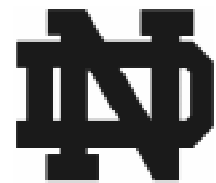


2001 Notre Dame Softball



University of Notre Dame Sports Information • February 12, 2001 • Contact: Alan Wasielewski, 219-631-7516, Fax: 219-631-7941

2001 Schedule			
February			
<i>16-18 Fri.-Sun. at Holiday Inn Invitational (Tampa, Fla.)</i>			
16	Fri.	vs. Maryland	11:00 a.m.
16	Fri.	vs. South Florida	6:00 p.m.
17	Sat.	vs. #4 Washington	10:00 a.m.
17	Sat.	vs. Hofstra	12:00 p.m.
18	Sun.	vs. #18 S.Carolina	12:00 p.m.
<i>23-25 Fri.-Sun. at Lady Razorback Invitational (Fayetteville, Ark.)</i>			
23	Fri.	vs. Texas Tech	11:00 a.m.
24	Sat.	vs. Arkansas	4:00 p.m.
25	Sun.	vs. Maine	9:00 a.m.
March			
<i>2-4 Fri.-Sun. at Frost Tournament (Chattanooga, Tenn.)</i>			
2	Fri.	vs. Jacksonville St.	2:00 p.m.
2	Fri.	vs. Tenn.-Chatt.	6:00 p.m.
3	Sat.	vs. Alabama-Birm.	2:00 p.m.
3	Sat.	vs. Tenn.-Chatt.	6:00 p.m.
4	Sun.	vs. Alabama-Birm.	10:00 a.m.
4	Sun.	vs. Jacksonville St.	12:00 p.m.
11	Sun.	at Cal St. North (Northridge, Calif.)	12:00 p.m.
13	Tues.	at #22 Long Beach St. (Long Beach, Calif.)	5:00 p.m.
<i>15-16 Th.-Fri. Kia Klasic First Round (Fullerton, Calif.)</i>			
15	Thurs.	vs. Utah State	9:00 a.m.
15	Thurs.	vs. Fresno State	1:00 p.m.
16	Fri.	vs. #2 Oklahoma	11:00 a.m.
<i>16-18 Fri.-Sun. Kia Klasic Championship play</i>			
27	Tues.	Western Michigan	4:00 p.m.
28	Wed.	Valparaiso	4:00 p.m.
31	Sat.	*St. John's	11:00 a.m.
April			
1	Sun.	*Seton Hall	11:00 a.m.
3	Tues.	at Purdue	2:00 p.m.
7	Sat.	*at Connecticut	12:00 p.m.
8	Sun.	*at Syracuse	11:00 a.m.
11	Wed.	Bowling Green	3:30 p.m.
12	Thurs.	Loyola (Chicago)	4:00 p.m.
14	Sat.	*Pittsburgh	11:00 a.m.
17	Tues.	at Indiana State	2:00 p.m.
19	Thurs.	at #10 DePaul	4:30 p.m.
21	Sat.	*at Virginia Tech	11:00 a.m.
24	Tues.	at Illinois-Chicago	5:30 p.m.
25	Wed.	Toledo	4:00 p.m.
28	Sat.	*Boston College	11:00 a.m.
29	Sun.	*Providence	11:00 a.m.
May			
4	Fri.	*at Villanova	12:00 p.m.
5	Sat.	*at Rutgers	10:30 a.m.
10-12	Th.-Sat.	BIG EAST Championship	
17-20	Th.-Sat.	NCAA Regionals	
24-28	Th.-Mon.	College World Series	

All home games (indicated in bold) played at Ivy Field.

* - indicates BIG EAST Conference game

Who: Notre Dame, Maryland, South Florida, Washington, Hofstra and South Carolina.

What: The 2001 Holiday Inn Invitational

Where: Tampa, Fla., University of South Florida Softball Field

When: Friday, Feb. 16 - Sunday, Feb. 18, 2001

#19 Notre Dame vs. Maryland, Friday, Feb. 16, 11:00 a.m.

#19 Notre Dame vs. South Florida, Friday, Feb. 16, 6:00 p.m.

#19 Notre Dame vs. #4 Washington, Saturday, Feb. 17, 10:00 a.m.

#19 Notre Dame vs. Hofstra, Saturday, Feb. 17, 12:00 p.m.

#19 Notre Dame vs. #18 South Carolina, Feb. 18, 12:00 p.m.

First pitch of the 2001 season will take place in Tampa, Fla.: The 19th-ranked Notre Dame softball team will begin the 2001 season this weekend, taking part in the Holiday Inn Invitational on the campus of the University of South Florida, Feb. 16-18.

The Irish will face a highly-competitive field, with #4 Washington and #18 South Carolina in the tournament. Hofstra and South Florida also have received votes in the preseason USA Today/NFCA Top 25.

Notre Dame posted a 17-7 (.708) record in five in-season tournaments last season, including capturing the 2000 State Line Classic tournament title with victories over Kentucky and Tennessee and two wins over new 2001 BIG EAST conference member Virginia Tech.

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

The 2001 BIG EAST Coaches Preseason Poll:

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

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

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

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

Alkire finished the 2000 season with 13 home

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Miller enters 26th season: Notre Dame head coach Liz Miller, entering her ninth season with the Irish, is entering her 26th season as a collegiate head coach. She boasts a 864-291 (.748) record over the last 25 years, 17 of which she coached at Lake Michigan College before heading to the Golden Dome in 1993.

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

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

2001 Notre Dame Softball Roster

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

* - indicates monograms won

(C) - indicates 2001 team captains

Head Coach: Liz Miller (Western Michigan, '69), 323-149 (.684) record at Notre Dame (Eight years)

Associate Head Coach: Deanna Gumpf (Nebraska '92)

Assistant Coach: Traci Conrad (Michigan '99)

Volunteer Assistant Coach: John Gumpf (Cal St. San Bernardino '97)

Trainer: Chantal Porter (Iowa State '94)

Team Managers: Maureen Guilfoyle, Sean Coary

Pronunciation Guide

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

Notre Dame Softball Quick Facts

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

nation's top five each year.

Miller currently ranks 16th on the NCAA winningest active coaches list with a 323-149 (.684) record at Notre Dame.

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

Her 64 RBI ranked fifth in the nation in 2000, while her 13 round trippers was ranked 34th.

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

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

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

Veterans and underclassmen mix: Even though the Irish return all nine starters from the 2000 team, Notre Dame boasts both young talent and veteran leaders throughout the lineup. Lizzy Lemire and Danielle Klayman have started together in the outfield all three years, while junior Jenny Kriech has been part of the combination over the last two sea-

sons.

The Irish infield, anchored by the veteran battery of junior catcher Jarrah Myers and senior pitcher Jenn Sharron, has youth on the corners as sophomores Andria Bledsoe (third base) and Andrea Loman (first base) started all 61 games as freshmen last season. Up the middle, the Irish have a veteran at short (Alkire) and a sophomore at second base (Alexis Madrid).

A look at the Terrapins: Notre Dame will face Maryland in the first game of the 2001 schedule Friday, Feb. 16, at 11:00 a.m. This will be just the



second meeting between the two teams, the first taking place in 1999. Notre Dame won the '99 meeting in eight innings 6-0. Irish junior catcher Jarrah Myers finished off a six-run eighth inning for the Irish with a grand slam home run. Jenn Sharron picked up the win, pitching a complete game and striking out 10.

Maryland was 27-28 last season and posted a 3-5 (third place) record in the Atlantic Coast Conference. Head coach Gina LaMandre (Trenton State '86) is in her sixth season in College Park. The Terrapins are led by junior catcher Beth Radford, who hit .303 with 35 RBI and 8 home runs last season. Radford was named to the all-ACC and all-mid atlantic regional team last season.

A look at the Bulls: Notre Dame will take on the South Florida Bulls Friday, Feb. 16, at 6:00 p.m., on South Florida's home field. It will be the second game of the day for the Irish, who will have previously faced Maryland at 11:00 a.m.



Notre Dame and South Florida will be meeting for the fifth time, with the Bulls hold a 3-1 advantage in the series. The last meeting occurred in 1999, the first game of the season for Notre Dame. South Florida entered the contest ranked sixth in the nation, but Notre Dame managed a 2-0 upset victory

2000 BIG EAST Final Standings

Team	2000 BIG EAST record	Overall
1. Notre Dame	14-2	47-14
2. Connecticut	12-4	37-17
3. Villanova	9-7	36-17
4. Boston College	9-7	20-25
5. St. John's	8-8	26-24
6. Seton Hall	7-9	25-18-1
7. Rutgers	6-8	24-16-1
8. Pittsburgh	4-12	21-28
9. Providence	3-13	21-28

BIG EAST Schedule and Results

Feb. 9

!Syracuse 7, Northern Illinois 3

!Syracuse 0, Auburn 7

Feb. 10

!Syracuse 0, Ohio State 3

!Syracuse 1, Purdue 2

Feb. 11

!Syracuse 1, Ohio State 2

Feb. 16

*St. John's vs. Eastern Kentucky, 12 p.m.

#Virginia Tech vs. Louisiana-Monroe, 3 p.m.

*St. John's vs. East Carolina, 4 p.m.

#Virginia Tech vs. Tennessee State, 5 p.m.

+Boston College vs. College of Charleston, 6 p.m.

Feb. 17

#Virginia Tech vs. Southern Mississippi, 10 a.m.

*St. John's vs. George Mason, 12 p.m.

#Virginia Tech vs. Georgia Tech, 2 p.m.

+Boston College vs. Florida State, 2 p.m.

+Boston College vs. Kent, 6 p.m.

Feb. 18

#Virginia Tech in elimination play

+Boston College in elimination play

! - Tiger Invitational (Auburn, Ala.)

* - Triangle Classic Tournament (Raleigh, NC)

- Mardi Gras Tournament (Monroe, La.)

+ - Sunshine State Tournament (Tallahassee, Fla.)

USA Today/NFCA Top 25 (as of Jan. 24, 2001)

School	2000 Record	Points	LY
1. UCLA	46-12-1	655	2
2. Oklahoma	66-8	542	1
3. Arizona	59-9	632	3
4. Washington	61-9	541	5
5. Alabama	66-14	535	6
6. Arizona State	43-20	523	10
7. California	49-25	484	7
8. LSU	59-13	465	9
9. Fresno State	54-14	455	10
10. DePaul	40-22	412	8
11. Michigan	45-16-1	362	13
12. Nebraska	52-21	353	14
13. Iowa	46-15	301	15
14. Cal St. Fullerton	45-15	295	19
15. Stanford	45-18	270	18
16. Oregon State	40-21-1	261	12
17. Florida State	51-27	210	17
18. South Carolina	40-28	169	22
19. NOTRE DAME	47-14	157	24
20. Oregon	35-29	145	16
21. S. Mississippi	63-13	137	4
22. Long Beach St.	39-23	125	NR
23. Mississippi St.	44-27	108	21
24. Texas	30-27-1	94	NR
25. Utah	42-23	67	20

Others receiving votes: Florida Atlantic (56), **Illinois-Chicago** (35), **Hofstra** (32), Massachusetts (32), Oklahoma State (31), Louisiana-Lafayette (27), Florida (23), Texas A&M (23), Penn State (21), Central Michigan (20), **Cal State Northridge** (16), Hawaii (13), New Mexico (10), Wisconsin (8), North Carolina (7), Northwestern (6), **Virginia Tech** (6), **South Florida** (2).

Bold indicates 2001 Notre Dame opponents.
LY - ranking at the end of the 2000 season

Notre Dame Sports Information

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

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

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

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

behind junior catcher Jarrah Myers' first career home run.

Last season, USF went 41-33 (11-7 in Conference USA). Head coach Ken Erickson (South Florida, '84) welcomes back three right handed pitchers from last season (Jamie Peterka, Jessi Kowal and Jaimi Anderson) and outfielder Nikki Phillips (.313, 9 RBI in 2000).

A look at the Huskies: The University of Washington Huskies and the Irish will meet Saturday, Feb. 17, at 10:00 a.m. The Huskies enter the weekend



ranked fourth in the country after posting a 62-9 record in 2000 and advancing to the College World Series (eventually tying for fifth place). The Huskies finished

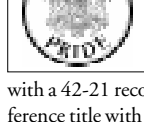
the 2000 season ranked fifth in the country and return four starters from last year's team.

This will be the second meeting between Notre Dame and Washington. The Huskies lead the series 1-0 after a 7-1 victory on March 2, 1996.

Washington's top returnees include catcher Jenny Topping (.438 avg., 24 HR, 90 RBI in 2000) and RHP Jennifer Spediacci (34-5, 0.67 ERA in 2000).

Head coach Teresa Wilson (Missouri, '84) is entering her ninth year with the Huskies and was named the Pac-10 Co-Coach-of-the-Year in 2000.

A look at the Flying Dutchwomen: The Hofstra Flying Dutchwomen and the Irish are meeting for the first time on Saturday, Feb. 17, at 12:00 p.m. It



will be the fourth game in two days for both teams.

Hofstra, coached by Bill Edwards (Northern Michigan, '67), finished the 2000 season with a 42-21 record and won the America East Conference title with a 22-4 mark in league play. Hofstra and Notre Dame are linked by both school's inclusion in the Northeast Region. Notre Dame was ranked first in the region last season, while the Flying Dutchwomen were ranked second. Hofstra's top returnees include OF Lisa Ciavardini (.314, 7 home runs, 47 RBI in 2000), 1B Amanda Hallaway (.331, 5, 32) and pitcher Kelly Blois (7-3, 2.00 ERA).

A look at the Gamecocks: Notre Dame and 18th-ranked South Carolina will meet for the ninth time Sunday, Feb. 18, at 12:00 p.m. The Gamecocks lead



the series 6-2, including a 1-0 shutout win March 6, 1998. The last Notre Dame victory in the series occurred March 27, 1992, when the Irish earned a 4-1 victory.

South Carolina finished 41-28 in 2000, earning third place in the SEC eastern division. The Gamecocks have made two consecutive NCAA regional tournament appearances and 10 overall. Head coach Joyce Compton (Trenton State '72) returns seven starters this season, including Jodi Fittro (.307, 16 RBI in 2000), Joyce McMillin (.298, 64 hits, 35 RBI) and pitcher Megan Matthews (311.0 IP, 1.37 ERA, 237 K).

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

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

Irish boast a strong schedule this season: Notre

Notre Dame Statistical Leaders (according to 2000 statistics)

Batting Average

Alkire, M. ....	.376
Kriech, J. ....	.360
Lemire, L. ....	.330

Runs

Kriech, J.	45
Loman, A.	41
Alkire, M.	41

Hits

Alkire, M.	73
Kriech, J.	72
Lemire, L.	60
Myers, J.	60

Doubles

Alkire, M.	15
Kriech, J.	14
Klayman, D.	10

Triples

Kriech, J.	8
Loman, A.	2
Myers, J.	2

Home Runs

Alkire, M.	13
Myers, J.	12
Loman, A.	5

RBI

Alkire, M.	64
Myers, J.	47
Lemire, L.	33

SLG %

Alkire, M. ....	.665
Myers, J. ....	.576
Kriech, J. ....	.525

Total Bases

Alkire, M.	129
Myers, J.	106
Kriech, J.	105

On Base %

Alkire, M. ....	.421
Kriech, J. ....	.417
Sharron, J. ....	.382

Stolen Bases

Loman, A.	17
Kriech, J.	16
Klayman, D.	12

Fielding %

Loman, A. ....	.989
Myers, J. ....	.981
Madrid, A. ....	.967

Assists

Myers, J.	449
Loman, A.	325
Madrid, A.	117

Pitching

ERA

Sharron, Jenn.	0.88
Alkire, M.	2.30

Strikeouts

Sharron, Jenn.	246
Alkire, M.	33

Shutouts

Sharron, Jenn.	12
Alkire, M.	2

**2001 Preseason
All-BIG EAST Team**

*P - Jenn Sharron, Sr., Notre Dame**
P - Kim Ryan, So., Boston College
*C - Jarrah Myers, Jr., Notre Dame**
IF - Melanie Alkire, Sr., Notre Dame
IF - Vickie Lamb, Sr., Seton Hall
IF - Andrea Loman, So., Notre Dame
IF - Jackie Pasquerella, Sr., Villanova
IF - Jessica Yanosy, Sr., Connecticut
OF - Nicole Dubovik, So., Connecticut
OF - Jennifer Kriech, Jr., Notre Dame
*OF - Lizzy Lemire, Sr., Notre Dame**
U - Sara Carlson, So., Villanova
DP - Mary Lowzinski, Sr., Virginia Tech

Dame will face a number of ranked teams this season, as six opponents on the 2001 schedule appear in the preseason top 25. Another five opponents received mention in the 'others receiving votes' category in the poll. Notre Dame will face fourth-ranked Washington this weekend at the Holiday Inn Invitational in Tampa, Fla., (Feb. 16-18). The 18th-ranked South Carolina Gamecocks will also be in Tampa, Fla., as well as Hofstra and South Florida, who both received votes in the preseason poll.

Two top-10 teams have been placed in Notre Dame's pool at the Kia Klassic in Fullerton, Calif., (March 15-18). Defending National Champion Oklahoma is ranked second in the preseason poll while Fresno State, 54-14 in 2000, is ranked ninth.

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

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

Three talented rookies join the Irish roster: Liz Miller and her staff welcomes three talented freshmen to the team this season. Catcher Chantal DeAlcuaz (Modesto, Calif.), IF/OF Nicole deFau (Southington, Conn.) and RHP Kristin Schmidt

(Houston, Texas) all possess the talent and drive to contribute immediately in the Notre Dame lineup.

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

Providing her team some solid depth in the infield, deFau has shown the range and ability to be a steady backup to Alexis Madrid and may also see some time in the outfield. deFau joins junior Kas Hoag as the only two Notre Dame players with Connecticut state roots. She was named the 2000 Gatorade Connecticut Player of the Year.

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

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

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

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

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

EAST Rookie of the Year **Andrea Loman**.

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

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



Notre Dame Softball Roster Breakdown

Starting Pitchers

Pos.	No.	Name	Year	Height	Bats/Throws	Birthdate	Hometown	Notes
LHP	9	Jenn Sharron	Sr.	5-9	L/L	9-14-79	Agoura Hills, CA	Three-time BIG EAST Pitcher of the Year
RHP	8	Kristin Schmidt	Fr.	5-9	R/R	4-3-82	Houston, TX	Established herself as Notre Dame's #2 starter

Probable Starters

C	22	Jarrah Myers	Jr.	5-9	R/R	4-22-80	Carbondale, KS	Preseason all-BIG EAST, 12 HR in 2000
1B	33	Andrea Loman	So.	5-10	R/R	11-25-81	Riverside, CA	2000 BIG EAST Rookie-of-the-Year
2B	1	Alexis Madrid	So.	5-1	L/R	10-17-81	Temecula, CA	.967 fielding percentage last season
SS	2	Melanie Alkire	Sr.	5-8	R/R	10-6-79	Union City, CA	Team record 13 HR, 64 RBI in 2000
3B	18	Andria Bledsoe	So.	5-9	R/R	8-4-81	Higley, AZ	Second team all-BIG EAST last year
LF	16	Lizzy Lemire	Sr.	5-9	R/R	10-10-79	Irvine, CA	.330 avg., 33 RBI in 2000
CF	11	Jennifer Kriech	Jr.	5-7	L/L	9-8-80	Indianapolis, IN	Team record eight triples last year
RF	4	Danielle Klayman	Sr.	5-7	L/L	9-17-79	San Diego, CA	.306 avg., 12 steals in 2000
DP	5	Kas Hoag	Jr.	5-5	L/R	6-13-80	Wallingford, CT	Will be the first player off Irish bench

Off the Bench

IF	15	Nicole deFau	Fr.	5-9	R/R	10-5-82	Southington, CT	2000 Gatorade Conn. Player-of-the-Year
C	19	Chantal DeAlcuaz	Fr.	5-9	R/R	4-29-82	Modesto, CA	Capable backup to Myers
OF	17	Sarah Kirkman	Sr.	5-11	R/R	11-2-78	Kokomo, IN	Gives the Irish powerful bat on bench
1B	20	Lisa Mattison	So.	5-10	R/R	4-26-81	Granger, IN	Ready to step in at first base when needed
RHP	7	Jessica Sharron	So.	5-8	R/R	10-12-81	Agoura Hills, CA	Will provide relief inning and extra bat