

NOTRE DAME BASEBALL GAMEDAY NOTES

at West Virginia (Saturday, March 27, 2004 ... 1:00 p.m. doubleheader)

The Notre Dame baseball team (14-3) – ranked as high as sixth in this week’s national polls (per *Collegiate Baseball* magazine) – heads on the road for the sixth straight weekend by opening BIG EAST Conference play at West Virginia on Saturday, March 27 (1:00 p.m. doubleheader) and Sunday the 28th (1:00) ... the Irish are coming off a 16-6 win over Detroit, after totaling just 24 runs in the previous six games ... ND’s planned pitching rotation is junior RHP **Chris Niesel**, sophomore LHP **Tom Thornton** (already a two-time BIG EAST pitcher of the week in '04) and junior RHP **Grant Johnson**, who is being eased back to regular duty after 2003 shoulder surgery ... WVU is expected to counter with junior LHP Zac Cline, junior RHP Shawn Miller and freshman RHP Travis McGrath ... Niesel will look to get back on the winning track after losing last week at Southern Illinois (8-4), ending his streak of 10 consecutive winning decisions while dropping his career record with the Irish to 16-2 ... Niesel nearly no-hit West Virginia in the 2003 series opener, a 1-0 pitcher’s duel vs. Miller (ND took the narrow win) ... ND leads the series 25-13 (9-5 at WVU) but WVU won 2-of-3 at Eck Stadium last season (0-1, 7-5, 5-1) before the Irish beat the Mountaineers to open the '04 BIG EAST Tournament (9-1) ... ND’s team stats include a .313 team batting avg., 14 home runs, 128 runs scored, a 4.30 staff ERA and just 13 errors (.977 fielding pct.) while WVU is batting .303 with 13 HRs and 91 R, plus a 6.49 ERA and .957 fielding (25 Es) ... ND has scored in 101 straight games and has been shut out just once in the last 331 games ... see www.msnsportsnet.com for in-depth information on the Mountaineers.

CHRIS NIESEL’S 2004 APPEARANCES (relief vs. UTSA)

Date	Opponent (dec.)	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K
2/20	San Diego State, @USC (W)	5.2	3	1	1	1	9
2/27	Winthrop, @FAU (W)	7.0	8	1	1	2	5
3/6	Southern Illinois, @S.A. (-)	3.0	6	5	5	1	0
3/9	Texas-San Antonio, @S.A. (-)	1.0	2	0	0	0	1
3/12	Arizona, @ Round Rock (W)	7.0	10	2	2	1	6
3/20	at Southern Illinois (L)	5.0	7	6	6	2	3
(3-1, 2.87 ERA, .212 opp. avg.)		31.1	24	13	10	9	24

TOM THORNTON’S 2004 APPEARANCES (relief vs. SIU)

Date	Opponent (dec.)	IP	H	R	ER	BB	K
2/21	at Southern California (W)	6.0	4	1	0	2	4
2/28	at Florida Atlantic (-)	7.0	6	2	2	0	7
3/7	Texas-San Antonio (L)	4.1	8	8	6	3	2
3/13	Texas Tech (W)	8.0	1	0	0	3	7
3/21	Southern Illinois (W)	6.0	5	2	2	1	4
(3-1, 4.71 ERA, .324 opp. avg.)		28.2	36	15	15	7	24

RADIO, LIVE-STATS & HOTLINE – All of Notre Dame's 2004 regular-season and postseason games again will be broadcast by South Bend-based ESPN Radio 1580 AM (WDND, which recently switched from 1620, and its sister station WNDV 1490) ... the broadcasts are available via the internet at www.und.com (College Sports Pass subscription required) ... www.und.com also provides links to GameTracker Ivestats on the website's main page, for all home games and – as a bonus offering – at select road games ... WVU originally had intended to provide non-GameTracker livestats but will be unable to do so for the ND series ... call the ND Sports Hotline at 574-631-3000 for schedule and result information for all varsity sports currently in season (from the main menu, select "4" and then select "1" for baseball information).

FAR & WIDE – The 11 players listed below as potential starters include three California natives and two each from Florida and Ohio, plus one each from Virginia, Iowa, New York and Colorado.

NOTRE DAME PROBABLE STARTING LINEUP (* indicates lefthander hitter, ** switch hitter)

2B – #3 Steve Sollmann (Sr.; 5-11/195; Cincinnati, OH/St. Xavier HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
01	.362	61-61	221	52	80	9	2	5	36		.489	30	4	29		.440	4	6	23-34	21
02	.362	59-57	213	53	77	8	4	2	47		.465	22	3	18		.420	5	6	6-6	8
03	.384	61-61	255	67	98	16	5	4	40		.533	25	1	23		.438	2	4	38-48	8-.974
04	.227	16-16	66	18	15	1	0	1	9	19	.288	9	6	9	2	.370	0	0	3-3	0-1.000
Tot.	.358	197-195	755	190	270	17	11	12	132			86	14	79			11	16	70-91	37

* **ND Record Book** – ranks 10th in career batting avg. (.358), 4th in fielding assists (545), 5th in stolen bases (70), 6th in hits (270), 8th in runs (190) and 9th in at-bats (755) ... next up on those lists are Alec Porzel's 562 assists, Greg Layson's 80 SBs, J.J. Brock's 272 hits (then Porzel's 279), Paul O'Toole's 191 runs (then Amrhein's 195) and Andrew Bushey's 777 ABs.

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads 2004 team in stolen bases (3), runs (18; also 6th among BIG EAST ., players) and hit-by-pitch (6) while ranking 2nd in starts (16), 3rd in runners advanced (6), 4th in walks (9) and RBI (8) ... collected first extra-base hit of 2004 vs. Texas Tech (2B).

* **Trends** – Has collected his in 5 of last 6 games.

* **Second-to-None** – rated BIG EAST's best defensive 2B for '04, per Baseball America (was a prep CF) ... has averaged 5.3 games per error in his career, including just 16 total errors in the last three seasons (8.5 games per E) ... has not made an error in his last 22 games with the Irish (spanning 115 fielding chances) while totaling 69 error-free games in the last two seasons (77 GP).

* **Honors** – Preseason 1st Team All-American/BE Player of Year ... 2003 All-American/Academic All-American (3.38 GPA, mark. major)

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. San Diego State (2-4, 2 R, 2 BB, SB), Minnesota (2-4, RBI, R, BB, HBP), Penn State in S.A. (2-5, 2 RBI, R), UTSA in title game (2-6, 3 RBI, R), SIU gm 3 (1-3, HR, 2 R, HBP, BB)

CF – #6 DANNY DRESSMAN* (Fr.; 5-9/175; San Jose, CA/Archbishop Mitty HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
04	.281	15-15	57	9	16	4	0	0	9	20	.351	8	0	10	0	.358	2	4	1-3	0-1.000

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads '04 team in sac. bunts (4) and runners advanced (13) while ranking 2nd in doubles (4), 4th in RBI (9) and 5th in hits (16), walks (8), total bases (20), 2-out batting (.333) and 2-out RBI (5) ... also has advanced baserunners 58.1% (4th-best on team).

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Winthrop (2-4, RBI, 2 R, SAC), SIU in S.A. (2-6, 2 RBI, 2B), Detroit (2-2, BB, R)

* **Trends** – Has collected his in 7 of last 8 games.

* **Senior Season at Mitty HS** ('03): .402, 8 HR, 40 RBI, 15-15 SB, 21 BB

* One of three **California natives** in 2004 opening-day lineup (also Cody Rizzo, Steve Andres) ... **parents** Chuck and Diane (former ND tennis player) are Notre Dame graduates

1B – #14 Matt Edwards (Jr.; 6-2/195; Mechanicsville, VA/Lee-Davis HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
02	.290	9-8	31	3	9	1	0	0	4		.323	3	1	6		.371	1	0	1-1	6-.806
03	.376	62-62	229	40	86	16	2	8	69		.568	25	4	39		.439	4	0	2-5	9-.973
04	.323	17-16	62	14	20	4	0	4	17	36	.581	12	3	10	2	.449	1	0	0-0	1-.993
Tot.	.357	87-86	322	57	115	21	2	12	90			40	8	49			5	0	3-6	16

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads '04 team in home runs (4), walks (12), games played (17) and 2-out RBI (9), also ranking 2nd in RBI (17), slugging pct. (.581), doubles (4), total bases (36) and starts (16) plus 3rd in batting with runners on (.412), pct. of baserunners advanced (.605) and hits (20), 4th in on-base pct. (.449), runs (14), 2-out batting (.357) and leadoff on-base (.429) .

* **BIG EAST Ranks** – leads conference in home runs (4), also 3rd in slugging (.629), 4th in walks (12) and 9th in total bases (36) and on-base (.500).

* **Trends** – Looking to break out of 0-for-16 slump, spanning last 4 GP.

* **ND Record Book** – his .357 career batting avg. would rank 11th in ND history

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. San Diego State (3-for-5, 4 RBI, R, HR, 2B), Winthrop (3-for-4, 2 RBI, 2 R, 2B, BB), Florida Atlantic (2-for-4, 2 RBI, 2 R, game-tying and go-ahead HRs), UTSA first game (3-for-4, 4 RBI, 2 R, HR, 2B, SF) and Texas Tech (3-for-4, R, 2B, BB)

* Named **Tournament MVP** at Florida Atlantic Classic (.417, 5-for-12, 2 BB, HBP, 4 RBI, 5 R, 2 HR, 2B) and Alamo City Irish Baseball Classic (.438, 7-for-16, 4 BB, 7 RBI, 4 R, HR, 2B) ... first Mainieri-era player to homer in his first AB of season opener ('04 vs. SDSU)

* **2003 Honors:** 1st team all-BIG EAST, ABCA 2nd team all-region

* Returned in 2003 after suffering **broken leg** early in '02 (at Round Rock); prep SS, played 3B and 1B in '03

C – #15 Javi Sanchez (Sr.; 6-3/205; Miami, FL/Columbus HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
01	.000	9-2	13	0	0	0	0	0	0		.000	1	0	2		.071	0	0	0-0	
02	.281	66-65	231	50	65	7	3	5	29		.403	24	5	32		.360	1	8	1-1	28-.902
03	.303	58-57	201	42	61	13	1	1	26		.393	26	7	16		.384	1	5	6-8	8-.982
04	.315	15-15	54	10	17	4	0	1	9	24	.444	8	4	8	1	.433	1	1	0-0	2-.978
Tot.	.287	148-139	499	102	143	24	4	7	64			53	16	58			3	14	7-9	

- * **'04 Team Ranks** – leads team in 2-out batting (.474) while ranking 2nd in batting with runners in scoring pos. (.444) and doubles (4), 4th in total bases (24), hits (17), RBI (9) and hit-by-pitch (4), 5th in walks (8).
- * **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Winthrop (3-5, 2 RBI, 2 R, 2B), Southern Illinois in S.A. (4-6, 2 R, 2B) and UTSA first game (2-4, 2 RBI, R, 2B, HBP), SIU gm 3 (2-for-3, 2 HBP, RBI)
- * **All-Tournament** selection at the 2004 Florida Atlantic Classic (.417, 5-for-12, 4 RBI, 3 R, HR, 2B) and the Alamo City Irish Baseball Classic (.412, 7-for-17, 3 BB, HBP, 3 RBI, 4 R, 3 2B)
- * **Road Warrior** – owns .313 career batting avg. away from home (.245 at Eck Stadium) ... six of his seven home runs with the Irish have come away from home (including the last five)
- * **Prep 2B** who started at **SS for 2002 CWS team**; converted to another new position of catcher in 2003
- * 2003 **BIG EAST Tournament MVP** (8-for-11, 4 BB, 4 SAC, 6 RBI, 5 R), NCAA **Regional all-tournament** pick (6-for-15, 2 RBI, 4 R)
- * Serves as 2004 team **tri-captain** along with senior 2B Steve Sollmann and junior RHP Chris Niesel

RF – #17 Cody Rizzo (So.; 6-1/200; Temecula, CA/Chaparral HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
03	.314	58-56	191	53	60	11	1	4	38		.445	11	28	33	0	.425	3	1	1-2	4-.968
04	.333	10-10	36	11	12	0	0	0	5	12	.333	0	6	4	0	.419	1	0	1-1	1-.964
Tot.	.317	68-66	227	64	72	11	1	4	43			11	34	37	0		4	0	2-3	5

- * **2004 Team Ranks** – leads '04 team in hit-by-pitch (6) while ranking 3rd in leadoff on-base pct. (.500) and batting with runners in scoring position (.444), 4th in overall batting avg. (.333) and 5th in runs (11).
- * **Top '04 Games** – vs. USC (2-for-3, 2 R), Minn. (1-for-5, HBP, 3 R), SIU (2-for-5, HBP, 2 RBI, 2 R), UTSA gm-2 (2-for-3, HBP, 3 R)
- * Missed six games with **wrist injury** (ND was 4-2) before returning in last game, vs. Detroit
- * **HBP MVP** – Set Notre Dame record with 28 HBP in '03 (7th in NCAA record book) ... his 34 career HBP already are 4th in the ND record book and just four shy of Craig DeSensi's record total ('92-'95)
- * **Prep soccer/baseball two-sport star**; hit 8 HRs in 2003 fall ball ... high school catcher who has developed into stellar defensive OF

DH/LF – #36 STEVE ANDRES* (So.; 5-10/190; Napa, CA/Justin Siena HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
03	.269	43-29	104	26	28	2	2	4	22		.442	19	9	27		.415	3	0	2-3	1-.968
04	.333	14-10	33	10	11	2	0	2	7	19	.576	10	3	9	0	.511	1	0	1-3	1-.667
Tot.	.285	57-39	137	36	39	4	2	6	29			29	12	36			4	0	3-6	2

- * **2004 Team Ranks** – leads team in overall on-base pct. (.511) and leadoff OB (.571) while ranking 2nd in walks (10) and 4th in home runs (2).
- * **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Winthrop (1-3, RBI, 2 R, HR, BB), SIU in S.A. (3-for-3, RBI, 2B), UTSA first game (2-5, 2 RBI, R, HR)
- * **Trends** – Batting just 1-for-7 in ND's last 6 games.
- * **All-Tournament** selection at Alamo City Irish Baseball Classic (.462, 6-for-13, BB, 4 RBI, 3 R, HR, 2B)
- * **Academic All-America** candidate (3.40 GPA, business major)
- * Has hits in 8 of his last 13 **pinch-hit** ABs with the Irish (8-for-19 career), including 4-for-8 in 2004 (rest of '04 team is 0-for-10) ... was 4-for-11 as a 2003 pinch-hitter (ended freshman season 4-for-5 in pinch-hit ABs)
- * **4th-generation** ND student (great-grandfather William Andres played for ND)

or DH – #12 Matt Bransfield (So.; 6-1/200; Englewood, CO/Cherry Creek HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
03	.310	33-17	71	13	22	3	0	0	10		.352	3	3	19		.354	2	1	0-0	0-1.000
04	.290	13-9	31	4	9	0	0	3	9	18	.581	4	2	4	1	.405	0	0	0-0	0-1.000
Tot.	.304	46-26	102	17	31	3	0	3	19		.581	7	5	23			2	1	0-0	0-1.000

- * **2004 Team Ranks** – ranks 2nd on team in home runs (3) and slugging (.581), 4th in RBI (9).
- * **Top 2004 Games** – vs. USC (2-for-3), Florida Memorial (1-for-5, 2 RBI, R) ... has homered in 3 of last 4 games: 8-4 loss at SIU (2-3, HBP), vs. CMU and Detroit (2-3, 3 RBI, BB)
- * **Trends** – Batting 6-for-10 in last 4 games (3 HRs).
- * **Academic All-America candidate** (3.34 GPA, College of Arts & Letters)
- * Hit .383 with 12 HR in **summer '03** with wood-bat Colorado Sox

3B – #5 Matt Macri (Jr.; 6-2/190; Clive, IA/Dowling HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
02	.206	17-16	68	10	14	3	0	1	13		.294	7	0	24		.273	2	0	1-2	
03	.294	60-60	214	41	63	15	5	4	35		.467	26	6	47		.386	0	7	6-9	19-.933
04	.349	16-16	63	18	22	4	1	3	22	37	.587	10	1	13	0	.440	1	0	1-2	4-.918
Tot.	.290	93-92	345	69	99	22	6	8	70			43	7	84			3	7	8-13	23

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads team with 22 RBI (2nd BIG EAST), .587 slugging pct., 18 runs (7th BIG EAST), 37 total bases and has hit one of ND's two triples of the season, also ranking 2nd in home runs (3; 7th BIG EAST), hits (22), doubles (4), walks (10), starts (16) and leadoff OB (.500), 3rd in batting avg. (.349) and 4th in batting with runners on (.381).

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Minn. (4-for-6, 6 RBI, 5 R, 2-run, opp.-field HR, 3-run 3B), SIU in S.A. (3-6, RBI, 3 R), Penn St. in R.R. (3-4, 3 RBI), SIU gm (1-4, HR), 2 Detroit (1-3, 3 BB, 3 RBI, 3 R, HR)

* Named **All-Tournament** at Florida Atlantic Classic (.385, 5-for-13, 7 RBI, 7 R, HR, 3B, 2 BB) and Alamo City Irish Baseball Classic (.400, 6-for-15, BB, 3 RBI, 6 R, 2 2B)

* Big day vs. **Minnesota** included career-high in hits (4) while 6 RBI and 5 R were one shy of tying ND records ... one of eight ND players known to have scored 5-plus runs in game and just the 3rd in ND record book since 1901 (Pat Pesavento had 5 runs vs. Penn in '89, Brant Ust 5 vs. at Seton Hall in '98, Steve Sollmann tied 102-year-old ND record with 6 R vs. South Ala. in '02 NCAAs)

* Already has **15 error-free** games in '04, including no errors in both first 7 games and last 7 games (he totaled 45 error-free games at Irish SS in '03)

* Rated nation's **#41 prospect** among 2004 college juniors, per *Baseball America* (4th infielder on that list)

* Returned in 2003 after early-season **elbow injury** in 2002 freshman season

* Summer 2003: hit **7 HRs** as 3B in wood-bat **Cape Cod League**, with Brewster Whitecaps

* One of several **top prep QBs** on 2004 ND team (also Matt Bransfield, Steve Andres, Mike Dury)

SS – #4 Greg Lopez (So.; 6-0/185; Upper Arlington, OH/Upper Arlington HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
03	.250	50-40	132	17	33	1	0	0	26		.258	4	4	22		.289	2	8	1-5	8-.917
04	.393	17-17	61	16	24	5	0	2	17	35	.574	4	6	10	1	.466	2	2	1-1	5-.939
Tot.	.295	67-57	193	33	57	6	0	2	43			8	10	32			4	10	1-6	13

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads '04 team in hits (24), doubles (5), hit-by-pitch (6) and starts (17) while ranking 2nd in batting (.393), RBI (17), on-base pct. (.466), batting with runners on (.432), 2-out batting (.364) and 2-out RBI (7), 3rd in runs (16) and total bases (35), 4th in home runs (2) and batting with runners in scoring pos. (.400), and 5th in slugging (.574)

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Winthrop (4-6, 6 RBI, 2 R, HR, 2B), Southern Illinois (2-5, 2 RBI, R), Penn State in S.A. (2-4, RBI, R), Texas Tech (1-2, 2 R, HBP, SAC), loss at SIU (1-3, HR, HBP), SIU gm 3 (3-5, 2B) and Central Michigan (2-4, 2B)

* **Trends** – Has collected his in 11 of last 12 games, including 6-for-12 in last 3 GP.

* Named to Florida Atlantic Classic **All-Tournament** Team (.357, 5-for-14, 8 RBI, 2 R, HR, 2B)

* Already has posted 14 **error-free** games in 2004, with no errors in last 8 of last 9 games

LF – #13 BRENNAN GROGAN* (So.; 6-2/175; Tequesta, FL/The Benjamin School)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
04	.299	56-50	184	43	55	3	5	0	25		.370	17	2	14		.363	1	12	15-21	1-.985
04	.300	10-6	30	5	9	1	1	1	7	15	.500	3	0	2	0	.364	0	2	1-1	1-.900
Tot.	.299	66-56	214	48	64	4	6	1	32			20	2	16			1	14	16-22	2

* **2004 Team Ranks** – leads '04 team in pct. of baserunners advanced (.652) while ranking 2nd in 2-out batting average (.429), sacrifice bunts (2) and runners advanced (8)

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Florida Memorial (2-for-5, 2 RBI, 2 R, HR, 2B) and Minnesota (4-for-5, 2 RBI, 2 R, BB, SB)

* **Trends** – Batting 2-for-15 in ND's last 11 GP.

* One of Notre Dame's 13 Florida natives in Paul Mainieri era, including four on 2004 team (also senior C Javi Sanchez, junior RHP Chris Niesel, freshman LHP Matt Whittington)

or LF #9 Craig Cooper (So.; 6-2/205; Plainview, NY/Chaminade HS)

YR	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	E-FLD
03	.303	46-31	122	22	37	6	2	0	15		.385	15	4	23		.397	0	2	10-13	1-.970
04	.256	15-10	43	7	11	4	0	0	8	15	.349	4	0	5	0	.313	1	2	2-4	0-1.000
Tot.	.291	61-41	165	29	48	10	2	0	23			19	4	28			1	4	12-17	1

* **2004 Team Ranks** – ranks 2nd on team in doubles (4), plus 2nd in stolen bases (2) and sac. bunts (2)

* **Top 2004 Games** – vs. Florida Memorial (2-for-4, 2 RBI, BB) ant UTSA in title game (2-for-5, 3 RBI, R, 2B)

* **Trends** – Batting 2-for-19 in ND's last 7 GP.

* **Summer 2003** (Hays Larks): hit .337 with 24 SB, 38 RBI, 5 HR, 5 3B