (7.0)	
4/17	Pittsburgh	L 3-5	3-4-2	5-14-3	Thornton	
4/19	Seton Hall (12:05)					
4/19	Seton Hall (gm 2)					
4/22	Ball State (6:05)					
4/23	Cleveland State (5:05)					
4/24	IPFW (5:05)					
4/26	Connecticut (12:05)					
4/26	Connecticut (gm 2)					
4/27	Connecticut (12:05)					
4/29	vs. Michigan (Grand Rapids; 7:30 EDT)					
4/30	Oakland (6:05)					
5/3	West Virginia (12:05)					
5/3	West Virginia (gm 2)					
5/4	West Virginia (12:05)					
5/10	at Rutgers (noon)					
5/10	at Rutgers (gm 2)					
5/11	at Rutgers (noon)					
5/13	Cincinnati (3:05)					
5/14	Butler (6:05)					
5/16	at Virginia Tech (noon)					
5/16	at Virginia Tech (gm 2)					
5/17	at Virginia Tech (noon)					