

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL GAMEDAY NOTES

University of New Orleans Ron Maestri Classic vs. Missouri (Friday, Feb. 22; 2:30 p.m.)

PLAY BALL!!: The 4th-ranked Notre Dame baseball team opens its 2002 season by competing in the Ron Maestri/UNO Classic, at the University of New Orleans' Privateer Park ... the Irish will face Missouri on Friday, Feb. 22 (2:30 CST), followed by Saturday's game vs. the host team (1:00) and a Sunday morning game vs. Southern Illinois (9:30 a.m.).

RADIO COVERAGE: South Bend's ESPN Radio 1620 AM (WDND) and its sister station WHLY 1580 AM are slated to broadcast Notre Dame's entire 56-game schedule in 2002 (plus all postseason action) ... a real-audio link to internet broadcasts of the games may be accessed at www.und.com while real-time stats for home games-including updated play-by-play-likewise can be accessed at und.com ... any baseball games that conflict with ND hockey or women's basketball broadcasts on WDND 1620 typically will be shifted to WHLY 1580 (including Saturday's baseball game vs. UNO).

TOURNAMENT TO REUNITE FORMER TEAMMATES: The Ron Maestri/UNO Classic will serve as the official ceremony to rename the field at Privateer Park in honor of the former Hall of Fame baseball coach who now serves as the UNO athletic director ... each of the four teams in the tournament is led by a head coach who was a player on UNO's 1979 Sun Belt Conference championship team: Tim Jamieson (Missouri), Paul Mainieri (Notre Dame), Dan Callahan (Southern Illinois) and Randy Bush (UNO) ... Mainieri was a 2B for UNO's 1978 and '79 teams that won Sun Belt titles while Jamieson played at UNO from 1978-81, earning team MVP honors as a senior and being named to the 1980 NCAA South Regional all-tournament team ... Jamieson also was a six-year assistant coach at his alma mater, when he helped UNO advance to four NCAA regionals and the 1984 College World Series ... Callahan was a pitcher at UNO in '78 and '79 before transferring to Quincy College while Bush started at LF for the '79 UNO team before embarking on a 15-year Major League career with the Minnesota Twins ... the same four teams also met at Privateer Park in 1999, at the UNO Invitational.

SERIES NOTES: Notre Dame lost its only previous game versus Missouri (13-1, at UNO in 1999) while New Orleans owns a 4-2 series edge vs. the Irish ... ND dropped two of three at UNO in 1996 (8-3, 7-11, 7-12) and lost an 11-inning game at UNO in 1998 (3-4) before beating the Privateers at the 1999 UNO Invitational (14-11) and losing the 2001 opener vs. UNO (6-7, at the Mississippi State Classic) ... the Irish own a 3-2 series edge vs. Southern Illinois, including a pair of wins in San Antonio (6-2 in 1996, 4-3 in '98) and a 15-5 win over SIU at the 1999 UNO Invitational (SIU beat ND twice in 1970 NCAA District Playoffs at Ohio State, 2-10 and 0-1).

RECAPPING THE 1999 ND-MISSOURI GAME: Four Irish errors led to nine unearned runs as the Tigers claimed a deceiving 13-1 win at the '99 UNO Invitational ... Missouri's big inning came in the eight-run 3rd ... Jake Epstein and current Tigers player Mick Weiss both homered in the game while Jody Harris tossed the complete-game win (8 IP, 5 H, R, 5 Ks) ... Alex Shilliday (2.2 IP, 7 H, 9 R/3 ER, 2 BB, 3 Ks) took the loss ... three current ND seniors played in the game: CF Steve Stanley (0-for-4, K), 3B Andrew Bushey (1-for-3, 2B) and C Paul O'Toole (1-for-3, 2B) while current seniors Drew Duff (3.1 IP, 5 H, 3 UER, BB, 2 Ks) and Matt Buchmeier (K'd only batter faced) also pitched in the game ... four current Tigers played in that game, led by the 2B Weiss (3-for-4, 2 RBI, 2 R, HR, BB) and LF W.T. Hoover (2-for-5, R, RBI, BB, 2 Ks), with Luke Cassis being a late defensive replacement while Wes Fewell was 0-for-1 as a pinch hitter.

SHOW-ME STATE(MENT): Notre Dame sophomore 1B **Joe Thaman** (St. Louis, Mo./St. Louis University HS) will have extra motivation in the Missouri game, with the chance to play versus his

home-state team ... Thaman played summer-league ball with Missouri sophomore LHP Garrett Bauer (1999 and 2000) while spending the summer of 2001 as a member of the Hays (Kan.) Larks team that included three Missouri players: Bauer, sophomore OF Ryan Rallo and sophomore LHP/1B Cody Ehlers ... current Irish junior RHP J.P. Gagne also was a member of that 2001 Larks team that competed in the Jayhawk League and advanced to the title game of the annual National Baseball Congress World Series.

FRIEND OR FOE?: In addition to the above connections, several other ND players are past teammates with players from other teams in the UNO Classic: ND senior 3B Andrew Bushey, senior RHPs Matt Buchmeier and Drew Duff and Missouri's Bauer, Ehlers, Rallo and junior OF Jayce Tingler (2000 Hays Larks); Irish sophomore 2B Steve Sollmann and Missouri junior RHP Drew Endicott (2001 Yarmouth-Dennis Red Sox of the Cape Cod League); and ND senior DH Ken Meyer (Fort Myers, FL) and UNO's J.D. Huether, Chandler Rose and Justin LoFranco (Bishop Verot HS).

SCOUTING THE FIELD

MISSOURI - The Tigers won three of four games at last week's Rawlings/Oakland A's Spring Training Tournament in Phoenix, with a 10-6 opening loss to Washington, two wins over Portland (6-4, 11-7) and a 10-9 win over UW ... Missouri hit .349 at the tournament (3 HR, 0 SB) while posting a 6.81 team ERA, .310 opp. batting avg. (49 H, 14 BB, 24 Ks) and a .960 fielding pct. (7 E) ... three Tigers players are batting .500 or higher: junior 3B Jody Roughton (10-for-17, 6 RBI, 5 R, HR, 3 2B, 2 BB, sac. bunt), senior SS Luke Cassis (7-for-14, 2 RBI, 2 R, 2B, BB, 3 HBP) and sophomore DH Cody Ehlers (7-for-14, 5 R, 7 RBI, 2 2B, 3B, 2 HR, 3 BB) ... Missouri returned 15 of 22 letterwinners from its 2001 team that went 31-24-1 overall and finished 10th in the Big 12 Conference (11-19) ... see www.umtigers.com for additional information on Missouri.

NEW ORLEANS - The Privateers opened with a 13-4 loss to Lamar, followed by a pair of wins in that series (4-0, 4-1) ... UNO is hitting .236 (0 HR, 3 SB), with a 3.60 ERA and .237 opp. batting avg. (30 Ks in 25 IP), plus a .971 fielding pct. (3 E) ... sophomore OF Justin LoFranco hit 4-for-10 in the Lamar series (4 RBI, R, 2B) ... UNO returned just 12 of 24 letterwinners from its 2001 squad that went 25-32 overall and finished 5th in the Sun Belt Conference (13-14) ... see www.unoprivateers.com for more UNO information.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS - The Salukis took two of three last week at Louisiana-Monroe (8-1, 8-2, 6-7) ... SIU hit .330 in that series (4 HR, 4 SB), with a 2.39 ERA and .248 opp. batting avg. (21 Ks in 26.1 IP), plus a .982 fielding pct. (2 E) ... SIU's top hitters from last week included LF Ross Kowzan (6-for-11, 5 RBI, 2 R, HR, 2B) and SS P.J. Finnigan (6-for-12, 4 RBI, 3 R, 2B) ... SIU returned 17 of 24 letterwinners from its 2001 squad (19-36 overall, 8th in Missouri Valley Conference at 10-21) ... see www.siu/~athletic for additional info. on the Salukis.

INJURY UPDATE: Notre Dame freshman shortstop Matt Macri is out indefinitely with an elbow strain, with sophomore Javier Sanchez or freshman Matt Edwards likely to start at shortstop vs. Missouri.

PROBABLE PITCHING MATCHUPS: Notre Dame is expected to send junior RHP **Peter Ogilvie** (5-1, 1.91 ERA in 2001) to the mound vs. Missouri, which will counter with freshman RHP Justin James (no decision in 6-4 win over Portland, 7 IP, 7 H, 3 R, 3 Ks) ... another Irish junior RHP, **J.P. Gagne** (12-6, 4.90 career), is slated to start opposite UNO sophomore LHP Jeff Stander (no decision in 4-1 win over Lamar, 2.2 IP, H, UER, 3 BB, 3 Ks) ... RHP **Chris Niesel** then is scheduled to be the first ND freshman to start on the opening weekend since Christian Parker's 1995 win vs. Pepperdine at the Anaheim Classic (14-5) ... Niesel likely will be opposed by SIU's Luke Nelson, who had no decision in the 7-6 loss to La.-Monroe (9 H, 6 R/3 ER, 3 BB, 4 Ks).

PROBABLE STARTING LINEUP

- CF *STEVE STANLEY** (Sr. ... 5-8, 155 ... Upper Arlington, OH)
2001: .400, 32 RBI, 76 R, 1 HR-5 3B-14 2B ... 29 BB/17 K ... 31-39 SB ... 63 GS
Career: .363, 85 RBI, 179 R, 1 HR-8 3B-30 2B ... 88 BB/65 K ... 84-101 SB ... 188
consecutive GS
2001 All-American and BIG EAST Player of the Year; nation's No. 9 pro prospect among seniors (BA)
- 2B STEVE SOLLMANN** (So. ... 5-10, 190 ... Cincinnati, OH)
2001: .362, 36 RBI, 5 HR-2 3B-9 2B ... 30 BB/29 K ... 23-34 SB ... 61 GS
Freshman All-American, 1st team all-BIG EAST / Rookie of the Year; Preseason All-American (BA, CB)
- LF *BRIAN STAVISKY** (LF ... 6-3, 220 ... Port Allegany, PA)
2001: .386, 66 RBI, 10 HR-4 3B-19 2B ... 31 BB/24 K ... 9-11 SB ... 58 GP/57 GS
Career: .338, 111 RBI, 24 HR-9 3B-34 2B ... 49 BB/63 K ... 14-21 SB ... 122 GP/121 GS
Preseason 1st Team All-American (BA); hit 4 HR at NCAA South Bend Regional; nation's No. 25 prospect (BA)
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- RF KRIS BILLMAIER** (Jr. ... 5-10, 200 ... Woodinville, WA)
2001: .257, 37 RBI, 3 HR-0 3B-9 2B ... 30 BB/15 K, 9 HP ... 4-6 SB ... 56 GP/55 GS
Career: .287, 56 RBI, 7 HR-0 3B-12 2B ... 38 BB/25 K ... 4-8 SB ... 89 GP/76 GS
Hit .322 in 2001 with runners in scoring position; started in LF during 2000 and 2001 seasons
- C/3B *PAUL O'TOOLE** (Sr. ... 6-1/205 ... Lakewood, OH)
2001: .323, 35 RBI, 4 HR-2 3B-12 2B ... 26 BB/16 K, 8 HP ... 15-24 SB ... 58 GP/57 GS
Career: .314, 113 RBI, 20 HR-6 3B-37 2B ... 62 BB/66 K, 21 HP ... 43-58 SB ... 173 GP/164 GS
Hit 6-for-10 in 1999-2001 openers (6 RBI, 10 TB); holds ND record for most SBs by a catcher
- 3B/C *ANDREW BUSHEY** (Sr. ... 5-10, 190 ... Boardman, OH)
2001: .335, 36 RBI, 0 HR-3 3B-17 2B ... 16 BB/24 K ... 1-5 SB ... 61 GS
Career: .296, 70 RBI, 5 HR-5 3B-17 2B ... 51 BB/51 K ... 6-12 SB ... 160 GP/159 GS
2nd-year team captain; 1st team all-BIG EAST (2001); hit .425 in 2001 BIG EAST games (27 RBI in 26 games)
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- DH #MATT BOK** (Sr. ... 5-10, 190 ... Akron, OH/Georgetown Univ.)
2001: .286, 17 RBI, 1 HR-4 3B-6 2B ... 7 BB/14 K ... 0-1 SB ... 98 AB, 40 GP/30 GS
Career: .277, 49 RBI, 3 HR-6 3B-18 2B ... 28 BB/43 K ... 4-8 SB ... 118 GP/79 GS
3rd team all-BIG EAST, with .333 conference batting average (2001); .459 slugging pct. in 2001 (.306 in 2000)
- or KEN MEYER** (Sr. ... 6-0/205 ... Fort Myers, FL)
2001: .271, 20 RBI, 3 HR-0 3B-5 2B ... 10 BB/21 K ... 1-1 SB ... 107 AB, 45 GP/24 GS
Career: .289, 46 RBI, 7 HR-5 3B-21 2B ... 19 BB/54 K ... 3-3 SB ... 114 GP/71 GS
Hit game-ending grand slam vs. Central Michigan in 2001 (6-4); 8-for-29 as a pinch hitter in his ND career
- 1B *JOE THAMAN** (So. ... 6-4, 210 ... St. Louis, MO)
2001: .284, 25 RBI, 2 HR-1 3B-15 2B ... 10 BB/31 K ... 1-3 SB ... 61 GP/60 GS
Posted 30-game error-free streak in 2001; rated by Baseball America as best defensive 1B in BIG EAST
- SS JAVIER SANCHEZ** (So. ... 6-2, 200 ... Miami, FL)
2001: 9 GP/2 GS, 0-for-13, BB, 2 K
Also backup option at 1B; hit .354 in summer of 2001 with Delaware (OH) Cows
- or MATT EDWARDS** (Fr. ... 6-1, 180 ... Mechanicsville, VA)

2001 (HS): .460, 20 RBI, 8 HR, 36 BB

TOP RESERVES

MATT STRICKROTH (Sr., OF/1B ... 6-4, 230 ... Mission Viejo, CA)

Career: .234, 41 RBI, 8 HR (110 GP/64 GS) ... 2001: .245, 9 RBI, 4 HR (49 AB)

Hit pair of booming first-pitch home runs in 2001 win at UOP

BRENT WEISS (Fr., OF/C ... 6-1, 215 ... Cockeysville, MD)

2001 (HS): .450, 8 HR

Set career home run record at St. Paul's High School (24)

***GEOFF MILSOM** (Fr., IF ... 6-1, 195 ... New York, NY)

2001 (HS): .510, 25 RBI, 7 HR

PROBABLE STARTING ROTATION (all RHPs)

PETER OGILVIE (Jr. ... 6-3, 215 ... Buffalo Grove, IL)

2001: 5-1, 1.90 ERA (8 GP/7 GS) ... 30 K/11 BB, 44 H in 52 IP (.234 opp. avg.) ... 3 WP, 4 HB

Would have ranked 9th in nation for 2001 ERA (11 IP shy of min.); beat FIU with complete games in NCAAs (5-2)

J.P. GAGNE (Jr. ... 6-0, 200 ... Bloomington, MN)

2001: 5-5, 5.35 ERA (17 GP/13 GS) ... 47 K/21 BB, 79 H in 70.2 IP (.280 opp. avg.) ... 1 WP, 5 HB

Career: 12-6, 4.90 ERA (36 GP/36 GS) ... 91 K/46 BB, 79 H in 143.1 IP (.307 opp. avg.) ... 5 WP, 7 HB

Posted 5-game winning streaks in 2000, 2001; owns six career postseason starts (four in NCAAs)

CHRIS NIESEL (Fr. ... 5-11, 205 ... Plantation, FL/Aquinas HS)

2001 (HS): 13-0, 0.35 ERA ... 120 K/11 BB in 81 IP

1st team high school All-American (Baseball America); #11 freshman prospect (BA); prep career: 27-5, 246 Ks in 227 IP

THE BULLPEN (all RHPs)

GRANT JOHNSON (Fr. ... 6-6, 220 ... Burr Ridge, IL/Lyons Township HS)

2001 (HS): 12-1, 3 SV, 0.72 ERA ... 133 K/28 BB in 87 IP

Member of 2001 U.S. Junior National Team; career prep stats included 29-6 record, 1.53 ERA, 291 Ks in 234 IP

JOHN AXFORD (Fr. ... 5-11, 205 ... Port Dover, Ontario/Assumption College HS)

2001 (HS): 13-0, 0.35 ERA ... 120 K/11 BB in 81 IP

Member of Canada's Junior National Team; 7th-round draft pick of Seattle Mariners

MARTIN VERGARA (Fr. ... 6-0, 185 ... Paterson, NJ/DePaul Catholic HS)

2001 (HS): 10-0, 0.30 ERA ... 127 K/17 BB in 67 IP

15th-round draft pick of Cleveland Indians; #15 freshman prospect (BA); averaged 17 Ks per 9 IP as a prep senior

MATT BUCHMEIER (Sr., RHP ... 6-0, 195 ... Greenwood, IN)

2001: 1-1, 2 SV, 3.91 ERA (13 GP/5 GS) ... 28 K/12 BB, 54 H in 46 IP (.302 opp. avg.) ... 2 WP, 2 HB

Career: 5-3, 4 SV, 5.05 ERA (41 GP/89 GS) ... 73 K/37 BB, 132 H in 108.2 IP (.295 opp. avg.) ... 13 WP, 7 HB

Served as No. 3 starter and top reliever in 2001; career average of just 3.06 walks per 9 IP

MATT LAIRD (Jr., RHP ... 6-0, 195 ... Bellaire, TX)

2001: 5-1, 4 SV, 3.09 ERA (22 GP) ... 28 K/15 BB, 23 H in 32 IP (.209 opp. avg.) ... 4 WP, 6 HB

Career: 10-3, 4 SV, 3.53 (37 GP/9 GS) ... 62 K/30 BB, 78 H in 79 IP (.257 opp. avg.) ... 10 WP, 15 HB

Paul O'Toole	4-for-11	4 R, RBI	2 2B	1-2 SB, SF, K
Andrew Bushey	2-for-12	RBI, 2 R	2B	K
Matt Strickroth	0-for-5			0-1 SB, BB, K

TOURNAMENT TOUGH - Notre Dame is 54-18-1 (.747) in regular-season tournaments during the Paul Mainieri era (1995-), including a 1998 win over Florida St., wins in 2000 over Wake Forest, Georgia and Illinois (2) and the 2001 season's wins over Mississippi State (2), Fresno State and Illinois ... the Irish head into 2002 with a record of 19-3-1 in their previous 23 regular-season tournament games, dating back to a 9-7 loss to Minnesota on March 4, 2000 ... ND has not had a losing record in its last 11 regular-season tournaments (33-6-1 in those events)-since a 1-2 showing at the ACC Disney Blast early in 1998 ... the current 19-3-1 stretch in regular-season tournaments includes wins over Georgia, Illinois (3), Mississippi State (2), Florida Atlantic and Fresno State ... ND has played in 21 previous regular-season tournaments during the Mainieri era, posting an even record in 16 of them and splitting its games in two others, with only three losing records (1-2 at the 1995 Anaheim Classic, 0-3 at the 1997 Long Beach State Classic and 1-2 at the 1998 ACC Disney Blast) ... here's a look at ND's recent run in regular-season tournament play:

1998 (5-2)

ACC Disney Blast	1-2
Diamond Classic (Evansville)	3-0
Irish Baseball Classic (San Antonio)	1-0

1999 (6-1)

New Orleans Invitational	2-1
Irish Baseball Classic (San Antonio)	4-0

2000 (11-3)

Service Academies Classic (Millington and Memphis, Tenn.)	2-1
Hormel Foods Classic (Metrodome)	2-1
Kennel Clubs Classic (Jacksonville)	7-1

2001 (11-2-1)

Commerce Bank Classic (@Mississippi State)	2-1
Alamo Invitational (San Antonio)	3-0
Devil Rays Invitational (St. Petersburg)	1-1
Pepsi/Johnny Quik Classic (@Fresno St.)	5-0-1

FOR OPENERS: Notre Dame owns an all-time record of 72-33-1 in season openers, including 3-4 in the Paul Mainieri era (with wins in three straight before 2001) ... here's a rundown of the previous seven openers in the Mainieri era:

1995	10-6 loss to Texas (Anaheim Classic) ... starter Darin Schmalz
1996	12-4 loss at Georgia Tech ... starter Craig Allen
1997	10-8 loss at Long Beach State (LBSU Classic) ... starter Darin Schmalz
1998	10-1 win over Florida State (ACC Disney Blast) ... starter Alex Shilliday
1999	8-4 win over James Madison, at Florida International ... starter Alex Shilliday
2000	6-0 win over Air Force (Service Academies Classic) ... starter Scott Cavey
2001	6-7 loss to UNO (at Mississippi State Classic) ... starter Danny Tamayo

QUICK STARTERS: Senior C/3B Paul O'Toole has been ready to play in three previous season openers, hitting a combined 6-for-10 in those games vs. James Madison, Air Force and UNO ... O'Toole also has totaled six RBI in season openers and 10 total bases, with two doubles and a triple (he also was hit by a pitch, stole a base, scored four runs and hit a sac. fly) ... ND's other senior C/3B, Andrew Bushey, also owns strong career numbers in season openers (5-for-11, RBI, 4

R, 2B, 2 BB) ... senior CF Steve Stanley (0-for-11, BB) will be looking for his first career hit in an opener while junior LF Brian Stavisky (3-for-7, BB) tripled vs. AFA in 2000 and vs. UNO last season.

CAREER STATS - SEASON OPENERS

Paul O'Toole	6-for-10	6 RBI, 4 R	2 2B, 3B	SB, HP, SF
Andrew Bushey	5-for-11	RBI, 4 R	2B	2 BB, K
Brian Stavisky	3-for-7	RBI, 2 R	2 3B	BB, 2 K
Matt Strickroth	1-for-6	RBI, 3 R		BB, SB
Steve Stanley	0-for-11	RBI, R		BB, 3 K, SAC

FAR & WIDE: Notre Dame's 2002 roster includes 35 players from 21 different home states/provinces ... the top 10 position players and top three starting pitchers hail from eight different states, including five from Ohio and two from Florida, plus one each from Iowa, Pennsylvania, Washington, Missouri, Illinois and Minnesota.

ROAD TRIPPERS: Notre Dame will be playing its first 22 games away from home, in seven different cities: New Orleans; Homestead, Fla.; Round Rock and San Antonio, Texas; Storrs, Conn.; Morgantown, W.Va.; and Washington, D.C. ... the Irish then will spend virtually all of April (18 of 22 games) in the friendly confines of Eck Stadium, including the first 14 games of the month (before an April 20-21 series at Seton Hall; plus the April 30 game vs. Michigan in Grand Rapids) ... ND's 12 regular-season games in the month of May will include eight at home, plus a May 11-12 road series vs. Villanova and the May 14 game at Purdue ... all told, the Irish will play 26 of their final 34 games at Eck Stadium.

RECORD RUN: Senior CF **Steve Stanley** is one pace to set several Notre Dame career records, including the top all-time marks for hits, stolen bases and runs scored:

Category	Current Rank	Recordholder	Stanley's Pace (based on 1999-2001 average)
Hits	266	Pat Pesavento (296)	355
Stolen bases	84 (3rd)	Scott Sollmann (101)	112
Runs	179	Pat Pesavento (246)	235
At-bats	732	Alec Porzel (897)	976
Games played	188	Alec Porzel (239)	251
Games started	188	J.J. Brock (238)	251
Consec. starts	188	Pat Pesavento (204)	

THE SHIFT: Notre Dame's probable 2002 lineup includes several position switches, with junior **Brian Stavisky** shifting from RF to LF (flipping with classmate **Kris Billmaier**) while seniors **Paul O'Toole** and **Andrew Bushey** are slated to split time behind the plate (where O'Toole made 128 starts from 1999-2001) and at third base, where Bushey owns 148 career starts ... sophomore **Javier Sanchez** also has developed into a solid backup option at 1B, after playing mostly at 3B and in the middle infield during previous seasons.

WHO'S BACK, WHO'S GONE?: Notre Dame returns many of the key elements from its landmark 2001 season (49-13-1), including the top five hitters, nine of the top 10 position players and 16 total letterwinners ... the top losses include starting SS Alec Porzel and the squad's top starting pitchers, four-year All-American Aaron Heilman and fellow first team all-BIG EAST performer Danny Tamayo ... the veteran core includes five senior and two juniors among the top nine returning position players ... the ND returning offensive players combined for 91% of the team's stolen bases in 2001, plus 86% of the walks, 85% of the hits, 82% of the RBI and 81% of the home runs ... the returning Irish pitchers totaled 26 of ND's 49 wins last season while logging 49% of the innings, 30 of 63 starts, 43% of the Ks and all eight saves.

PAYBACKS: Notre Dame posted a 21-3 record during the 2001 season when facing a team that the Irish had lost to in the previous campaign (2000), with those 2001 payback games coming versus Mississippi State (2-0), Pittsburgh (2-0), Rutgers (4-0), West Virginia (2-0), Villanova (3-0), St. John's (3-0), UConn (2-1), BC (2-1) and Wisconsin-Milwaukee (12-4 win in the NCAAs), plus a 7-6 loss to Western Michigan (the only other teams that beat ND in the 46-18 season of 2000 were Ohio State, Minnesota, North Florida and Northwestern) ... the Irish will have the **chance to avenge 12 of their 13 losses** from the record-setting 2001 season, with that first payback chance coming versus the host team at the New Orleans Classic (UNO held off ND, 7-6, at the 2001 Mississippi State Classic) ... two teams - Virginia Tech and Florida International - combined to post nearly half (6) of ND's 2001 losses, with the Irish having a shot at revenge vs. FIU at the Homestead Challenge on March 2 (FIU beat ND in the 2001 NCAAs, 7-6 and 5-4) ... Virginia Tech will visit Eck Stadium for a rare Friday-night doubleheader on April 12 (ND lost a DH last season in Blacksburg, 3-2 and 9-8, while the Hokies posted two wins over the Irish at the 2001 BIG EAST Tournament (4-3, 5-2) ... ND also will have the change to avenge its only other two BIG EAST losses of the 2001 season (19-12 vs. UConn, 7-6 at BC) and also will be looking to return the favor vs. Midwestern rivals Ball State (4-3) Valparaiso (4-2) and Western Michigan (7-6) ... the only other team that beat ND in 2001 was South Florida.

HEAD COACH PAUL MAINIERI: Eighth-year ND head coach Paul Mainieri owns a 635-404-1 (.6xx) record in 19 previous college seasons ... in addition to his 303-125-1 (.710) mark at ND, Mainieri's teams were 180-121 in six seasons at St. Thomas (Fla.) and 152-158 in six seasons at Air Force ... his 304 wins rank 3rd all-time at ND, behind Pat Murphy (318, '88-'94) and Jake Kline (558, '34-'75) ... Mainieri has seen 27 of his Irish players go on to pro baseball (19 via the draft), with RHP Christian Parker being the first to reach the Majors (he earned a spot as the N.Y. Yankees No. 5 starter and made his debut vs. Toronto on April 6 at Yankee Stadium-with Mainieri and others from ND watching on) ... 15 of his players at St. Thomas went on to pro ball, including three - Joe Klink, Dane Johnson and Dan Rohrmeier - who have played in the major leagues ... Mainieri and his father Demie are the only known father-son combo in college baseball history to top 500 wins ... Demie won 1,018 in 30 years at Miami-Dade North CC.

MAINIERI'S MILESTONES: Paul Mainieri - who posted his 300th career victory at Notre Dame in the second game of the DH sweep at Boston College on May 12, 2001 - fittingly reached the 500-win milestone in ND's Feb. 27, 1999, win at his former school New Orleans (14-11) before reaching his 600th win during the 2002 season in memorable fashion: on St. Patrick's Day in the 7-6 win over Portland in the title game of Fresno State's Pepsi/Johnny Quik Classic (the Irish wore special green jerseys) ... Mainieri experienced two noteworthy homecomings in '99, making his third return with the Irish to UNO (where he played) and his third return as the ND coach to his hometown of Miami ... Mainieri coached his 800th career game on Feb. 20, 1998, at the University of Miami, after a Feb. 15 game at UNO was rained out ... he notched his 499th career win in the '99 season opener vs. James Madison, in Miami at Fla. International (Feb. 19) ... Mainieri picked up his 200th win at ND in the 7-6 win over Oakland on April 30, 1999 ... he coached his 900th college game in the opener at Georgetown on May 8, 1999, and his 1,000th last season vs. Hillsdale College (March 29, 2001).

PENCIL HIM IN, OR USE PEN: Senior Steve Stanley has started all 188 games of his ND career (all in CF) while logging all but 14 innings in CF his three seasons ... from 1999-2001 seasons, the familiar #2 has patrolled CF in 99.13% of the innings (1,592.1 of 1,606.1) - including all but two of 513 as a freshman (his classmate Paul O'Toole played the final two innings in a 20-10 loss at Northwestern on April 6, 1999) ... Stanley then played in CF for the final 267.2 innings of '99 and the first 497 of 2000-a span of 764.2 consecutive innings in CF - before being replaced by current senior Ben Cooke for the final five innings of the 8-1 NCAA loss at Mississippi St. (the Irish fell into an early 7-0 hole and Stanley reluctantly left the game due to illness) ... in 2001, he patrolled center in all but seven of 547.2 innings - with Mike Naumann inserted into CF for the final inning vs. Texas-

Pan American (a 14-9 win) while John Heintz played the position for the final four innings vs. Hillsdale (a 9-2 win) and for the final two innings of the 15-3 win over Seton Hall.

ROAD WARRIORS: Notre Dame was 24-5-1 away from home in the 2001 regular season (21-4 at Eck Stadium) ... ND's 14-3 record on the opponent's field nearly was 17-0 (with two late-inning losses at Virginia Tech, 3-2 and 9-8, and another at BC, 7-6).

MLB CONNECTIONS - Several Notre Dame graduates currently serve as top executives in Major League Baseball: Oakland A's president **Mike Crowley** ('85), Arizona Diamondbacks general manager **Joe Garagiola, Jr.** ('72), L.A. Dodgers V.P. of External Affairs **Tommy Hawkins** ('59), Tampa Bay Devil Rays GM **John McHale** ('71), Tampa Bay owner and CEO **Vince Naimoli** ('59) and MLB Director of Special Events **Brian O'Gara** ('89) ... Hawkins was a star basketball player for the Irish before playing in the NBA with the Los Angeles Lakers before serving as a broadcaster in the L.A. area.

ALL-TIME OPPONENTS: Notre Dame has faced 273 different opponents entering its 110th year of varsity baseball ... James Madison, Florida International, Missouri and Oakland were first-time opponents in 1999, followed by North Florida and Akron in 2000 and six more first-time opponents in 2001 (Florida Atlantic, New Mexico, Pacific, Sam Houston State, South Florida and UC Santa Barbara) ... the Irish could add two more first-time opponents to that list in 2002: Fairfield and Arkansas-Little Rock ... Notre Dame's most common all-time opponents include: Northwestern (130 games), Michigan State (125), Western Michigan (122), Wisconsin (118), Purdue (114) and Michigan (114) ... noteworthy teams that Notre Dame has yet to face include Oklahoma State and Texas Tech.

TOP PROSPECTS: Notre Dame junior LF **Brian Stavisky** is listed 25th on *Baseball America's* annual list of top pro prospects in college baseball ... Stavisky is the 8th position player and 2nd OF on the list, behind Stanford's Jason Cooper (12) ... ND was the only school with multiple outfielders on *BA's* list of the top 100 college prospects, with senior CF **Steve Stanley** listed 80th (he's the 34th position player and 14th OF on the list) ... only seven teams had more than two players listed among the top 80 on that list ... Notre Dame (7) also joined Stanford (10) as the schools with the most players among *Baseball America's* list of the nation's top-40 prospects by college class: Stanley (9th among seniors), C/3B **Paul O'Toole** (31st among seniors), Stavisky (25th among juniors), 2B **Steve Sollmann** (37th among sophomores), SS **Matt Macri** (2nd among freshmen) and freshman RHPs **Chris Niesel** (11th) and **Martin Vergara** (15th).

SCORING STREAKS: Notre Dame heads into 2002 riding the school record for consecutive games with at least one run scored (185) ... the Irish scored in the final 58 games of 1999 and in every game of 2000 (64) and 2001 (63), for a 185-game streak that stretches back to a 12-0 loss at Florida International on Feb. 21, 1999 ... the previous record 133-game scoring streak began with the first game of the Paul Mainieri era, a 10-6 loss to Texas at the Anaheim Classic, on Feb. 24, 1995 (the Irish were shut out by Auburn, 8-0, in the 1994 NCAA East Regional at Clemson) ... the previous record streak ended vs. another Texas team, 2-0 vs. Texas Pan-American in a seven-inning game on March 10, 1997 (at Wolff Stadium in San Antonio) ... ND has scored in 98.8 pct. of its games in the Mainieri era (426 of 431), with other shutouts at Seton Hall (16-0; 3/22/97), vs. St. John's (3-0; 5/9/98) and vs. Rutgers in the BIG EAST Tournament (12-0; 5/16/98) ... prior to the Mainieri era, the longest ND scoring streaks were: 121-games (April 23, 1930-May 26, 1937) and 103-games (May 25, 1907-May 17, 1912).

SHUTOUT STREAK: Current junior RHP **Peter Ogilvie** (vs. Cleveland State) and then-seniors **Aaron Heilman** and **Danny Tamayo** (doubleheader at Pittsburgh) equaled an 85-year-old Notre Dame team record by combining to post three consecutive shutouts (all 3-0) on March 21 and 23 of the 2001 season.

FALL SIGNEES: Notre Dame signed six high school seniors to national letters of intent in the 2001 early fall period: catcher **Cody Rizzo** (Temecula, Calif.), shortstop **Greg Lopez** (Upper Arlington, Ohio), outfielders **Craig Cooper** (Plainview, N.Y.) and **Brennan Grogan** (Tequesta, Fla.), righthanded pitcher **Ryan Doherty** (Toms River, N.J.) and third baseman **Matt Bransfield** (Englewood, Colo.), who also could pitch for the Irish ... Cooper, Doherty and Grogan have been listed among Team One Baseball's top 200 high school prospects while Cooper, Doherty and Rizzo are ranked among Baseball America's list of the nation's top prospects ... Grogan and Cooper are accomplished outfielders who should add speed to the Irish lineup while Lopez has been rated as the best infield prospect to come out of the talent-rich state of Ohio in five years (according to The Buckeye Scout) ... Rizzo is a talented all-around catcher who could make the biggest contributions as a freshman while Bransfield's versatility as a third baseman and pitcher could prove valuable to the 2002 squad ... Doherty provides an added dimension to the class, due to his 7-1, 235-pound frame that produced plenty of interest from Division I basketball programs.

TOP ASSISTANT: Notre Dame's Brian O'Connor was named the Division I national assistant baseball coach of the year for the 2001 season, as selected by the American Baseball Coaches Association and Baseball America magazine ... O'Connor-who also recently was promoted to associate head coach of the Irish-spent the previous seven seasons as Notre Dame's primary assistant coach while overseeing the Irish pitching staff and coordinating the program's highly-successful recruiting effort ... O' Connor, who pitched on Creighton's 1991 College World Series team, has tutored 13 eventual professional baseball pitchers, including 10 Major-League draft picks (two of them 1st-rounders) ... Notre Dame is one of just four schools since 1998 to produce two pitchers who have been drafted in the first round - Brad Lidge in 1998 and Aaron Heilman in 2001 - with only Notre Dame and Baylor having the same pitching coach during that span (Baylor head coach Steve Smith coaches the Bears pitching staff).

TRAVEL: Notre Dame's schedule regularly takes the baseball team to top-notch facilities and noteworthy cities. In Paul Mainieri's eight seasons, the Irish have visited: Fullerton and Long Beach, Calif.; Seattle, Wash. (Kingdome); San Antonio, Texas; four Florida cities (Miami, Orlando, Jacksonville and St. Petersburg); Atlanta, Ga.; New Orleans; Boston; Washington, D.C.; New York City; and Minneapolis, Minn. (Metrodome).

SUMMER STARS: Several Notre Dame players had noteworthy 2001 summer performances, following a 2000 summer season that saw three ND players (Steve Stanley, Paul O'Toole and Brian Stavisky) start in the Cape Cod League All-Star game while three others - Matt Buchmeier, Drew Duff and Andrew Bushey - helped the Hays Larks reach the title game of the National Baseball Congress World Series (held in Wichita, Kan.) ... Stanley was named by *Baseball America* as a 2001 summer All-American, after earning Great Lakes League MVP honors as a member of the Delaware (Ohio) Cows (.442 batting average, 23 stolen bases) .. Stavisky again was an all-star with Hyannis in the summer of 2001, as was Irish 2B Steve Sollmann with the Yarmouth-Dennis Red Sox ... righander J.P. Gagne (11-1, 1.70 ERA, 65 Ks/15 BB in 80 IP) and first baseman Joe Thaman continued ND's tradition with the Hays Larks, helping lead the Larks back to the NBC World Series championship game during the 2001 summer season.

FRESHMAN FOCUS: Notre Dame's current freshman class was ranked No. 1 in the nation by *Baseball America* ... here are some facts about Notre Dame's 2002 freshman contingent:

Top Prospects - Shortstop **Matt Macri** was listed in *Baseball America's* 2002 college preview as the No. 2 prospect among all current college freshmen, behind Vanderbilt LHP Jeremy Sowers ... freshman RHPs **Chris Niesel** (11th) and **Martin Vergara** (17th) also were on *BA's* freshman prospect list, with Notre Dame joining USC (3) as the only schools with more than two freshmen in the top 20 of that list ... Macri also has been forecasted by *BA* as the No. 4 overall prospect for the 2003 Major League draft (he will be sophomore-eligible because his 21st birthday falls in late May of 2003).

Draft Picks - Five Notre Dame freshmen were selected in the 2001 Major League draft, with most falling in the draft due to their strong commitment to attend Notre Dame ... most notably, RHP **Grant Johnson** was not drafted but was rated as a 2nd-rounder by *BA* prior to the draft ... the freshmen drafted as preps included RHPs John Axford (7th round, Seattle) and **Vergara** (15th, Cleveland), **Macri** (17th, Minnesota; was rated a 1st rounder) and RHPs **Tyler Jones** (30th, Atlanta) and **Niesel** (46th, Chicago Cubs; was expected to be drafted as high as the third round), who also was one of five pitchers nationwide named by *BA* as a first team All-American (Macri, Vergara and Johnson all were named Gatorade player of the year for their respective states).

National Teams - Three freshmen recently were top players on junior national teams ... **Macri** was one of two members of the 2000 U.S. Junior National Team that was named to the all-tournament team at the 2000 Junior Pan Am Games in Sonora, Mexico, after hitting .353 with seven RBI in nine games as a member of that bronze-medal team (9 BB, 3B, 2B, 5 SB, 12 R) ... **Johnson** helped the 2001 U.S. team post a best-ever silver-medal finish at the 2001 Pan-Am Games in Cuba, winning both of his outings versus Panama (10-1, 2 H) and Columbia (17-1, unearned run. 2 H) ... **Axford** actually crossed paths with Johnson during the summer of 2001 in Joplin, Mo., when he won a game versus the U.S. as a member of Canada's Youth National Team (he also saved a game vs. a professional rookie-level team in Florida and posted a 1-1 record while competing with Team Canada in the Dominican Republic, vs. teams from the Dominican Summer League).

Multi-Sport Stars - Three freshmen - **Macri** (Iowa player-of-the-year and state champs), **Vergara** (all-state in New Jersey) and C **Jay Molina** (all-conference in Illinois) - each were accomplished high school quarterbacks while **Johnson** was one of the top players on the Lyons Township High School basketball team that made an impressive run to the quarterfinal round of the 2001 Illinois state tournament.

Bloodlines - Thirteen Notre Dame players - nine of them freshmen - have parents who were college athletes ... three have fathers who played college baseball: LHP **Scott Bickford**'s father Mark (Salisbury St.), IF/OF **Matt Edwards**' father Norm (catcher at Stetson) and **Niesel**'s father Rudy (Spring Hill), while **Johnson**'s father Gary played football and basketball at Kansas ... not to be outdone are the mothers of **Macri** (Audrey Macri; cheerleading, Wartburg) and C **Mike Milligan** (Tish Kierl Milligan; basketball/volleyball/tennis, Marymount) ... **Macri**'s father Mike also played football at Simpson College while Doug **Jones** (father of Tyler) played golf at Stephen F. Austin, freshman IF **Geoff Milsom**'s father Jeff was on the rowing team at the University of Pennsylvania and OF/C **Brent Weiss**'s father Paul was an All-American lacrosse player at Johns Hopkins ... two of the freshmen also have brothers who have played college baseball: **Jones**' brother David at Texas Wesleyan and **Molina**'s brother Anthony at Evansville, while OF **George Howard**'s sister Jennifer is a softball player at Arkansas-Pine Bluff ... Jones joined sophomore 2B Steve Sollmann as the only current ND players with a parent and a sibling who have played college sports.

Big Shadows - Notre Dame's 2002 roster includes some big bodies, with the freshman class more than doing its share, led by RHPs **Johnson** (6-6, 220), **Axford** (6-5, 175) and **Jones** (6-4, 205) and LHP **Bickford** (6-4, 160).