

**BIG EAST Baseball Doubleheader**

**West Virginia**

**Mountaineers (29-13, 12-3)**

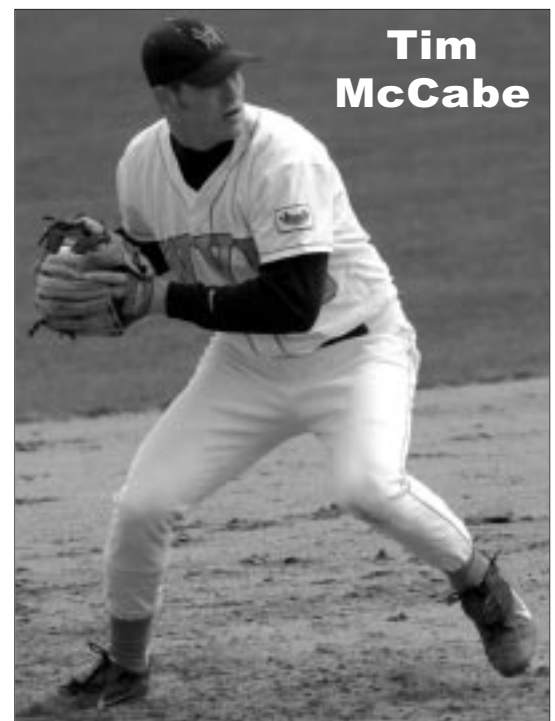
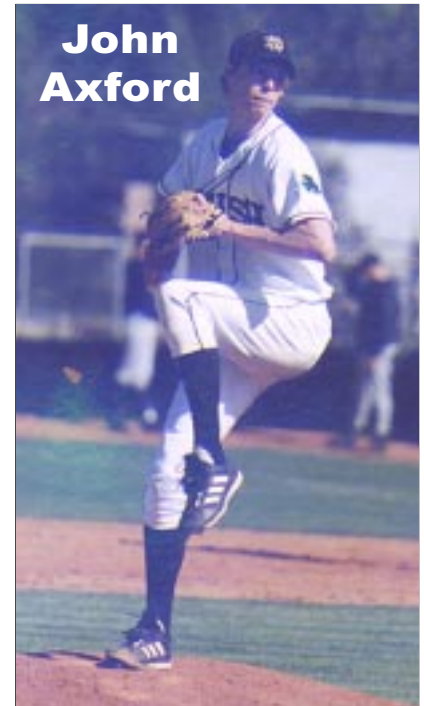
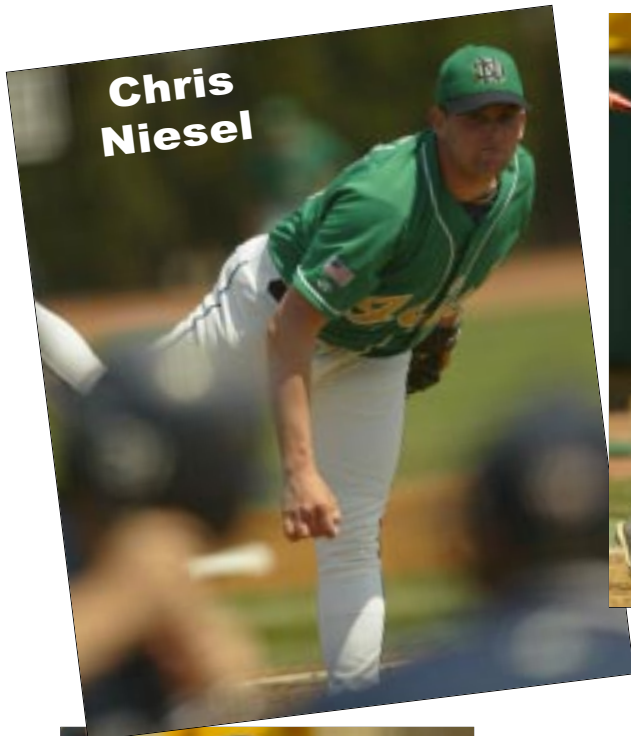
**vs.**

**#13 Notre Dame**

**Fighting Irish (35-10, 13-2)**



**Saturday, May 3, 2003 ... Eck Stadium (Notre Dame, Indiana)**





**#2 Tim Murray**  
Fr., IF • Shrub Oak, NY



**#3 Steve Sollmann**  
Jr., 2B • Cincinnati, OH



**#4 Greg Lopez**  
Fr., 3B • Upper Arlington, OH



**#5 Matt Macri**  
So., SS • Clive, IA



**#7 Zach Sisko**  
Jr., IF • Belleville, IL



**#8 Kris Billmaier**  
Sr., CF • Woodinville, WA



**#9 Craig Cooper**  
Fr., OF • Plainview, NY



**#10 Chris Niesel**  
So., RHP • Plantation, FL



**#12 Matt Bransfield**  
Fr., IF • Englewood, CO



**#13 Brennan Grogan**  
Fr., OF • Tequesta, FL



**#14 Matt Edwards**  
So., IF • Mechanicsville, VA



**#15 Javi Sanchez**  
Jr., C/IF • Miami, FL



**#16 Alex Nettey**  
Fr., OF • Dolton, IL



**#17 Cody Rizzo**  
Fr., OF/C • Temecula, CA



**#18 Brent Weiss**  
So., OF/C • Cockeysville, MD



**#20 Peter Ogilvie**  
Sr., RHP • Buffalo Grove, IL



**#21 Joe Thaman**  
Jr., 1B • St. Louis, MO



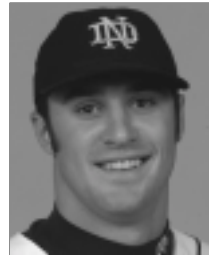
**#22 Grant Johnson**  
So., RHP • Burr Ridge, IL



**#23 Martin Vergara**  
So., RHP • Paterson, NJ



**#24 Matt Arminio**  
Fr., LHP • Brentwood, TN



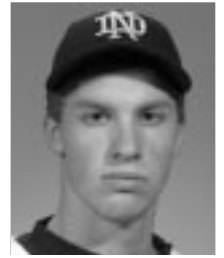
**#25 Mike Holba**  
Sr., 1B • Lansing, IL



**#27 Sam Richey**  
Fr., C • Minneapolis, MN



**#29 Cody Wilkins**  
Jr., LHP • Hudson, NC



**#30 Tom Thornton**  
Fr., LHP • Middleboro, MA



**#32 Ryan Kalita**  
Sr., RHP • Oak Park, IL



**#33 Scott Bickford**  
So., LHP • Owings, MD



**#36 Steve Andres**  
Fr., C • Napa, CA



**#37 Matt Laird**  
Sr., RHP • Bellaire, TX



**#38 Tyler Jones**  
So., RHP • Arlington, TX



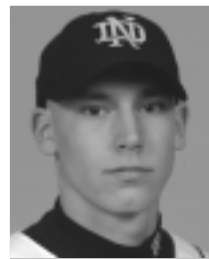
**#45 Brandon Vilorio**  
Sr., RHP • Wailuku, HI



**#46 J.P. Gagne**  
Sr., RHP • Bloomington, MN



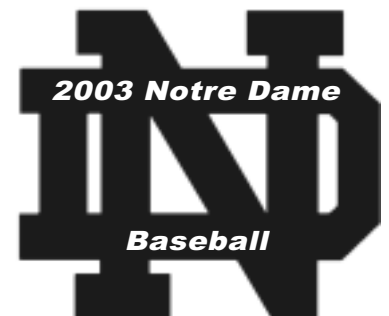
**#47 Ryan Doherty**  
Fr., RHP • Toms River, NJ



**#49 John Axford**  
So., RHP • Port Dover, ONT



**Paul Mainieri**  
Head Coach (9th Yr.)



**Updated BIG EAST Conference Baseball Standings**

1. Notre Dame	13-2 (.867)	35-10	
2. Rutgers	13-3 (.813)	24-14	
3. West Virginia	12-3 (.800)	29-13	
4. Pittsburgh	10-7 (.588)	33-13	
	Virginia Tech	10-7 (.588)	27-16
6. St. John's	9-8 (.529)	24-21	
7. Boston College	7-8 (.467)	25-18	
8. Seton Hall	8-11 (.421)	19-21	
9. Connecticut	7-12 (.368)	21-20	
10. Villanova	5-14 (.263)	13-26	
11. Georgetown	2-21 (.087)	12-32	

**This Weekend's Other Series** (bye for Villanova)  
 Rutgers at Connecticut ... Virginia Tech at St. John's  
 Pittsburgh at Boston College ... Georgetown at Seton Hall

**Series Remaining**  
**Notre Dame – at Rutgers, at Virginia Tech**  
**West Virginia – Villanova, at Boston College**  
 Rutgers – Notre Dame, at Villanova  
 Virginia Tech – at Pittsburgh, Notre Dame  
 Pittsburgh – Virginia Tech, at Connecticut  
 St. John's – Boston College, at Seton Hall

**BIG EAST NOTES** – The ND-WVU showdown will pit the BIG EAST's top pitching and fielding team vs. the conference's runaway offensive leader ... WVU entered the week ranked 6th in the nation for team batting avg. (now .340) and 28th in scoring (7.8 runs/gm) while Notre Dame was listed 13th in team ERA (3.37) and 17th in fielding pct. (.972) ... this weekend's action could clear up the race for the four spots in the BIG EAST Tournament ... final standings are based on win pct. (not "games back"), due to rainouts ... the first tiebreaker is head-to-head results, then record vs. the league from the top down ... ND holds the tiebreaker vs. St. John's (split vs. Pittsburgh) ... WVU has tiebreakers vs. SJU and Virginia Tech (split vs. Pitt and Rutgers) ... RU owns tiebreakers vs. BC, SJU and VT (also split vs. Pitt) ... other tiebreakers of note include VT over BC and SJU over Pitt.

**MOUNTAINEER NOTES** – West Virginia is bidding to make the BIG EAST Tournament for the first time since 1999, led by a returning nucleus that includes 1B Kurtis Clinton, 2B Eric Grimm, SS Grant Psomas and 3B Tim McCabe – with the team's top hitters including veteran Jarod Rine (CF) and two OFs who played sparingly prior to '03 (Lee Fritz and Jake Serfass) ... WVU has developed a solid rotation (see p. 5), after losing ace Billy Biggs to the pro draft ... WVU's three BIG EAST losses have come vs. Rutgers (4-12), at Pittsburgh (0-4) and at St. John's (6-7) ... WVU is one of just six teams ever to beat ND three-plus times at Eck Stadium (3-4), with Rutgers and St. John's each owning four wins at The Eck (Ball State, Pittsburgh and Wisconsin-Milwaukee also own three wins over ND at Eck Stadium) ... WVU owns a rare series win over ND at The Eck (6-4, 8-5 in '96) – with the Irish playing 33 straight doubleheaders at The Eck without being swept (the only other all-time BIG EAST doubleheader sweeps of ND came at SHU in '97, at VT in '01 and at UConn in '02).

**IRISH NOTES** (more on p. 3) – Notre Dame completed another strong April and is 58-8 in April over the past three seasons ... the Irish lacked 1st-inning scoring punch (13 total runs) before posting a 15-0 scoring edge in the 1st inning of the last 10 games (ND also owns a 55-8 overall edge in the 2nd) ... ND is 8-1 in one-run games but also has registered 19 "big wins" (margin of 5-plus runs), just two shy of the entire 2002 total of 21 big wins ... ND also has racked up 17 "big innings" (5-plus runs) this season (14 in the last 25 games) ... the Irish faced a daunting early schedule but have won 33 of the last 39, including a 17-game win streak (2nd-longest in ND history) ... ND 40-4 in its last 44 home games ... the Irish have been shut out just once in the last 297 games (11-0 vs. Rutgers last season) while scoring in 538 of 542 games during the nine-year Paul Mainieri era ... Mainieri picked up his 700th career win earlier this season vs. Georgetown (he now is 721-431-1, including 389-152-1 at ND) ... ND's .972 team fielding pct. (well ahead of the .965 team record) includes 17 error-free games and 13 with one error ... the Irish own a 91-26 (.778) record in seven-plus seasons of BIG EAST play, with Mainieri owning the best BIG EAST winning pct. in the league's history ... ND's 70 all-time BIG EAST series include 55 series wins, eight even series and just seven series wins by the opponent ... since starting 0-4 in '02 BIG EAST play, ND is 31-6 in its last 37 BE games (sparked by the '02 comeback at WVU).

**BIG EAST LEADERS**

**Overall Batting Average**  
 1. Mike Rozema, SJU ..... 437  
 3. Lee Fritz, WVU ..... 417  
 4. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 414  
 6. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 396  
 8. Steve Sollmann, ND ..... 388

**Conference Batting Average**  
 1. Mike Rozema, SJU ..... 515  
 2. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 460  
 4. Lee Fritz, WVU ..... 429  
 5. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 418  
 7. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 409

**Overall Home Runs**  
 1. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 11  
 3. McCabe/Grimm, WVU ..... 9  
 8. Edwards, ND/Serfass, WVU ... 7  
 11. Grant Psomas, WVU ..... 6

**Overall RBI**  
 1. Matt Edwards, ND ..... 54  
 2. Eric Grimm, WVU ..... 51  
 5. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 42  
 9. Kris Billmaier, ND ..... 36

**Overall Slugging Percentage**  
 1. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 703  
 2. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 639  
 9. Eric Grimm, WVU ..... 591  
 10. Matt Edwards, ND ..... 599  
 11. Tim McCabe, WVU ..... 577

**Overall On-Base Percentage**  
 1. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 541  
 5. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 477  
 11. Steve Sollmann, ND ..... 453

**Overall Stolen Bases**  
 1. Steve Sollmann, ND ..... 27  
 12. Brennan Grogan, ND ..... 12

**Overall Triples**  
 1. Brennan Grogan, ND ..... 5  
 3. Sollmann/Macri, ND ..... 4

**Overall Doubles** (S. Rykaceski, Pitt-17)  
 3. Kris Billmaier, ND ..... 14  
 4. Edwards, ND/Serfass, WVU .. 13  
 9. Macri, ND/McCabe, WVU ..... 12

**Overall Walks**  
 1. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 34  
 3. Matt Macri, ND ..... 28

**Overall Runs Scored**  
 1. Steve Sollmann, ND ..... 51  
 5. Cody Rizzo, ND ..... 41  
 6. Jake Serfass, WVU ..... 40  
 7. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 39

**Overall Hits** (Marc Tugwell, VT-70)  
 2. Lee Fritz, WVU ..... 68  
 3. Steve Sollmann, ND ..... 66  
 7. Matt Edwards, ND ..... 57  
 9. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 56  
 10. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 55

**Overall Total Bases** (Tugwell, VT-104)  
 2. Curtis Clinton, WVU ..... 96  
 3. Sollmann, ND/Grimm, WVU .. 94  
 5. Matt Edwards, ND ..... 93  
 6. Tim McCabe, WVU ..... 90  
 7. Jarod Rine, WVU ..... 85

**Overall ERA** (K. Shephard, BC-2.06)  
 2. John Axford, ND ..... 2.21  
 6. Chris Niesel, ND ..... 2.86

**Conference ERA** (C. Noonan, SH-0.90)  
 4. John Axford, ND ..... 1.96  
 5. Ryan Kalita, ND ..... 1.97  
 9. Chris Niesel, ND ..... 2.88  
 10. Zac Cline, WVU ..... 3.22

**Overall Opp. Batting Average**  
 1. John Axford, ND ..... .215  
 7. Chris Niesel, ND ..... .233  
 9. Shawn Miller, WVU ..... .236

**Overall Wins**  
 1. John Axford, ND ..... 9-0  
 2. Zac Cline, WVU ..... 8-3  
 4. Niesel, ND 6-1/D'Angelo, WVU . 6-3  
 9. Kalita, ND/Miller, WVU ..... 5-0

**Overall Strikeouts**  
 1. Chris Niesel, ND ..... 68  
 3. Zac Cline, WVU ..... 61  
 5. John Axford, ND ..... 59  
 6. Jason D'Angelo, WVU ..... 58

**Overall Saves** (Matt Dalton, VT-12)  
 2. J.P. Gagne, ND ..... 11

**Appearances** (C. Noonan, SHU-27)  
 2. J.P. Gagne, ND ..... 22

**Overall Innings**  
 1. Zac Cline, WVU ..... 89.2  
 2. Chris Niesel, ND ..... 72.1  
 4. Jason D'Angelo, WVU ..... 61.1  
 5. John Axford, ND ..... 61.0

**THE TALE OF THE TAPE**

	<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b>		<b>NOTRE DAME</b>	
	24-26, 9-16 BE (10th)		50-18, 18-8 BE (1st)	
2002 Records				
Lettermen Returning/Lost	11/10		17/9	
<b>CURRENT STATS</b>	<b>BIG EAST Rank</b>		<b>BIG EAST Rank</b>	
Overall Batting Average	(1)	.340	(4)	.310
Conference Batting Average	(1)	.363	(4)	.302
Runs Per 9 Innings		9.0		7.9
Home Runs	(1)	60	(8)	23
Slugging Percentage	(1)	.542	(4)	.443
Batters BB/K Ratio (Ks)		0.78 (236)		0.62 (227)
On-Base Percentage	(1)	.424	(5)	.385
Stolen Bases	(9)	39	(2)	63
Stolen Base Percentage		.750		.724
Overall Team ERA	(7)	5.04	(1)	3.37
Conference ERA	(7)	4.76	(1)	2.56
Pitchers' K-to-BB Ratio		1.50		2.35
Pitchers' Ks Per 9 Innings (Ks)		7.1 (274)		8.1 (352)
Opponent Batting Average	(7)	.284	(1)	.243
Overall Fielding Pct./Errors	(5)	.962/59	(1)	.972/48
Conference Fielding Pct./Es	(6)	.964/19	(1)	.971/16
Double Plays Turned	(8)	30	(3)	39
Record In One-Run Games		6-3		8-1
Extra-Inning Record		1-0		2-2

# NOTRE DAME FIGHTING IRISH \* – lefthanded hitter; # – switch hitter

NO	NAME	CL	POS	HT/WT	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
2	Tim Muray	Jr.	IF	6-2/180	Shrub Oak, NY (Lakeland) HS
3	Steve Sollmann (C)	Jr.	2B	5-10/190	Cincinnati, OH (St. Xavier HS)
4	Greg Lopez	Fr.	IF	6-0/175	Upper Arlington, OH (Upper Arlington HS)
5	Matt Macri	So.	SS	6-2/195	Clive, IA (Dowling HS)
7	*Zach Sisko	Jr.	IF	6-1/195	Belleville, IL (St. Louis University HS)
8	Kris Billmaier (C)	Sr.	CF	5-10/205	Woodinville, WA (Woodinville HS)
9	Craig Cooper	Fr.	OF	6-2/195	Plainview, NY (Chaminade HS)
10	Chris Niesel	So.	RHP	5-11/195	Plantation, FL (St. Thomas Aquinas HS)
12	Matt Bransfield	Fr.	IF	6-1/195	Englewood, CO (Cherry Creek HS)
13	*Brennan Grogan	Fr.	OF	6-2/170	Tequesta, FL (Benjamin HS)
14	Matt Edwards	So.	IF	6-2/195	Mechanicsville, VA (Lee-Davis HS)
15	Javi Sanchez	Jr.	C/IF	6-2/200	Miami, FL (Christopher Columbus HS)
16	Alex Nettey	Fr.	OF	6-1/180	Dolton, IL (Thornridge, IL)
17	Cody Rizzo	Fr.	OF	6-1/180	Temecula, CA (Chapparral HS)
18	Brent Weiss	Fr.	OF/C	6-1/200	Cockeysville, MD (St. Paul's HS)
20	Peter Ogilvie	Sr.	RHP	6-3/220	Buffalo Grove, IL (Stevenson HS)
21	*Joe Thaman	Jr.	1B	6-4/215	St. Louis, MO (St. Louis University HS)
22	Grant Johnson	So.	RHP	6-6/220	Burr Ridge, IL (Lyons Township HS)
23	Martin Vergara	So.	RHP	6-0/185	Paterson, NJ (DePaul Catholic HS)
24	Matt Arminio	Fr.	LHP	6-0/195	Brentwood, TN (Father Ryan HS)
25	Mike Holba	Sr.	1B	6-8/240	Lansing, IL (Thornton Fractional South HS)
27	Sam Richey	Fr.	C	6-0/170	Minneapolis, MN (De LaSalle HS)
29	Cody Wilkins	Jr.	LHP	6-1/205	Hudson, NC (South Caldwell HS)
30	Tom Thornton	Fr.	LHP	6-6/205	Middleboro, MA (Middleboro HS)
32	Ryan Kalita	Sr.	RHP	6-2/210	Oak Park, IL (Oak Park River Forest HS)
33	Scott Bickford	So.	LHP	6-4/160	Owings, MD (Northern HS)
36	*Steve Andres	Fr.	C/DH	5-11/205	Napa, CA (Justin Siena HS)
37	Matt Laird	Sr.	RHP	6-0/185	Bellaire, TX (Bellaire HS)
38	Tyler Jones	So.	RHP	6-4/210	Arlington, TX (James Martin HS)
45	Brandon Vilorio	Sr.	RHP	5-11/210	Wailuku, HI (Maui HS)
46	J.P. Gagne (C)	Sr.	RHP	6-0/205	Bloomington, MN (Cretin-Derham Hall HS)
47	Ryan Doherty	Fr.	RHP	7-1/230	Toms River, NJ (Toms River East HS)
49	John Axford	So.	RHP	6-5/175	Port Dover, Ontario (Assumption College HS)

**Head Coach:** # 1 Paul Mainieri (St. Thomas '82, ninth season at Notre Dame)

**Assistant Coaches:** # 26 Brian O'Connor (Creighton '93), #19 David Grewe (Dayton '98), #28 Wally Widelski (ND '97)

**ND POSITION PLAYER NOTES – Kris Billmaier** is the only ND player to appear in every game this season and is on the verge of becoming the 16th ND player ever to appear in 200-plus career games (199) ... Billmaier has hits in six of the last seven games (9-for-23, 10 RBI), after a 3-for-21 drought (4 RBI) ... three ND players entered the week ranked among the NCAA leaders: **Steve Sollmann** (16th with 0.61 stolen bases per game), **Matt Edwards** (24th with 1.26 RBI/gm) and **Brennan Grogan** (24th with 0.13 triples/gm, five total) ... Sollmann's career-best hitting streak ended at 15 games (longest by an ND player since Steve Stanley's 16-game tear in 2000) in Wednesday's 4-1 win over Oakland ... he has hits in 24 of the last 26 games and has gone hitless in consecutive games just once all season ... Sollmann already ranks 6th on the ND career stolen bases list (56) and needs just three more to become the 5th ND player ever with 30-plus SBs in a season (his brother Scott holds the record, with 52 in '96) ... Sollmann's .369 career batting avg. ranks 5th in ND history, right behind his brother's .372 ... he has made just one error in the last 21 games and has totaled just 5 Es in his last 60 games with the Irish (13 total Es in the '02 and '03 seasons) ... Edwards hit 11-for-22 (11 RBI) in his recent 7-game hitting streak but is 1-for-7 (1 RBI) in the last two games ... his RBI total (54) nearly has matched ND's team leaders from the 2002 season (when Andrew Bushey had 59 and Brian Stavisky 57) ... **Matt Macri** bounced back from a slow start to hit .377 in April (26-for-69, with just four errors) ... Macri has totaled 33 error-free games and has made just one error in his last 10 games played (45 chances) ... the ND defense has totaled 30 games with no errors (17) or one error (13) ... **Matt Bransfield** is batting 8-for-15 in his 6-game hitting streak ... four freshmen – and now Billmaier – have started in CF this season (Steve Stanley started at CF in all 256 games from '99-'02) ... **Cody Rizzo's** 20 times hit-by-pitch already has bested the ND record previously held by Eric Danapilis (15, in 1993) ... Macri (elbow) and Edwards (broken leg) missed most of '02 due to injury (first-year catcher **Javi Sanchez** served as the Irish SS in '02).

**PITCHING STAFF NOTES –** Notre Dame joined just five other teams (all among the nation's elite) – Rice, Long Beach State, Mississippi State, Arizona State and Cal State Fullerton – that entered the week ranked in the national top-20 for both ERA and fielding pct. ... since suffering the only loss of his ND career (Feb. 28 vs. Nebraska), **Chris Niesel** has dominated in his last nine outings to the tune of a 1.88 ERA, a .214 opp. batting avg. and nearly a 7-to-1 K-to-walk ratio (65/10) in those nine starts ... Niesel is 29-2 in his last 31 decisions (dating back to his HS senior season) and is the 10th ND pitcher ever to post multiple double-digit K games in his career (plus four 9-K games) ... **John Axford** (43rd in the NCAA stats with a 2.21 ERA) has won his last 13 decisions with the Irish (14-2 career mark) and became the 17th ND pitcher to post 12-plus Ks in a game (12 vs. WMU) ... just two pitchers in the country entered the week with a better undefeated mark than Axford's 9-0 ... Niesel (10-1), Axford (14-2) and **Ryan Kalita** (12-0) have combined for a 36-3 career record with the Irish (20-1 in '03) ... **J.P. Gagne** (24-14, 17 SV) has joined Chris Michalak and Aaron Heilman as the only ND pitchers ever to post 20-plus wins and 10-plus saves ... Gagne – who has converted all 11 of his traditional save chances this season, including three in ND's last four wins – has matched the ND record (11, good for 4th in the nation) set in 2000 by former teammate John Corbin, with Gagne's 17 career saves three shy of that Irish record (also held by Corbin) ... Gagne has not allowed an earned run in his last five outings (7.2 IP) and owns a 1.41 ERA in his last 11 appearances (3 ER, 19.1 IP) ... his 86 career appearances are six shy of Chris Michalak's ND record ... **Ryan Doherty** is averaging 15.2 Ks per 9 IP and has not allowed an earned run since a rough outing in the season opener, spanning nine appearances and 17.2 IP ... Doherty and fellow rookie Tom Thornton have combined for a 1.90 ERA, 6-1 record and .246 opponent batting avg. in 61.2 IP (53 Ks, 19 BB) ... **Brandon Vilorio** ranks 5th on the ND career ERA charts (2.54) and owns the best career walk ratio (1.50 BB per 9 IP) in ND history (both min. 60 IP) ... **Matt Laird** is averaging 11.2 Ks per nine innings.

# WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINEERS \* – lefthanded hitter; # – switch hitter

NO	NAME	CL	POS	HT/WT	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
3	#Eric Grimm	Sr.	2B	6-0/195	Parkersburg, WV/Parkersburg HS
4	Casey Bowling	Fr.	OF	6-0/200	Chapmanville, WV/Chapmanville HS
5	#Doug Nelms	Fr.	IF	6-1/195	Bristol, VA/Virginia HS
8	*Jarod Rine	Jr.	CF	6-1/200	Moundsville, WV/John Marshall HS
9	Travis D'Amico	So.	C	6-0/185	Wampum, PA/Mohawk HS
10	Grant Psomas	So.	SS	6-2/185	Carnegie, PA/Keystone Oaks HS
12	Shawn Miller	Jr.	RHP	6-1/185	Troy, NY/Hudson Valley
13	Derek Cisar	Sr.	LF	6-1/205	New Martinsville, WV/Potomac State JC
17	Jason DiAngelo	Sr.	RHP	6-2/195	McMurray, PA/Garrett CC
18	J.C. Sousa	Jr.	C	6-1/200	Tucson, AZ/Yavapai CC
21	Matt Miller	Fr.	C	5-11/195	Fairmont, WV/East Fairmont HS
22	*Marty Fagler	Jr.	LHP	6-2/195	Farmington, PA/Uniontown Area HS
23	*Justin Gray	Jr.	LF	6-0/195	Nitro, WV/South Charleston HS
24	Kurtis Clinton	Sr.	1B	6-1/210	Morgantown, WV/University HS
25	Tim McCabe	Sr.	3B	6-3/215	Wexford, PA/North Catholic HS
26	*Zac Cline	So.	LHP	6-3/205	Union City, PA/Erie Cathedral Prep HS
28	Brandon Halstead	Rr.	RHP-UTL	6-3/200	Charleston, WV/Hurricane HS
29	*Tino Medina	Sr.	LHP	6-0/200	Nutter Fort, WV/Potomac State JC
31	John Riffle	Fr.	RHP	6-1/195	Morgantown, WV/Morgantown HS
32	*Stan Posluszny	So.	OF	6-3/210	Aliquippa, PA/Hopewell Senior HS
34	Lee Fritz	So.	RF	6-2/190	Waynesburg, PA/Waynesburg Central HS
35	Chris Amedro	So.	RHP	6-0/175	Moundsville, WV/John Marshall HS
36	Todd Dunham	So.	RHP	6-1/195	Gans, PA/Albert Gallatin HS
38	Justin Asbury	Sr.	RHP	6-2/208	Bancroft, WV/Poca HS
39	*Brendan Bergerson	Fr.	LHP	6-6/190	Michigan City, IN/Marquette HS
40	Justin Willett	Jr.	3B-1B	6-3/215	Marion County, KY/Marion County HS
42	*Jake Serfass	Jr.	RF	6-2/210	Fairless Hills, PA/Pennsbury HS
43	*Evan Davis	Sr.	LF	5-11/190	Morristown, NJ/Morristown HS
44	David Walker	Sr.	RHP	6-4/215	Newton, TX/Allen County CC
45	*Ryan Lipscomb	So.	LHP	6-4/195	Shenendoah Junction, WV/Jefferson HS

**Head Coach:** #37 Greg Van Zant

**Assistants:** #15 Bruce Cameron, #30 Joe McNamee, #2 Ernie Galusky

**THE SERIES** – Notre Dame has faced West Virginia more than any other BIG EAST opponent, with a 23-11 series edge (14-8 since both began BIG EAST play in '96) ... the Irish have won 10 of the last 12 in the series, including 4-1, 8-1 at The Eck in '01 and a 2-4, 10-6 (10 inn.) split at WVU in '02 ... WVU's only other win in the series since '98 came in the middle game of the 2000 series, at WVU (7-2) ... the Irish hold a 10-3 series edge at home (4-3 at Eck) ... the teams were big rivals in the late 1990s, meeting in the BIG EAST Tournament every year from '96-'99 (including three games in '96, with WVU winning the 7-4 title game) ... ND beat WVU in a '97 BET elimination game and opened the '98 BET with a 5-4 win over the Mountaineers – before a 7-2 win over WVU to open the '99 BET (stretched over two days, due to rain) ... four of the last 12 games in the series have gone to extra innings, with ND winning three (including the longest game in Eck Stadium history, a 5-3, 15-inning game in '98 that ended on an Alec Porzel home run) ... ND's 2001 visit to Hawley Field featured 18 Ks from ND's Aaron Heilman in the 3-1 opener (stretched from 7 to 10 innings) ... the first ND-WVU game came in 1902 (9-5 win at ND) ... ND head coach Paul Mainieri was born in Morgantown and his father Demie was inducted into the WVU Physical Education Hall of Fame.

**RECAPING THE '02 SERIES** – Paul O'Toole's 3-run blast capped a 5-run rally that forced extra innings and Javi Sanchez had the go-ahead double in the 10th, as the Irish averted the sweep at Hawley Field (2-4, 10-6) ... ND's Brian Stavisky missed most of the doubleheader after being hit in the head with a 3rd-inning pitch ... WVU opened the nightcap with five 1st-inning runs and took a 6-1 lead into the 7th ... three straight 2-out walks – by Sanchez, Joe Thaman and Steve Sollmann – loaded the bases before Steve Stanley ripped a 2-run single past the third-base bag (6-3) ... O'Toole then tied the game with a linedrive home run down the rightfield line ... the winning rally included Ken Meyer's leadoff single, Kris Billmaier's sac. bunt, a walk by Matt Macri and Sanchez' 2-run double to left-center ... Drew Duff (5 IP), winner Martin Vergara (3 IP, 11 BF) and Matt Buchmeier combined for nine strong innings of relief (UER, 5 H, 3 BB, 8 Ks) ... WVU ace Billy Biggs (7 IP, 2 R, 6 H, 2 BB, 5 Ks) picked up the opening win while Grant Johnson (4.1 IP, 3 R, 9 H, 5 BB, 5 Ks) took the loss ... Zac Cline (6.2 IP, 3 R, 2 H, 4 BB, 7 Ks) ended up with no-decision in Game 2 while Joe Van Gorder had the loss (after Jason DiAngelo gave up two walks and two hits, including the Sanchez double, in the 10th).

## Probable Pitching Rotations



**Shawn Miller**



**Jason DiAngelo**

### Saturday (Game 1)

**WVU – Shawn Miller (So., RHP)**  
(4.11, 5-0, 46.0 IP, 40 K/28 BB, .236)

...  
**ND – Chris Niesel (So., RHP)**  
(2.86, 6-1, 72.1 IP, 68 K/13 BB, .233)

### Saturday (Game 2)

**WVU – Jason DiAngelo (Sr., RHP)**  
(4.84, 6-3, 61.1 IP, 58 K/32 BB, .272)

...  
**ND – John Axford (So., RHP)**  
(2.21, 9-0, 61 IP, 59 K/32 BB, .215)

### Sunday

**WVU – Zac Cline (So., LHP)**  
(3.61, 8-3, 89.2 IP, 61 K/25 BB, .289)

...  
**ND – Ryan Kalita (Sr., RHP)**  
(3.93, 5-0, 50.1 IP, 40 K/22 BB, .246)

**SERIES STATS** – Javi Sanchez (.286, 2-for-7, 2 RBI, 2 R, 2B, BB, K) is the only ND player with a .200-plus career batting avg. vs. WVU ... others include **Joe Thaman** (1-for-11, 2 RBI, 2 R, BB, 2 Ks), **Steve Sollmann** (1-for-9, 2 R, 2 BB, K), **Kris Billmaier** (0-for-14, R, BB, 3 Ks) and **Matt Macri** (0-for-1, R, BB, 4 Ks) ... **J.P. Gagne** (6.00, 0-1, 6 IP, 13 H, 9 R, BB, 4 Ks, 2 WP, HB) and **Matt Laird** (3.38, 2.2 IP, 4 H, 4 R/ER, 3 BB, 4 Ks, 2 WP) have two career GP vs. WVU.

# 2003 Notre Dame Baseball Stats (as of May 1)

Record: 35-10 Home: 20-3 Away: 7-5 Neutral: 8-2 BIG EAST: 13-2

(Sorted by Batting Average)

Player	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	PO	A	E	FLD%
3 Steve Sollmann....	.388	43-43	170	51	66	11	4	3	29	94	.553	21	0	13	1	.453	1	4	27-34	77	132	5	.977
14 Matt Edwards.....	.354	44-44	161	27	57	13	1	7	54	93	.578	18	3	23	5	.419	4	0	2-5	200	48	5	.980
17 Cody Rizzo.....	.331	40-39	133	41	44	9	1	3	27	64	.481	6	20	25	4	.432	3	1	1-2	70	6	3	.962
9 Craig Cooper.....	.314	36-25	102	20	32	5	2	0	13	41	.402	12	2	21	3	.397	0	1	8-11	30	3	0	1.000
5 Matt Macri.....	.313	42-42	147	32	46	12	4	3	23	75	.510	18	5	29	0	.406	0	5	5-8	53	126	12	.937
13 Brennan Grogan....	.299	40-38	137	33	41	2	5	0	21	53	.387	10	2	10	3	.353	1	10	12-15	42	2	1	.978
15 Javi Sanchez.....	.297	40-40	145	31	43	10	1	1	18	58	.400	14	5	11	1	.376	1	0	5-5	271	35	5	.984
8 Kris Billmaier....	.292	45-44	168	31	49	14	1	4	36	77	.458	16	4	17	4	.356	6	2	1-1	82	4	1	.989
4 Greg Lopez.....	.274	37-32	106	15	29	1	0	0	25	30	.283	3	4	16	5	.313	2	6	1-4	16	54	5	.933
36 Steve Andres.....	.258	30-20	62	17	16	1	2	2	12	27	.435	11	8	12	2	.427	1	0	0-1	42	2	1	.978
21 Joe Thaman.....	.208	29-18	72	6	15	4	1	0	14	21	.292	4	1	22	2	.260	0	5	0-0	226	11	1	.996
-----																							
12 Matt Bransfield..	.359	21-7	39	9	14	3	0	0	7	17	.436	1	2	11	1	.395	1	1	0-0	18	3	0	1.000
2 Tim Murray.....	.320	17-5	25	4	8	1	0	0	5	9	.360	0	0	6	1	.308	1	0	0-0	7	14	3	.875
7 Zach Sisko.....	.286	10-0	7	0	2	1	0	0	2	3	.429	3	0	2	0	.500	0	0	0-0	0	3	1	.750
16 Alex Nettey.....	.214	22-8	42	8	9	2	0	0	3	11	.262	1	1	9	1	.250	0	1	1-1	17	0	0	1.000
25 Mike Holba.....	.200	7-0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	.200	2	0	0	0	.429	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	.000
23 Martin Vergara....	.000	1-0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	0-0	1	1	0	1.000
27 Sam Richey.....	.000	1-0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	1	0	0	0	1.000	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	.000
Totals.....	.310	45-45	1522	326	472	89	22	23	289	674	.443	141	57	227	33	.385	21	36	63-87	1177	510	48	.972
Opponents.....	.243	45-45	1468	185	356	68	11	20	160	506	.345	149	27	352	28	.322	10	26	56-74	1116	483	99	.942

LOB - Team (336), Opp (318). **DPS Turned** - Team (39), Opp (40). **CI** - Team (0), Opp (1). **IBB** - Team (8), K. Billmaier (3), Javi Sanchez (2), S. Sollmann (2), Matt Macri (1), Opp (7). **Picked Off** - S. Sollmann (2), Matt Macri (2), B. Grogan (2), Javi Sanchez (1), Cody Rizzo (1), Craig Cooper (1), Matt Edwards (1).

(Sorted by Earned-Run Average)

Player	ERA	W-L	APP	GS	CG	SHO	CBO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	2B	3B	HR	AB	B	AVG	WP	HBP	BK	SFA	SHA
45 Brandon Viloria..	1.04	1-0	15	0	0	0/0	1	17.1	12	3	2	2	14	5	0	0	60	.200	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
30 Tom Thornton....	1.66	4-1	11	7	0	0/0	0	43.1	42	15	8	13	22	11	0	0	159	.264	3	5	0	1	0	1	6
49 John Axford.....	2.21	9-0	10	10	0	0/0	0	61.0	46	17	15	32	59	8	4	3	214	.215	6	3	0	0	0	5	
47 Ryan Doherty....	2.45	2-0	10	1	0	0/0	0	18.1	13	8	5	6	31	1	0	0	65	.200	1	2	0	0	2	0	
46 J.P. Gagne.....	2.68	3-4	22	0	0	0/0	11	40.1	36	19	12	15	29	4	0	2	152	.237	2	0	0	0	0	3	
10 Chris Niesel.....	2.86	6-1	11	11	2	0/0	0	72.1	65	27	23	13	68	14	2	1	279	.233	5	3	0	0	0	3	
32 Ryan Kalita.....	3.93	5-0	9	8	0	0/0	0	50.1	45	25	22	22	40	9	0	3	183	.246	5	6	1	1	1	7	
23 Martin Vergara....	4.57	1-0	8	2	0	0/0	1	21.2	19	15	11	17	20	2	2	2	83	.229	2	3	0	0	0	0	
37 Matt Laird.....	5.82	1-0	15	0	0	0/0	1	21.2	19	14	14	12	27	2	0	3	81	.235	3	1	0	0	3	0	
20 Peter Ogilvie....	6.56	1-3	6	5	0	0/0	0	23.1	27	21	17	11	20	5	0	3	93	.290	1	3	0	1	0	0	
-----																									
24 Matt Arminio....	0.00	0-0	2	0	0	0/0	0	2.1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	7	.000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
38 Tyler Jones.....	6.28	2-1	9	1	0	0/0	0	14.1	18	11	10	1	14	3	1	2	61	.295	1	1	0	0	0	0	
29 Cody Wilkins....	9.00	0-0	3	0	0	0/0	0	4.0	10	6	4	1	5	3	2	1	20	.500	0	0	0	1	0	0	
33 Scott Bickford...	18.00	0-0	1	0	0	0/0	0	2.0	4	4	4	3	2	1	0	0	11	.364	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Totals.....	3.37	35-10	45	45	2	0/0	14	392.1	356	185	147	149	352	68	11	20	1468	.243	30	27	1	10	26		
Opponents.....	6.46	10-35	45	45	0	0/0	4	372.0	472	326	267	141	227	89	22	23	1522	.310	35	57	8	21	36		

**PB** - Team (18), Javi Sanchez (14), Steve Andres (2), Cody Rizzo (2), Opp (11). **Pickoffs** - Team (7), John Axford (3), Tom Thornton (2), Ryan Doherty (1), Javi Sanchez (1), Opp (10). **SBA/ATT** - Javi Sanchez (39-52), Ryan Kalita (7-14), John Axford (11-14), Tom Thornton (9-12), Chris Niesel (11-12), Steve Andres (9-9), Cody Rizzo (7-8), P. Ogilvie (5-6), J.P. Gagne (4-5), M. Vergara (3-3), Ryan Doherty (2-3), Tyler Jones (2-2), B. Viloria (0-1), Matt Arminio (1-1), Matt Laird (1-1).

## 2003 West Virginia Baseball Stats (as of April 30)

Record: 29-13 Home: 20-4 Away: 5-8 Neutral: 4-1 BIG EAST: 12-3

(Sorted by Batting Average)

Player	AVG	GP-GS	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	TB	SLG%	BB	HBP	SO	GDP	OB%	SF	SH	SB-ATT	PO	A	E	FLD%
34 FRITZ, Lee.....	.417	41-41	163	31	68	8	2	0	19	80	.491	8	4	17	0	.449	3	1	6-8	62	1	2	.969
8 RINE, Jarod.....	.414	33-33	133	34	55	10	1	6	24	85	.639	14	2	18	1	.477	0	6	11-11	74	3	3	.962
42 SERFASS, Jake....	.396	37-32	111	40	44	13	0	7	29	78	.703	34	1	32	0	.541	0	3	6-8	57	3	3	.952
32 POSLUSZNY, Stan..	.377	25-14	61	17	23	6	1	4	19	43	.705	8	0	10	1	.449	0	0	1-1	13	0	0	1.000
24 CLINTON, Kurtis..	.354	42-42	158	39	56	7	0	11	42	96	.608	16	6	12	1	.429	2	1	2-2	355	28	6	.985
3 GRIMM, Eric.....	.333	42-42	159	36	53	10	2	9	51	94	.591	22	3	29	2	.419	2	2	1-4	81	88	7	.960
25 McCABE, Tim.....	.327	42-42	156	37	51	12	0	9	32	90	.577	28	3	18	2	.436	1	1	0-1	25	82	6	.947
18 SOUSA, J.C.....	.324	16-9	34	10	11	1	0	1	7	15	.441	3	2	7	1	.410	0	0	0-1	69	7	1	.987
9 D'AMICO, Travis..	.310	35-33	100	22	31	6	0	1	12	40	.400	21	0	17	0	.430	0	6	0-2	202	27	5	.979
13 CISAR, Derek.....	.293	36-34	123	23	36	6	1	4	29	56	.455	7	6	26	1	.355	2	3	4-5	0	0	0	.000
10 PSOMAS, Grant....	.274	42-41	146	34	40	10	0	6	29	68	.466	21	1	37	2	.363	3	3	7-8	51	100	17	.899
4 BOWLING, Casey...	.239	22-11	46	7	11	2	0	2	9	19	.413	3	1	10	0	.300	0	4	1-1	23	0	1	.958
5 NELMS, Doug.....	.111	13-1	9	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	.222	0	0	1	0	.111	0	1	0-0	5	12	0	1.000
28 HALSTEAD, Brandon	.083	5-3	12	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	.083	0	1	1	5	.154	0	0	0-0	1	5	0	1.000
21 MILLER, Matt.....	.000	2-0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	1	0	.000	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	.000
23 GRAY, Justin.....	.000	4-0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	.000
40 WILLETT, Justin...	.000	3-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	1	0	0	0	1.000	0	0	0-0	0	0	0	1.000

Totals.....	.340	42-42	1415	333	481	92	7	60	303	767	.542	186	30	236	16	.424	13	31	39-52	1039	435	59	.962
Opponents.....	.284	42-42	1349	247	383	76	6	22	220	537	.398	183	37	274	6	.380	19	30	48-69	998	395	67	.954

LOB - Team (344), Opp (332). **DPS Turned** - Team (30), Opp (38). **IBB** - Team (5), Posluszny 2, Clinton 1, Psomas 1, McCabe 1, Opp (5). **Picked Off** - Fritz 1, Cisar 1.

(Sorted by Earned-Run Average)

Player	ERA	W-L	APP	GS	CG	SHO	CBO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	2B	3B	HR	AB	B/AVG	WP	HBP	BK	SFA	SHA
45 LIPSCOMB, Ryan...	0.93	0-1	12	0	0	0	0	2	9.2	9	3	1	9	13	2	0	1	35	.257	1	0	0	0	1
28 HALSTEAD, Brandon	3.00	2-0	2	2	1	0	0	0	15.0	11	6	5	4	7	3	0	1	55	.200	1	3	0	0	1
22 FAGLER, Marty...	3.32	2-0	5	2	0	0	0	0	19.0	19	13	7	11	15	7	0	1	71	.268	2	1	1	1	5
26 CLINE, Zac.....	3.61	8-3	12	12	6	0	0	0	89.2	99	44	36	25	61	18	2	5	343	.289	6	7	2	2	9
12 MILLER, Shawn...	4.11	5-0	8	6	2	1	0	0	46.0	41	26	21	28	40	5	1	1	174	.236	4	4	0	1	4
17 DIANGELO, Jason...	4.84	6-3	10	10	4	1	0	0	61.1	66	46	33	32	58	17	2	2	243	.272	6	7	2	3	5
35 AMEDRO, Chris....	4.91	2-1	10	2	1	1	0	1	18.1	21	12	10	11	13	4	0	1	73	.288	2	2	0	1	1
29 MEDINA, Tino....	6.12	1-4	7	6	1	0	0	0	32.1	31	30	22	30	25	4	0	3	120	.258	5	5	2	1	2
38 ASBURY, Justin...	7.64	2-0	10	0	0	0	0	0	17.2	23	15	15	9	10	5	0	1	69	.333	1	4	0	0	2
36 DUNHAM, Todd....	8.15	1-1	9	1	0	0	0	2	17.2	21	17	16	9	22	2	0	2	69	.304	7	1	0	3	1
31 RIFFLE, John....	12.79	0-0	6	1	0	0	0	0	12.2	24	21	18	10	8	6	0	2	60	.400	2	3	0	1	1
44 WALKER, David....	12.86	0-0	5	0	0	0	0	0	7.0	18	14	10	5	2	3	1	2	37	.486	1	0	0	1	0
Totals.....	5.04	29-13	42	42	15	3	0	5	346.1	383	247	194	183	274	76	6	22	1349	.284	38	37	7	19	30
Opponents.....	7.71	13-29	42	42	4	2	1	6	332.2	481	333	285	186	236	92	7	60	1415	.340	51	30	2	13	31

**PB** - Team (18), D'Amico 13, Sousa 5, Opp (9). **Pickoffs** - Team (9), Medina 3, Cline 3, Lipscomb 1, D'Amico 1, DiAngelo 1, Opp (2). **SBA/ATT** - D'Amico (31-44), Sousa (17-20), DiAngelo (12-15), Cline (3-11), Riffle (7-8), Medina (5-7), Halstead (5-6), Dunham (4-5), Walker (3-4), Lipscomb (4-4), Fagler (3-3), Miller, S. (1-3), Asbury (1-2), Amedro (0-1).

# In-Season Checkup Yields Plenty Of Answers

Here's a look at how Notre Dame has answered 10 major preseason questions:

**Who would emerge as the new lead-off 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 a team-best .388 overall, scoring 51 runs and stealing 27 bases (both BIG EAST-leading totals) – in addition to reaching base on 60-percent of his leadoff plate appearances (best on the team).

**Who would fill the gap in center field, where Stanley started all 256 games from 1999-2002?**

Freshmen Craig Cooper and Cody Rizzo were tried in center the first two weeks of the season before their classmate Brennan Grogan started 21 of the next 22 games at CF ... another freshman, Alex Nettey then started three games in center – with senior RF **Kris Billmaier** making the shift to CF in the last 11 games.

**Who would step into the No. 3 batting order spot, occupied in '02 by LF Brian Stavisky (signed as a junior 6th-round pick of the Oakland A's)?**

Junior corner IF **Matt Edwards** has made 31 starts in the 3-hole (also batting cleanup recently) while ranking as one of ND's most pivotal players ... Edwards – who missed most of the '02 season with a broken leg – is batting .354 with 54 RBI and 7 home runs in 44 games played, comparable to Stavisky's '02 stats (.394, 57 RBI, 9 HR in 50 GP).

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

Edwards (see previous note) was 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 to boost his batting average to .313 while totaling just 12 errors in 191 fielding chances (he made four Es in the first four games and was batting just .211 in late March) ... Macri also has showcased his range, glove work and arm strength to throw out several batters.

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

**Ryan Kalita** has stepped up as the No. 3 starter in the past month, helping overcome the loss of Johnson and Kalita's fellow senior RHP Peter Ogilvie (returned from sore shoulder rehab) ... Kalita (12-0 ND career) is 5-0 with a 3.93 ERA and .246 opp. batting avg. in 2003 (40 Ks, 22 BB, 45 H in 50.1 IP).

**Would the Irish experience a dropoff in power, most notably due to the loss of O'Toole (11 HRs in '02) and Stavisky (9)?**

The 2003 team's current home run total (23) is on pace to fall well short of the HR total by the '02 squad (53) and the Irish may not have a double-digit HR hitter on the '03 squad, with Matt Edwards (7) the current long-ball leader ... ND's current 31-6 run is all the more noteworthy when considering that the cleanup spot has produced just one home run in the last 43 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 Brennan Grogan, Cody Rizzo, Craig Cooper and Greg Lopez has added some quality baserunners to the 2003 lineup – with the current SB total (63) matching the SB total for all of 2002 ... the combination of junior 2B Steve Sollmann (27), Grogan (12) and Cooper (8) gives the 2003 Irish a group of three players who are in the range of swiping 10-plus bases (Stanley's 32 and O'Toole's 11 were ND's only double-digit SB players in '02).

**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 mostly in the 5-hole (.297, 31 R, 18 RBI, HR, 3B, 10 2B) ... Sanchez has cut down on his passed balls 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 – RF **Cody Rizzo**, LF **Brennan Grogan**, 3B **Greg Lopez**, DH **Steve Andres** and OF/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 statistical contributions (at the 29-game mark) included 62% of Notre Dame'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) ... those players, plus freshman DH **Matt Bransfield**, have continued to play key roles in the second half of the 2003 season.

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

The 2003 team (.310 team batting avg.) – which has taken on a more righthanded slant (after the departure of five lefthanded-hitting position starters) – is lagging behind the 2002 team's final batting average (.321) but the Irish have been able to bunch together their hits to the tune of 17 "big innings" (5-plus runs) and 19 wins by 5-plus runs (just two shy of the 2002 team's total of wins by 5-plus) ... seven of the team's eight starting position players are batting above .290.



(from left)  
Steve Sollmann,  
Kris Billmaier  
and Matt  
Bransfield.