

THE OBSERVER

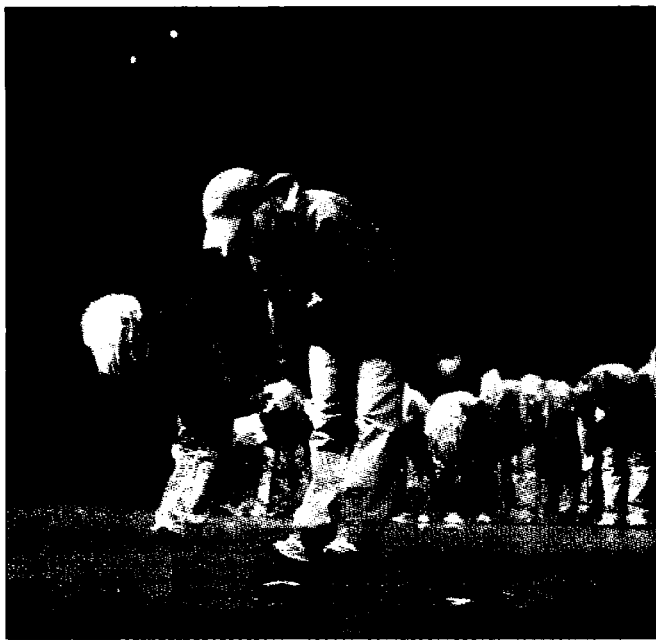
The Independent Newspaper Serving Notre Dame and Saint Mary's

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NDSMCOBSERVER.COM

Play reveals prevalence of assault



DUSTIN MENNELLA/The Observer

Madison Liddy, left, and Emily Weisbecker bow after dress rehearsal for "Loyal Daughters" Sunday.

By EILEEN DUFFY
Assistant News Editor

While it didn't boast the international scope of "The Vagina Monologues," cast members and viewers of the Notre Dame-specific "Loyal Daughters" say the play has increased awareness on the issue of sexual assault and rape at the University, and has the potential to break the reigning "culture of silence" often viewed as surrounding such issues at Notre Dame.

The controversial nature of "The Vagina Monologues" tended to turn off viewers at Notre Dame, said Madison Liddy, who directed both "Daughters" and last spring's production of the "Monologues."

"One of the biggest critiques we got was that 'The Vagina Monologues' isn't really applica-

ble to Notre Dame students," she said. "It's a very liberal, left-wing way to look at things. Part of me agrees, part of me disagrees ... But at the same time, [playwright Emily Weisbecker] and I wanted a way for people to talk about sexuality and sexual violence without feeling like they're in the wrong place."

Feminist Voice member Stephanie Brauer said the independent nature of "Loyal Daughters" might help it succeed. "I think it's more positively viewed [than 'Monologues'] on campus, because it doesn't have direct association with [the 'Monologues' playwright] Eve Ensler, who is a loaded figure in and of herself," she said.

And "Loyal Daughters," Liddy said, includes a broader scope of values — like the skit called

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Cell phone service cut short

Some students cite calling interruptions

By JOHN TIERNEY
News Writer

If the cellular phone is a college student's lifeline, a lot of the Notre Dame community was left drowning in the rain Thursday.

Many students complained of poor cell phone service throughout the day. Calls that were dialed never connected, and many connected calls were dropped after just 10 to 15 seconds, some students said. Text messaging functions, however, did not seem to be impaired.

The day of choppy service for many major carriers left students frustrated and some blamed the poor service on the day's steady rain. But Dewitt Latimer, chief technology officer in the Office of Information Technologies, said cell phone service is usually not affected by the weather.

"There is no reason to believe that the rain or the clouds would have interfered with the antennas," he said.

By Thursday evening, freshman Mike Kelly, a Verizon customer, said he was frustrated almost to the point of destroying his phone.

"I haven't been able to make a call all day," Kelly said. "I was about to throw my phone into a puddle 'cause I thought it was just

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Sisters lead Saint Mary's through the years

By KELLY MEEHAN
Saint Mary's Editor

When the Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Cross founded Saint Mary's in 1844, they could hardly have fathomed what the College would be like in the year 2006.

For the sisters at Saint Mary's — the first college the international Congregation established in the United States — looking 162 years into the future may have seemed like a challenge, but the decades passed quickly. Intense construction, dedicated educators and unrealized plans to become a co-educational institution marked eras of the College's diverse history. But one thing has remained constant: the Sisters of the

Congregation of the Holy Cross' unique presence on campus, guiding and influencing Saint Mary's.

Congregation President Sister Joy O'Grady said what began as a "family business" of sisters who traveled to Notre Dame, Ind. from Bertrand, Mich. to educate women has flourished into one of the nation's premier sites of higher education and a retirement home for Sisters who have completed their international work.

Over the years the Sisters' leadership positions at the College have dwindled, but they have not compromised their stake in assuring that the "excellence of the [Catholic] Church is maintained and fostered within a holistic education," O'Grady said.

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KRISTY KING/The Observer

The Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Cross live at one of three places on campus, including Augusta Hall.

Bookstore prepares for last game

Christmas decorations go up in Hammes as holiday season arrives



TOM FOLEY/The Observer

Hammes Notre Dame bookstore employee Amanda Lagone adjusts Christmas decorations to create a festive atmosphere.

By LAURA WILCZEK
News Writer

When thousands of fans descend upon Notre Dame's campus for fall football games, they come to cheer the Irish on to victory, listen to the band play and take a picture in front of Touchdown Jesus.

And many leave with campus with a piece of Irish merchandise to remember their weekend by.

The Hammes Notre Dame Bookstore is packed every weekend with alumni, fans and students eager to purchase a Notre Dame souvenir, and bookstore management

see HAMMES/page 8

McCarthy cracks jokes, gives important tips

By LAURA BAUMGARTNER
News Writer

Public service announcements often go unnoticed, but when retired Indiana State Police Officer Tim McCarthy comes on the PA system at Notre Dame Stadium, his standard "May I have your attention, please" is greeted with a cheer before the crowd falls silent so they can hear the safety warning and joke that follows.

At the end of each third quarter, McCarthy relays an often-humorous cautionary message to fans that's become a staple after 46 years. But in the beginning, he said, he would simply remind fans to be alert on the roads as they returned home.

"I was promoted to sergeant of safety education — now called a public information officer — and inherited the assignment from the troopers that did it before me," McCarthy said. "But I was the one who started using the quip or joke line because when I started giving [the announcements] straight and formal, no one paid attention to them."

McCarthy's first stint as a football personality was at the second-to-last home game in 1960.

"We were having a lot of traffic trouble at that time," he said. "So the next year I thought I'd try something a friend, who was a Chicago policeman with a safety education assignment,

see OFFICER/page 8

INSIDE COLUMN

Owens and 'Little T'

I would like to preface this by saying that it will be the first and last time I will ever make any addition to the most over-publicized athlete in the history of sports. I apologize, but this one was just too hard to let go.

Dan Murphy

Sports Production Editor

Two days ago a new series of children's books aimed at providing good role models for America's youth was released by Terrell Owens.

The story line follows a young ... wait, what?

Terrell Owens, the same man who once pulled a Sharpie out of his sock after scoring a touchdown, will now be signing books for kindergarten kids?

Believe it or not, it's true. BenBella Books has signed the Cowboys' wide receiver to deliver a series of illustrated stories that will teach children lessons that T.O. has apparently taken all of his 32 years to fully grasp.

Owens started drumming up the idea in his rookie season while with the 49ers but needed to do some additional research before he felt he was ready to begin the writing process.

The first set of books are titled "Little T Learns to Share," "Little T Learns What Not to Say" and "Little T Learns to Apologize" — honestly, this isn't a joke. Rumor has it that Owens is currently working on the fourth installment which will be called "Little T Learns about Painkillers," a piece that is sure to render those annoying childproof pill bottles obsolete. (Okay, so maybe that one was a little bit of a joke, but not too far of a stretch.)

Little T's lessons in the future may also include, but are certainly not limited to: enjoying the outdoors (maybe with a few driveway crunches and curls), playing well with others (just not on the sidelines) and getting a good night's rest (especially in the middle of offensive team meetings).

Owens is currently partnered up with college friend Courtney Parker and illustrator Todd Harris in the project, but once this craze takes off, everyone is sure to want a piece of the action — Keyshawn Johnson, Dennis Rodman ... they are even talking with O.J. about a Halloween special.

It's only a matter of time before Drew Rosenhaus manages to wiggle his way into the series as well. Perhaps as the evil money-grubbing Dr. Drew whose negative influence Little T has to overcome to learn his lesson. Hey, anything to make an extra buck, right Drew?

With all of the wonderful children's literature around today — Dr. Seuss, Roald Dahl, Stephen King — why would anyone ever consider having their own flesh and blood raised by such a monster?

It's really tough to say, all I know is that this avid reader will be sticking with Clifford.

Contact Dan Murphy at dmurphy6@nd.edu

The views expressed in the Inside Column are those of the author and

CORRECTIONS

The Observer regards itself as a professional publication and strives for the highest standards of journalism at all times. We do, however, recognize that we will make mistakes. If we have made a mistake, please contact us at 631-4541 so we can correct our error.

QUESTION OF THE DAY: WHO'S TOUGHER, THE JEDIS OR THE HOGWARTS GANG?



Nick Caprino
sophomore Morrissey

"Jedi because the power to destroy a planet is insignificant next to the power of the Force."



Dan D'Amore
sophomore Morrissey

"The Jedis, because I've never heard of a female Jedi."



Jim Harig
sophomore Morrissey

"Da Bears."



John Leahy
sophomore Morrissey

"Uh ... I'm way too cool for science fiction."



Carl Andersen
sophomore Morrissey

"No, he's really not."



Steve Brennan
sophomore Morrissey

"With or without Dumbledore? Because Dumbledore's [awesome]."



DUSTIN MENNELLA/The Observer

Staff members Steve Mall, left, and Kenny Tschida from the University Maintenance Department mount the Christmas light-decorated O on O'Neill Hall Thursday afternoon.

OFFBEAT

'Grape Guy' catches 116 grapes in mouth

SYDNEY, Australia — An American man caught 116 tossed grapes in his mouth in three minutes in what he hopes will become a new Guinness World Record, his publicity team said Thursday.

Steve "the Grape Guy" Spalding, 44, of Dallas, Texas also set a personal record for endurance grape catching, using his mouth to catch 1,203 grapes thrown from a distance of 15 feet over half an hour, according to publicist Deanna Brown.

No Guinness World Records officials were present at Spalding's grape-gobbling attempt, carried out Thursday in Australia overlooking Sydney's iconic Opera House.

appropriate places for these items. We have notified the donor of our willingness to handle this transaction."

Toys for tots agrees to take Jesus doll

LOS ANGELES — The Marine Reserves' Toys for Tots program has decided to accept a donation of Bible-quoting Jesus dolls, reversing course after saying earlier this week that it couldn't take them.

"The talking Jesus doll issue has been resolved," the organization announced on its Web site Wednesday. "Toys for Tots has found

The short note on the Web site did not explain what it would do with the dolls.

Earlier this week, the program declined a suburban Los Angeles company's offer to donate 4,000 of the foot-tall talking dolls. The battery-powered Jesus is one of several Bible-based dolls manufactured by one2believe, a division of the Valencia-based Beverly Hills Teddy Bear Co.

Information compiled from the Associated Press.

IN BRIEF

The marching band will conduct its traditional "step-off" today at 4:30 p.m., heading from the front of the Main Building through campus to its practice in the Joyce Center parking lot.

The pep rally will take place in the Joyce Center Arena at 6 p.m. Students with identification may enter from 5:15 to 5:45 p.m. through Gate 11, and the general public may enter through Gate 8 at 5:45 p.m.

The Notre Dame women's soccer team will take on Colorado in the third round of the NCAA Tournament tonight at 7:30 p.m., at Alumni Field. Call (574) 631-7356 for ticket information.

Asian Allure 2006: Illumination will take place tonight at 8 p.m. at Washington Hall. The show is open to all Notre Dame, Saint Mary's and Holy Cross College students. Tickets are \$7 at the LaFortune Box Office — which can be reached at (574) 631-8128 — and \$10 at the door.

The Notre Dame and U.S. Military Academy Glee Clubs will present a joint concert at 8:30 p.m. in Leighton Concert Hall of the DeBartolo Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets are \$8 for the general public, \$6 for faculty/staff members, \$5 for seniors and \$3 for all students.

To submit information to be included in this section of The Observer, e-mail detailed information about an event to obsnews@nd.edu

	TODAY	TONIGHT	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
LOCAL WEATHER						
	HIGH 43 LOW 28	HIGH 40 LOW 26	HIGH 45 LOW 30	HIGH 42 LOW 27	HIGH 45 LOW 35	HIGH 55 LOW 40

Atlanta 55 / 37 Boston 60 / 58 Chicago 45 / 30 Denver 56 / 28 Houston 74 / 38 Los Angeles 80 / 56 Minneapolis 43 / 28 New York 62 / 57 Philadelphia 59 / 53 Phoenix 83 / 52 Seattle 50 / 41 St. Louis 53 / 45 Tampa 70 / 55 Washington 58 / 50

Paraguayan senator lectures on failures of government

Country has little support for democracy

By JOHN-PAUL WITT
News Writer

Diego Abente Brun, former Paraguayan senator and minister of Justice and Labour, spoke Thursday at the Hesburgh Center on the challenges facing Paraguayan democracy.

Throughout his lecture entitled "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Dilemmas of a Small Latin American Democracy," Abente criticized the state of Paraguay's democratic government and explained the various chal-

lenges that need to be overcome to bring Paraguay to the level of the most developed Latin American nations — Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

Abente introduced his lecture with a brief history of modern democracy in Latin America, saying that by the 1980s and 90s, most nations were moving away from the Marxist foundations of their democratic system and adopting a more liberal system. Paraguay has a legislature with a proportional system of representation and direct elections, similar to the U.S. House of Representatives, he said.

Institutions may appear democratic from the outside, Abente warned, but "after decades of democracy [in the

region], evaluations of the performance of Latin American democracies show there is much to be desired."

Abente then posed a controversial question: Are the democratic regimes of the least successful Latin American countries — Paraguay, Ecuador and Bolivia — really better for the people than the authoritarian regimes they replaced?

Paraguay has the worst record of economic development, government effectiveness and ability to preserve the rule of law in Latin America. It has the highest gap between the "extremely poor" class and the "poor" class in the region, Abente said, as well as the lowest support for democracy.

The reason why Paraguay is so unsuccessful, Abente said, lies in the nature of its democratic system. Paraguay has always had universal suffrage, he said, so political parties attempt to win over poor voters by providing jobs to members of the most powerful families, who could in turn influence the votes of the poor economic classes.

Abente provided a shocking statistic: in 2005, 76 percent of all tax money collected by the Paraguayan government was used to pay government employees. Abente explained this as a result of party politics.

"Even if I were a senator from the opposition party that may be opposed to government corruption," he said. "I

would need the government to allow me to employ people from my district to ensure I am re-elected."

The Paraguayan government can never rule with legitimacy, Abente said, because Paraguayan society has become an "invertebrate." Citizens expect their government to reward them with jobs and food, and there is no desire for economic growth or change in the government.

Paraguay is between "a rock and a hard place," Abente said, because Paraguay's problems are caused by its democratic system, and democracy itself cannot provide the answer.

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Service

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my phone that wasn't working."

After unsuccessful attempts, Kelly finally connected his call.

"Yes! 53 seconds — that's my record!" he said. "I had to talk fast so I wouldn't get cut off, but I made it."

Some students, like freshman Ruben Saldana, were a little more fortunate with their service.

"I have Sprint and my service was fine today," Saldana

said. "I was on the phone for 15 minutes this afternoon and I didn't have any problems at all."

Latimer, who was away from his office all day Thursday, did not receive notification from carriers that coverage was inconsistent. He has a standard call with a representative from

major carriers every Friday and will inquire about report-

ed problems then. Until he makes that call, Latimer said

"We haven't signed any contracts yet, but there are serious conversations underway with some carriers."

Dewitt Latimer
chief technology officer
Office of Information
Technologies

that he "will not speculate on the nature of the problem and will not jump to hasty conclusions."

"All students can do when the service is bad is notify their carrier," Latimer said. "We won't know about it

unless the carrier knows about it. If no one knows about the problem, nothing can be done."

Although some students are nervous that poor service will continue this weekend with a football game and predictions of more rain, Latimer does not think cell phones should be affected.

"There is no reason why service should at all be affected by the weather," he said.

Service providers Verizon and Cingular currently have stealth antennas located on campus. Although Verizon customers reported difficul-

ties with their service today, Cingular customers did not.

Notre Dame is currently in negotiations with other major cellular carriers to install antennas on campus.

"We are in negotiation with all vendors," Latimer said. "We haven't signed any contracts yet, but there are serious conversations underway with some carriers."

Latimer declined comment on the identity of the carriers currently in discussions with the University, citing ongoing negotiations.

Contact John Tierney at
jtierne1@nd.edu



NOVEMBER 13-17 ~UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME IEW SPONSORS

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SINCERE THANKS TO ALL WHO SPONSORED AND PARTICIPATED IN THIS YEAR'S IEW EVENTS!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

Asian American Association's Asian Allure "Illumination"
8pm; Washington Hall

Fairly-Traded gifts Event, featuring handcrafts from developing countries produced for Ten Thousand Villages
Friday, 10am-4pm; Atrium, Mendoza College of Business

FOR EVENT DETAILS AND CONTACTS: www.nd.edu/~issa/IEW.htm

History

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The Sisters have gone from dominating the College's presidential and professor positions to currently maintaining leadership roles behind the scenes as six or seven members of the Board of Trustees.

And while the majority of Saint Mary's administration is laypersons, Sisters continue to fill the positions of vice president for mission, professors, director of space planning and assistant to the vice president for mission.

The majority of the Congregation, however, is constantly present at Saint Mary's. Nearly 200 sisters call the College's campus "home." With a median age of 74, they are over 50 years older than the 1,500 members of the student body, but they still play a vital role within the College community.

They reside in three locations — Augusta Hall, Saint Mary's Convent and Rosary Hall — in the southwest corner of campus. The Sisters' portion of the land-stake exceeds the 500 acres that belong to the College.

As a separate entity, the Congregation owns the vast majority of woodlands that run along the eastbound side of Interstate 80-90, the nature trails and most of the land in the front of Saint Mary's along Route 31/33. It also leases the Belles' athletic fields to the College.

This unique ownership of the land bordering Saint Mary's gives the Congregation complete jurisdiction of its uses. Most notably, the Congregation entered into an agreement earlier this year with the Holladay Corporation to build a Hilton Garden Inn and conference center, set to open before the 2007 football season, on the northeast corner of campus.

The decision to lease the land for the construction of this hotel and conference center, which took much of the student body by surprise in August 2006, was deemed a "formal business relation" by O'Grady.

"Negotiations were developed for some time," she said, "and we kept the College apprised the whole [time]."

As the final decisions of the time and location of the construction were made, O'Grady and College President Carol Ann Mooney were engaged in close and careful consideration — a quintessential example of the working relationship between Saint Mary's and its sponsor, The Congregation.

Mooney, who has been friends with O'Grady for "many years," said the construction of the Hilton Garden Inn is the result of the Sisters' role as "astute and careful financial planners" as they "find additional ways to bring in revenue" due to the shrinking number of their full-time employees in the United States.

"Utilization of their land holdings is one of the ways that they can do that," she said.

While O'Grady said she did

not "personally encounter concerns expressed" about the construction, she said she feels the potential problems, which exist within any project, do not outweigh the benefits.

She said this project will "benefit the whole community" — one of the Congregation's most noble aspirations.

"The relationship between the college we founded so many years ago and the congregation is closely connective and collaborative," O'Grady said. "We see the changing needs of our time ... and continue to commit to issues in the Church, world and society."

O'Grady said the Sisters have watched the College greatly change over the years, and have worked to grow and adapt to the changes — issues that, regardless of the out-

come, have "sustained [the Sisters'] significant influence [they] wish to maintain in the College."

The two entities' close relationship has maintained and fostered Saint Mary's Catholic identity, both modern and historical.

"Now that [Sister O'Grady] and I also have a professional relationship, our friendship enables us to talk easily and openly about mutual concerns," Mooney said. "She and I have regular meetings and we make every attempt to cooperate and enhance each other's mission."

O'Grady said this relationship also includes the students — the vital link in pursuing and maintaining Saint Mary's mission.

Students are welcome to engage in this "ideas exchange," O'Grady said, and they often interact with sisters through the "Friends with Sisters Program" that pairs students with Sisters to foster a relationship through religious and social events.

Although the Congregation plays a large role in the College's decision-making

process, O'Grady said it is important to remember they "want to be supportive and collaborative."

"It is our heritage too," she said. "We have watched this school grow, and we are proud of this high quality school."

The student body has come to recognize this through their recent appreciation for the history of the College displayed during the first ever "Heritage Week" last January.

Student body president Susan McIllduff said the student government-sponsored week, which will take place again during the week of Jan. 22, 2007, has "contributed to students' understanding of the Congregations' History."

McIllduff said one of Heritage Week's highlights was "the family style dinner ... [where], the leadership of the Congregation as well as approximately 20 other sisters who have influenced the College were invited to come and share their stories" While plans are in the works to incorporate even more understanding about the Congregation's influence on the College during this year's Heritage Week, Mooney said the positive influence inquisitive students had on the Sisters was impressive.

"The Sisters were thrilled with the student interest in their heritage last year," Mooney said.

"It truly is a remarkable story of strong, brave women. I am proud to work closely with them to enhance the future for both Saint Mary's College and the Sisters of the Holy Cross."

As for O'Grady, her hopes for the future mirror those of the majority of the College community.

"My hope is the College will continue to grow and thrive," she said.

"We must continue the vibrancy and excellence and outreach beyond [Saint Mary's]. It is this sense of service that will continue to allow us to grow."

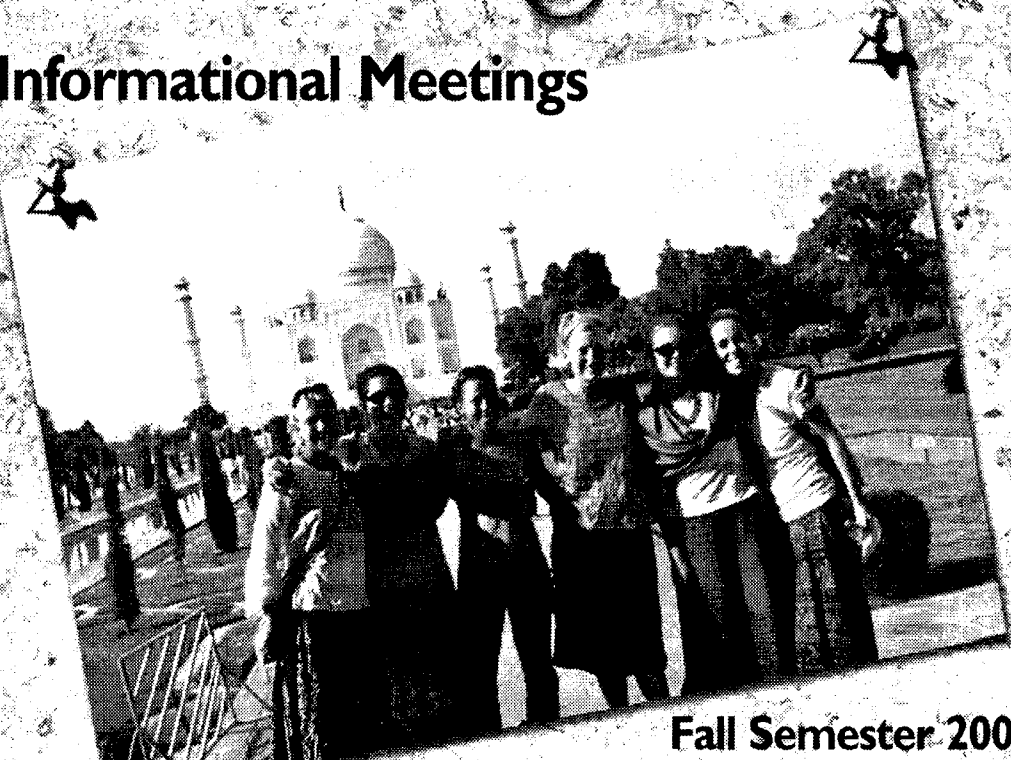
Contact Kelly Meehan at kmecha01@saintmarys.edu

"My hope is the College will continue to grow and thrive. We must continue the vibrancy and excellence and outreach beyond [Saint Mary's]. It is this sense of service that will continue to allow us to grow."

Sr. Joy O'Grady
president
Sisters of the Holy Cross

THE Semester Around the World PROGRAM

Informational Meetings



Fall Semester 2007

Wednesday, October 25, 2006
Monday, November 20, 2006
6:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Room 600, Hesburgh Library, University of Notre Dame
Applications available online: www.saintmarys.edu/~cwil

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE
NOTRE DAME, IN



**HAPPY #22
BIRTHDAY
BRIAN DOLAN**

ARCHIE '08

**LOVE,
MOM, DAD, KEVIN,
ERIN AND CARRIE**

WORLD & NATION

Friday, November 17, 2006

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Interior Ministry arrests Sunni leader

BAGHDAD — The Shiite-led Interior Ministry issued an arrest warrant Thursday for the top leader of the country's Sunni minority — a move certain to inflame already raging sectarian violence in Iraq.

Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani, a Shiite, announced on state television that Harith al-Dhari was wanted for inciting terrorism and violence among the Iraqi people.

Al-Dhari, head of the influential Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars, is an extreme hard-liner who recently mocked a government offer of reconciliation in return for abandoning the insurgency. But the move against him threatens to drive many moderate Sunnis out of the political system.

Already, moderate Sunnis have been threatening for weeks to leave the government and take up arms. If that happens, it would likely lead to a full-fledged civil war and make it much harder for U.S. troops to withdraw from Iraq.

Violent riots erupt in Tonga capital

NUKU'ALOFA, Tonga — Police and troops early Friday took control of Tonga's capital, where a crowd of young people had gone on a rampage, setting fires, overturning cars and looting shops in the South Pacific kingdom.

The violence erupted after crowds gathered in the capital, demanding that parliament pass democratic reforms before it ended its annual session Thursday.

"There are number of burning buildings," including several housing businesses and the offices of government ministries, said Tonga's Lord Chamberlain, the Honorable Filekepa.

NATIONAL NEWS

McCain calls for GOP reform after loss

WASHINGTON — Sen. John McCain, casting himself as the embodiment of the Republican Party's future in the vein of Ronald Reagan, said Thursday the GOP has lost its way and must return to "common-sense conservatism."

"Though we suffered a tough defeat last week, we will recover if we learn our lesson well and once again offer Americans enlightened, effective and principled leadership," the Arizona Republican said in a speech that laid out his vision for the party's path forward — and could set the tone for a potential presidential campaign.

The same day he launched a committee to explore whether to run in 2008, McCain invoked the legacy of Reagan, who won the presidency four years after leading the rebirth of a dispirited GOP following the Republican defeat in the 1976 presidential election.

Soldier sentenced in Iraqi rape case

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — A soldier was sentenced Thursday to 90 years in prison with the possibility of parole for conspiring to rape a 14-year-old Iraqi girl and kill her and her family.

Spc. James P. Barker, one of four Fort Campbell soldiers accused in the March 12 rape and killings, pleaded guilty Wednesday and agreed to testify against the others to avoid the death penalty.

"This court sentences you to be confined for the length of your natural life, with the eligibility of parole," said Lt. Col. Richard Anderson, the military judge presiding over the court-martial.

LOCAL NEWS

Semi chemical leak closes highway

LOWELL, Ind. — A chemical leaking from a semitrailer at a truck stop led authorities to close a section of Interstate 65 in northwestern Indiana for several hours Thursday after five people complained of breathing problems.

Both the northbound and southbound lanes of the highway were closed for a 17-mile stretch about 20 miles south of Gary as a precaution about 10:30 a.m. CST as hazardous materials responders prepared to neutralize the chemical, sodium hydrosulfite, said Mike Higgins, a spokesman for the Lake County Sheriff's Department.

ETHIOPIA

Darfur peacekeeping force planned

Annan, other world leaders do not set timetable; Sudan has reservations

Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA — African, Arab, European and U.N. leaders agreed in principle Thursday to a joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force for Sudan's Darfur region.

The force could be as large as 27,000, including the existing 7,000-member AU peacekeeping force in Darfur, but the leaders did not lay out a timetable for the force to begin work partly because Sudan had some reservations.

Sudan did not give the plan its unreserved approval because officials at Thursday's meeting needed to consult with their superiors, the country's U.N. ambassador, Abdul Mahmoud Abdelhaleem, said.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the additional personnel could include as many as 17,000 soldiers and 3,000 police officers.

A timetable for the expanded force to begin work was not announced partly because Sudan retained some reservations, including the question of who would be in charge.

"The next step is for the U.N. and AU to call a meeting of the non-signatories (of the Darfur Peace Agreement) ... and the government of Sudan. It should take place in the next couple of weeks to resolve outstanding issues by the end of the year," Annan told reporters.

A U.N. Security Council resolution has called for U.N. peacekeepers to take over for the poorly equipped and underfunded AU force, which has been unable to quell a war that has left more than 200,000 dead since 2003. But Sudan's government has firmly opposed the takeover.

The agreement was announced at a meeting in Ethiopia that brought together senior officials from the AU, the Arab League, the European Union, Sudan, the United States, China, Russia,



U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan opens a critical international meeting in Ethiopia to discuss the increasingly desperate situation in Darfur Thursday.

Egypt, France and a half-dozen African countries.

The expansion of the existing AU force will take place in three phases, said Annan, who had wanted to try to stop the bloodshed in Darfur before he leaves office on Jan. 1.

An African Union Peace and Security Council meeting will be held in the Republic of Congo on Nov. 24 during which Sudan is expected to present its final views, Annan said.

The senior British government representative at the meeting, International Development Secretary Hilary Benn, called on the Sudanese government to "accept the clear view of all the others present."

Benn called the joint U.N.-AU focus on Sudan "the best opportunity we have to bring this crisis to an end. In the mean time, we need an effective cease-fire, with all the parties committing to stop the fighting."

In recent days, pro-government militia forces known as janjaweed have stepped up attacks on villages in Darfur, killing dozens of people, international observers said Wednesday. In one raid, janjaweed militiamen — backed by government troops — forced children into a thatched hut, then set it ablaze, killing parents who tried to rescue the children, rebels said.

After years of low-level clashes over water and land

in the vast, arid Darfur region, rebels from ethnic African tribes took up arms against Sudan's Arab-dominated central government in 2003. Khartoum is accused of unleashing the janjaweed. The militiamen are accused of many of the atrocities in a conflict that has killed some 200,000 people and chased 2.5 million from their homes.

The conflict has destabilized a wide region that includes parts of neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic. The chaos has been exploited by rebels from Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic, and ethnic violence mirroring attacks in Darfur has been seen in Chad in recent weeks.

Hoyer selected as majority leader

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats embraced Rep. Nancy Pelosi as the first woman House speaker in history on Thursday, then quickly snubbed her, selecting Steny Hoyer of Maryland as majority leader against her wishes.

"Let the healing begin," Pelosi, D-Calif., said after Hoyer had eased past her preferred candidate, Rep. John Murtha, a prominent opponent of the war in Iraq. The secret-ballot vote for Hoyer was 149-86. She was chosen by acclamation.

Added Hoyer, a 25-year veteran

of Congress: "The Republicans need to know, the president needs to know and the country needs to know our caucus is unified today."

Hoyer, Murtha and several other Democrats predicted there would be no lingering effects from the bruising leadership campaign as the party looks ahead to taking control of the House in January after a dozen years in the minority.

Not everyone sounded convinced, though. "It created these tensions that we now have to work on," said Rep. Jose Serrano of New York, a Hoyer supporter.

Rep. Jim Moran, D-Va., who backed Murtha, said some mem-

bers of the rank-and-file had told both rival camps to count them as supporters. "We know who they are," he said, although he later added that many of them were lawmakers whose victories on Nov. 7 gave Democrats their majority.

"If they're freshmen, they get a pass on this one," he said.

Democrats chose their leaders for the next two years as lawmakers in both houses labored to wrap up work for the expiring 109th Congress and look ahead to the 110th, which convenes on Jan. 4.

House Republicans hold elections on Friday, with a two-way race for minority leader.

Play

continued from page 1

"Forgiveness," in which a man who has decided to save himself for marriage falls in love with a woman who has had sex. Through God's grace, Liddy said, he comes to forgive her, and even re-baptizes her as a born-again virgin in Saint Mary's Lake.

The play does, however, include its fair share of sexual assault and rape stories — even more than "Monologues" did — meaning the interviews did, as well.

"This play comes from stories of Notre Dame students; therefore I argue that it is

even more striking [than 'The Vagina Monologues'] because it is a reflection of our campus community," said student body president Lizzi Shappell, who works at the Gender Relations Center and headed up Student Senate's Sexual Assault Awareness Week two years ago. "Sexual assault is happening on campus."

History professor Gail Bederman, who was deeply involved in last spring's "Monologues" debate, left little doubt on the matter, calling sexual assault "an ongoing problem" that will "remain an ongoing problem for a long time."

Alcohol complicates the already-touchy matter. According to John Corker, a

cast member of "Loyal Daughters" who is involved in both Pillars and the "Men Against Violence" campaign, 90 percent of all rape and sexual assault incidents reported nationwide involved alcohol.

"You can't educate on issues of rape and sexual violence without bringing alcohol into the discussion," he said.

"Loyal Daughters" certainly identified the alcohol issue.

"The place of alcohol and social life on this campus, that's becoming clearer, and it came up in the discussion [Monday] night. ... I'm just not sure people understand that having sex with someone too drunk to understand is rape," Bederman said. "As long as

that's not clear to people, both sexes think they need to get plastered to have fun and hook up. I don't know what one play can do ... but this is a real problem."

Bederman emphasized the presence of sexual assault at colleges nationwide — something worsened by alcohol abuse, she said, noting that in studies from years past, Notre Dame has been shown to have a bigger problem with binge drinking than other schools. But she said a "culture of silence" at Notre Dame only deepens the problem.

"There is a cultural problem here — Student Activities must assume nobody is having sex, so they can't negotiate uncomfortable positions on

what constitutes consensual and nonconsensual sex. ... They can't draw lines other than thumbs up or thumbs down, do it or just don't do anything."

Other universities, she said, "are able to talk about issues, the gray areas. Because they do and can assume students are going to have extramarital sex, even promiscuous extramarital sex, they can talk about shades of gray. ... You can talk about this question of when something is consent and when something isn't consent."

"I think at other schools they do that, but you can't here, because nobody's supposed to consent whether they're drunk or not."

And students like Cassie Papak, also a cast member of "Loyal Daughters," say that silence exists even among friends at Notre Dame.

"It's come up in discussions with girlfriends. They feel uncomfortable talking about sexual situations in general," she said. "... It's more a fear of peer judgment than University action."

Still, many in the campus community agree a discussion has been started that is breaking that silence. Senior Emily Kelley, who attended Wednesday night's performance of "Loyal Daughters," said a few of her professors have breached the topic of sexual violence in classes this week. But victims of sexual assault and rape need more than just this play, Papak said.

"It takes a lot more than a pep talk for someone to overturn their world to expose that something like that happened to them," she said.

Ideally, Brauer said, there wouldn't be a need for plays like "Daughters" and "Monologues" at all.

"The day we don't need events like this is the day is the day we've succeeded. It's the day when Notre Dame is a sexual assault-free, rape-free campus," she said. "That's obviously the goal."

Whether "Monologues" will be performed remains to be seen, although Liddy said her involvement in another performance would prevent her from participating in "Monologues" — should it take place — this spring. Her main concern, however, was fundraising for the event.

For the past two years, "The Vagina Monologues" has been prohibited from fundraising, including charging for tickets, at Notre Dame. As proceeds are sent to the South Bend YWCA and the St. Joseph County SOS Rape Crisis Center (at an average of \$8,000 per run of the "Monologues"), Liddy called the University's fundraising prohibition "insane." The free tickets do, though, allow more students to see the performance, she said.

"It's kind of a catch-22," she said.

Bederman, on the other hand, suggested that perhaps "Monologues" has run its course, at least for the time being.

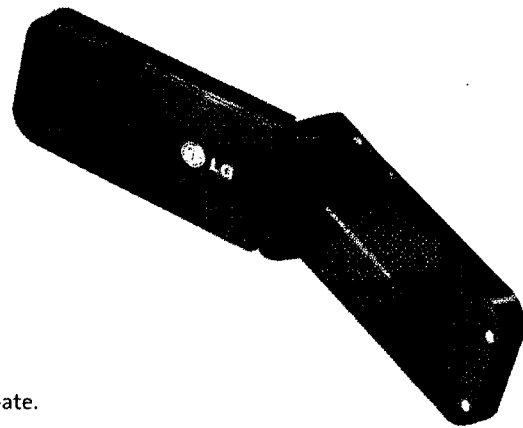
"It's my impression that's what's happening is different years, different groups of people say, 'Oh, we need the 'Monologues' ... [but] it's not like the football schedule. Personally, I'm hoping we have a vacation from the 'Monologues' this year."

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Contact Eileen Duffy at eduffy1@nd.edu

MARKET RECAP

Stocks		
Dow Jones	12,305.82	+54.11

Up: 1,746 Same: 164 Down: 1,509 Composite Volume: 2,744,087,380

AMEX	1,996.77	-13.79
NASDAQ	2,449.06	+6.31
NYSE	8,901.55	+21.08
S&P 500	1,399.76	+3.19
NIKKEI(Tokyo)	16,163.87	0.00
FTSE 100(London)	6,254.90	+25.10

COMPANY	%CHANGE	\$GAIN	PRICE
NASDAQ 100 TR (QQQQ)	+0.43	+0.19	44.30
INTEL CP (INTC)	+0.03	+0.01	22.33
SUN MICROSYS (SUNW)	+0.55	+0.03	5.44
MICROSOFT CP (MSFT)	+1.20	+0.35	29.47

Treasuries			
10-YEAR NOTE	+0.87	+0.04	4.655
13-WEEK BILL	+0.10	+0.005	4.955
30-YEAR BOND	+0.81	+0.038	4.733
5-YEAR NOTE	+0.95	+0.044	4.669

Commodities		
LIGHT CRUDE (\$/bbl)	-2.50	56.26
GOLD (\$/Troy oz.)	-2.10	621.70
PORK BELLIES (cents/lb.)	+1.35	91.00

Exchange Rates	
YEN	118.1950
EURO	0.7816
POUND	0.5296
CANADIAN \$	1.1424

IN BRIEF

Social Security plan called 'off the table'

WASHINGTON — The incoming chairman of the Senate Finance Committee said Thursday he wants to hold hearings on looming insolvencies in the Medicare and Social Security programs but said President Bush's plan to partially privatize Social Security is dead.

"Don't waste our time," said Democratic Sen. Max Baucus of Montana. "It's off the table."

He said the rising cost of Medicare and other health costs is a priority for the committee, though he did not detail how the committee would approach those problems. He said he will hold "vigorous" hearings on the issue.

Baucus said he will propose legislation to simplify the Medicare prescription drug program by streamlining the number of plans available and making it easier for people to choose one.

Baucus, 64, has been on the committee for more than two decades and briefly was chairman when Democrats took Senate control in 2001, the same year he collaborated with Bush on tax-cut legislation. The senator also sided with Republicans on a Medicare overhaul in 2003, a move that frustrated many in his party who felt the bill was a giveaway to drug companies.

He said the looming insolvency in the Medicare program is a more urgent problem than a similar fiscal crisis with Social Security.

Nobel Prize-winning economist dies

SAN FRANCISCO — Milton Friedman, a Nobel Prize-winning economist who championed individual freedom, influenced the economic policies of three presidents and befriended world leaders, died Thursday. He was 94.

Friedman died in San Francisco, said Robert Fanger, a spokesman for the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation in Indianapolis. He did not know the cause of death.

"Milton Friedman revived the economics of liberty when it had been all but forgotten," said former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, one of the politicians and colleagues who lauded Friedman on Thursday. "He was an intellectual freedom fighter. Never was there a less dismal practitioner of a dismal science."

Clear Channel agrees to buyout

Offer of \$18.7 billion, the third-largest in U.S. history, will make company private

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Three weeks.

That's how long it took radio giant Clear Channel Communications Inc. to accept the third-largest buyout offer ever in the U.S., after announcing in late October that it was considering "strategic alternatives."

And while the nation's biggest radio station operator has left the door open a crack in case something better comes along, it agreed to an \$18.7 billion offer from Thomas H. Lee Partners LLC and Bain Capital Partners LLC.

In addition to paying \$37.60 in cash for each Clear Channel share, the buyers will assume an additional \$8 billion in debt.

Chief Executive Mark Mays said the time was right to take the company private because its stock was being undervalued by equity markets.

"We tried to figure out what would be a way out of that and obviously the private equity markets have a much different view," he said by phone.

Mays said \$37.60 was a "great price" for shareholders and the private equity firms "think they got a great company and have a long-term view associated with it."

The transaction would be one of the biggest deals to take a company private, excluding debt, and illustrated the vast sums that buyout specialists have been able to assemble to acquire public companies.

HCA Inc. shareholders on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a \$21.3 billion leveraged buyout — the second largest ever in the U.S. — that will take the nation's No. 1 for-profit hospital chain private. That deal is the largest since the \$25.1 billion buyout of RJR Nabisco Inc. in 1988, according to Thomson Financial.

San Antonio-based Clear Channel's shares jumped \$1.24, or 3.6 percent, to



The nation's biggest radio station owner, San Antonio-based Clear Channel Communications Inc., has agreed to be acquired by an investment group.

close at \$35.36 on the New York Stock Exchange Thursday after rising earlier to a new 52-week high of \$35.88.

The company has until Dec. 7 to solicit competing proposals. Another bid for Clear Channel had been expected from Providence Equity Partners, the Blackstone Group and Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co.

"Basically they are telling you that we have a firm offer and a firm deal, but we are not going to get locked into it yet," said Frederick Moran, a Boca Raton, Fla.-based analyst for Stanford Financial Group.

Clear Channel owns or operates 1,150 radio stations and is the largest operator of radio stations in the country.

The company said in a

regulatory filing that it doesn't expect any senior management changes or significant layoffs.

Mark Mays will remain CEO while Randall Mays, his brother, will stay on as chief financial officer. Their father, Lowry Mays, the chairman, will continue to have an active role, the company said. Mark Mays said Thursday that may mean a "chairman emeritus" role for his father.

"Clear Channel is an exceptional media franchise that is well-positioned to grow thanks to the solid foundation the Mays family has created," John Connaughton, a managing director at Bain Capital, said in a statement.

It's not yet clear how much

the Mays stand to make in the deal. Clear Channel said Thursday that three members of senior management agreed to "significantly" reduce payments that would be made on a change of control.

A Clear Channel spokeswoman declined to elaborate. The Mays family owns about 7 percent of the company.

Mark Mays said only that "we don't stand to gain anything except what ... shareholders gain."

James Goss, media and entertainment analyst for Barrington Research, said the price of \$37.60 was in line with expectations. The figure represents a 10.2 percent premium over shares' closing price on Wednesday.

Citigroup wins bid for Chinese bank

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Citigroup Inc., America's largest banking institution, confirmed on Thursday that a Citigroup-led consortium has been selected to acquire a majority stake in one of China's biggest regional financial institutions, Guangdong Development Bank.

The consortium will acquire an 85.6 percent stake in GDB for 24.267 billion yuan, or \$3.06 billion, Citigroup said.

New York-based Citigroup itself will hold a 20 percent stake — under the 25 percent maximum allowed by Chinese government regulations. International Business Machines

Corp., headquartered in Armonk, N.Y., will have a 4.74 percent share. Meanwhile, two China-based companies — China Life Insurance Co. and State Grid Corp. — will each get 20 percent stakes, while Beijing-based CITIC Trust will hold a 12.85 percent share and Yangpu Puhua will get 8 percent.

GDB, which is owned by the provincial government and has more than 500 branches and about \$48 billion in assets, is based in the fast-growing industrial province that abuts Hong Kong.

Citigroup had been fighting since last year to buy the Chinese bank and the announcement of the deal signals that it will be able to greatly

expand its operations in China. Citigroup currently has branches in just six Chinese cities.

It bested a competing bid from a consortium led by France's Societe Generale AG.

A signing ceremony was held in Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong province.

Citigroup said in a statement issued in New York that "this transaction represents the first time a major international financial services company, leading a consortium of co-investors, has been permitted to obtain substantial ownership and assume a significant management role in a Chinese financial institution."

Officer

continued from page 1

used." That something became McCarthy's first joke line: "The automobile replaced the horse, but the driver should stay on the wagon."

This first creation elicited what has become the traditional "laugh and groan" from the crowd that now erupts after all of McCarthy's announcements.

But after a few years of using jokes in his safety address, McCarthy decided during one game not to follow his message with a witty remark because he thought people were getting tired of them.

"The crowd stayed quiet waiting for the joke, and afterward people asked me if the PA system had died," he said.

McCarthy has provided comic

relief at every home game since but emphasizes the importance of his words are not his clever punch lines, but rather the safety warnings. He said, the "idea wasn't to make fun of the announcement, but to use [jokes] as a gimmick to make people pay attention."

"The big thing is trying to get people to focus on traffic safety, and I know that's hard for them

"I watch for play-on-words throughout the entire year, and I jot them down. Before football season I sit down and try to put [the jokes] together."

Tim McCarthy
retired officer
Indiana State Police

to do after an exciting day of football and tailgating," McCarthy said. "I think it has been working ... I really feel we overall have a great safety record

as far as accidents are concerned."

The importance of McCarthy's announcements became obvious Nov. 4 — after Notre Dame defeated North Carolina — when a car struck Indiana state troop-

er Thomas Zeiser Jr. as he was directing traffic at the intersection of Indiana 933 and Cleveland Road following the game.

"The people who are really important are the police officers standing out on the corners directing traffic," McCarthy said, "and I did that before I started to go up to the press box."

According to a Nov. 6 South Bend Tribune article, Zeiser suffered only minor injuries after 39-year-old Dwayne Lodholtz of Lacrosse, Ind, hit him with his vehicle.

"[Lodholtz] wasn't a football fan, just someone going through the football traffic," McCarthy said.

After serving 25 years as a state trooper, six as a county sheriff and 12 as a county assessor, McCarthy is now retired, but said he was pleased when the police and the University asked

him to continue to make the traffic safety announcements at all home games.

Over 250 punch lines later, McCarthy continues to generate laughs no matter how the team is playing on the field.

"I watch the whole game from up in the press box" he said, "... the only drawback is being away from the crowd."

"You talk about loyal fans over the years, Notre Dame could be

"The big thing is trying to get people to focus on traffic safety, and I know that's hard for them to do after an exciting day of football and tailgating."

Tim McCarthy
retired officer
Indiana State Police

six touchdowns ahead and hardly anybody would be leaving that stadium, it's amazing how many people stay for the final second of the game."

As the years have passed, McCarthy's third-quarter announcement has become as expected as an Irish win in Notre Dame Stadium.

McCarthy said he gets his inspiration for his collection of one-liners from anyone and any-

thing. "I watch for play-on-words throughout the entire year, and I jot them down," he said. "Before football season I sit down and try to put [the jokes] together."

While he creates most of his work on his own, McCarthy said many students have offered him suggestions over the years as well.

Earlier this season outside the Joyce Center, McCarthy said he ran into leprechaun Kevin Braun who proposed the line: "If you drive when you're blitzed, you might get sacked," which McCarthy used in a following game.

"It was a great line," McCarthy said, "I couldn't believe I hadn't thought of it before."

A long time Notre Dame fan after growing up in a predominantly Irish Catholic neighborhood in Forty Wayne, McCarthy said he is happy to remain a presence in the stadium for years to come.

"I certainly don't get paid for it — never did — and I wouldn't take money for it, I just enjoy doing it," he said.

Contact Laura Baumgartner at lbaumg01@saintmarys.edu

Hammes

continued from page 1

predicts they will see similar volume for the last home game.

Director of Retail Operations Sally Wiatrowski said the Hammes Bookstore will be staffed with approximately three hundred employees this weekend to accommodate the expected 55,000 visitors. But Wiatrowski said the level of preparation for this weekend is the same as for every other football weekend in the fall.

"We bring the same level of intensity to our work every football weekend," Wiatrowski said. "We want to make sure every fan has the best experience possible."

This "level of intensity" must continue all weekend, as fans start to arrive at the bookstore as early as Friday morning and continue shopping through Sunday, Wiatrowski said. The busiest time during the

weekend is right before the football game, "when there is no win or loss and fans are still happy," she said.

The most popular items at the Bookstore are anything that "has Irish written all over it," Wiatrowski said. This includes face tattoos, football jerseys and the hooded sweatshirt, which Wiatrowski described as the "college sta-

"We bring the same level of intensity to our work every football weekend."

Sally Wiatrowski
director
Hammes Bookstore

ple." Now that the football season is drawing to a close, the bookstore is preparing for the holiday season rush.

A large Christmas tree and decorative wreaths have been erected to give the bookstore a festive air. New holiday apparel will be in the bookstore and students can get their holiday shopping done before they return home for winter break.

Sophomore Diane Sullivan plans on buying Christmas gifts for her family before heading home for winter break.

"I am definitely going to buy

my family Notre Dame gear," Sullivan said. "Stuff that has Notre Dame on the front of it, probably either a shirt or a sweatshirt."

Students do acknowledge that despite their good intentions to buy gifts for their family, they often buy a little something for themselves as well.

"I always end up buying myself the stuff they have displayed on the tables, or the stationery," Sullivan said. "I love pretty stationery."

Contact Laura Wilczek at Laura.A.Wilczek.1@nd.edu

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COLDWELL BANKER COMMERCIAL

Garbage man found guilty of rape, murder

Cape Cod criminal receives life sentence

Associated Press

BARNSTABLE, Mass. — A garbage man was convicted Thursday of rape and murder in the slaying of a fashion writer who was found beaten and stabbed in her Cape Cod home, her 2-year-old daughter clinging to her body.

Christopher McCowen, 34, received the automatic sentence of life in prison without parole for the 2002 killing of Christa Worthington, 46.

"I never meant for this to ever take place," said McCowen, who thanked the judge and court officers for showing him respect during the six-week trial. "Your honor, all I can say is I'm an innocent man in this case."

McCowen, who worked in the small town of Truro where Worthington lived, initially denied having any physical contact with her. After police told him his DNA had been found on her body, McCowen said they had consensual sex and he had beaten her. But he said a friend plunged the knife through her chest.

"We put the boots to her," McCowen said, according to police. The friend was never charged.

McCowen cried as the jury

came into the courtroom, and his attorney, Robert George, wiped away tears with the sleeve of his suit coat. McCowen bowed and shook his head "no" as the verdict was read.

"People ask about closure, but there will never be closure because Christa is never coming back to us," said her cousin Mary Worthington, who read a statement before sentencing.

Defense attorney Robert George reminded the jury that police had focused on Worthington's former boyfriends before finally arresting McCowen nearly 3 1/2 years after the crime.

George said police decided Worthington was raped because they could not believe that McCowen — a black, uneducated garbage man — could have had consensual sex with Worthington, a white, sophisticated woman who worked for years as a fashion writer in New York and Paris.

"The black man didn't get justice; I really believe that," said McCowen's friend, Janice Randall.

George also said police failed to seriously consider a report from a neighbor who said he saw a white man driving a dark-colored van or truck speeding out of Worthington's driveway about 12 hours after police believe she was killed.

Seniors to see final home game

Students say goodbye to student section, reminisce about past seasons

By MAGGIE DUNN
News Writer

Four years ago, they set foot in the Notre Dame Stadium and experienced the overflowing pride of Irish fans, football players and students on their own turf. Now, as Saturday's matchup against Army approaches, thousands of seniors face the bittersweet goodbye that is their last home game as students.

"It's pretty sad because it's been a part of my life for four years and to say goodbye is going to be tough," Saint Mary's senior Lauren Sheldon said. "Although I am pretty sure I'll go to games after I graduate, I'm going to miss the student section because it is a different experience from the regular seats."

"At my first Notre Dame game before I was a student, I would watch them in fascination," she said. "Then when I got to be a part of that, it was amazing."

Notre Dame senior Matt Buckle said he'll miss the tailgating — but also the stadium itself.

"I'll miss being at Notre Dame Stadium," said Buckle. "It's probably one of the best stadiums in the country, and most people don't even get a chance to go there. I take it for granted a lot, but Saturday I won't. I'm not leaving until the janitor from 'Rudy' kicks me out."

While many fellow seniors share mixed feelings nearing their final home game, they also hope to make the day a memo-

orable one.

Sheldon said she wants to take more pictures than usual, get there early and not leave until the very end. Buckle will enjoy the game with friends coming in from out of town, but he also plans to make the most out of what he presumes will be a n easy win against Army.

"I think Army is a good opponent for the last home game because we're probably going to win by a lot, and a lot of scoring makes for more memorable push-ups. I definitely want to go up," he said.

Though they soon face the end, the seniors enjoy reminiscing about the last four football seasons at Notre Dame.

"I have lots of memories," Sheldon said. "I'll always remember when the leprechaun threw a Rice Krispie treat at me and when we gave James Aldridge push-ups last year when he was in the recruiting section."

Sheldon, like many other seniors, noted that her favorite game was against the University of Southern California last season despite the loss.

"I went crazy when they ran out in their green jerseys," she said. "Then towards the end of the game, I rushed the field when I thought we had won. Although the ending was sad, it was still the best game of my four years."

Buckle also recalled a memory of rushing the field for the win against Michigan his sophomore

year, another game that stands out in the mind of several seniors.

"I got a handful of grass and put it in my pocket. It was awesome," he said.

Satisfied with a solid four-year run and especially the success of these last two seasons with the arrival of coach Charlie Weis, the seniors are happy to be ending on a positive note. Many look forward to an exciting game against USC, as well as the possibility of a big game in January.

"I'm happy about it," said Buckle. "We've only hit one divot in the road so far this year against Michigan and that's just one loss, so it's a pretty solid way to end up the season."



Sheldon echoed her sentiments.

"I feel like we're ending on an optimistic note," she said. "I would have loved to have been undefeated right now, but I'll take only one loss."

Not only are senior fans leaving, but 28 football players are graduating — which, students say, makes Charlie Weis' upcoming third season unpredictable.

"It's going to be a test of Charlie Weis' coaching ability because a bunch of new recruits are coming in, like Jimmy Claussen," said Buckle. "And a lot of freshmen are going to be put in starting spots, so it should be an interesting year. We'll see if they can step up or not."

Contact Maggie Dunn at mcdunn01@saintmarys.edu



"Seeds of Change" A Musical Performance

Georgine Resick, soprano
Professor of Music

John Blacklow, piano
Assistant Professor of Music

11:00 a.m.
Saturday, November 18
Annenberg Auditorium
Snite Museum of Art

"Seeds of Change," a program of French music from the first half of the 19th century, includes works by Berlioz, Chopin, Liszt, Gounod, and Saint-Saëns, as well as spoken commentary drawing parallels between the music of the period and concurrent trends in literature, the visual arts, social history, and politics.

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- ✦ **11/18–Army** "Seeds of Change" A Musical Performance
Georgine Resick, *Professor of Music*
John Blacklow, *Assistant Professor of Music*

3–1/2 hours before kickoff in the Annenberg Auditorium, Snite Museum of Art (unless otherwise noted).
For more information, visit <http://saturdayscholar.nd.edu>

College of Arts & Letters



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Tornadoes strike east, cause flooding, deaths

Power losses result from string of storms

Associated Press

RIEGELWOOD, N.C. — A tornado flipped cars, shredded trees and ripped mobile homes to pieces in this little riverside community early Thursday, killing at least eight people, authorities said.

The disaster the two-day death toll from a devastating line of thunderstorms that swept across the South to 12.

Kip Godwin, chairman of the Columbus County Commission, said authorities had nearly concluded their search of the area where all the deaths occurred — a cluster of trailers and an adjacent neighborhood of brick homes — and had accounted for everyone.

Hospital officials said four children were in critical condition.

The storms that began Wednesday unleashed tornadoes and straight-line winds that overturned mobile homes and tractor-trailers, uprooted trees and knocked down power lines across the South.

In Louisiana, a man died Wednesday when a tornado struck his home. In South Carolina, a utility worker checking power lines Thursday during the storm was electrocuted. In North Carolina, two people died in car crashes as heavy rain pounded the state, dropping as much as five inches in some areas.

Off the coast, a Coast Guard helicopter lowered a pump to a fishing boat that was taking on

water in 15-foot seas about 50 miles from Charleston. One crewman was aboard the 34-foot boat, which the Coast Guard escorted back to land.

The tornado that struck Riegelwood — situated on the Cape Fear River about 20 miles west of Wilmington — hit shortly after 6:30 a.m.

"There was no warning. There was no time," said Cissy Kennedy, a radiologist's assistant who lives in the area. "It just came out from nowhere."

As many as 40 mobile homes were damaged before the tornado crossed a highway and leveled three brick homes. Some of the dead were believed to be children.

Household debris, including carpet and a laundry basket, was scattered along a road. The storm dumped a minivan in a ditch, and an open refrigerator that still had food inside was filled with rainwater.

County Commissioner Sammie Jacobs said four to five mobile homes were demolished, and there were "houses on top of cars and cars on top of houses."

"We've stepped across bodies to get to debris and search for other bodies here this morning," Jacobs said.

The storm knocked out power to 45,000 customers in North Carolina. But the electricity was back on in most places by mid-afternoon.

The storm also caused minor flooding in the Washington area, where rescuers grabbed several people stranded in their vehicles, and slowed commuters as far north as

Newark, N.J.

Gamers line up for new PS3

Customers anticipate U.S. debut of Sony device after 6-month delay

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Die-hard gamers and entrepreneurs prepared to shell out \$500 or more for the new PlayStation 3 console that goes on sale Friday, many of them after waiting in line for days despite the likelihood they'd go home empty-handed.

Retailers across the country arranged midnight sales at some of their stores. Lines sometimes stretched around the block, even where the first consoles wouldn't be sold until Friday morning. Deliveries went down to the wire with FedEx vans sending boxes of the sleek black or silver consoles to individual stores Thursday.

Nine months pregnant, Julie Mosley said she tried to ignore her contractions for the chance to score machines for her family, her daughter's father and her younger brother.

"I'm going to hold out as long as I can," Mosley said Thursday as she sat on a cooler in the 19th spot outside a Circuit City in Mount Laurel, N.J., joking about giving birth on the sidewalk.

Potential customers braved freezing temperatures in Fargo, N.D., and heavy rain and winds in Baltimore and other East Coast locales.

"Katrina could come through here and I wouldn't switch," said Marco Cajas, 20, of Baltimore. "I spent the night on the cold street."

Short supplies and strong demand could be the formula for trouble as Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 3 makes its U.S. debut, a half-year late because of problems completing work on a built-in, next-generation DVD



Customers wait in tents outside a Best Buy in Plymouth Meeting, Pa. Thursday for the midnight release of PlayStation 3.

player.

The struggling electronics company, which has contended with laptop battery recalls and trails rivals in key products such as music players and liquid crystal displays, is counting on the PS3 to maintain and build its dominant position in video game consoles.

In Palmdale, Calif., authorities shut down a Super Wal-Mart after some shoppers got rowdy late Wednesday and started running around inside the store. In West Bend, Wis., a 19-year-old man ran into a pole and struck his head racing with 50 others for one of 10 spots outside a Wal-Mart.

At a Circuit City Stores Inc. location in New York, potential buyers traded accusations of line-cutting and tried to avoid fights amid heightened emotions.


"You can't even sleep unless you have your eyes open," Wataru Nada said.

Some customers were buying PS3 machines for themselves or as gifts, but many were hoping to resell them at a profit. Even before Friday's launch, units were fetching four or five times their retail price at the eBay Inc. auction site.

"As soon as I buy it, I'm going to sell it," said Jose Mota, 26, who grabbed the first spot in line Tuesday outside the Union City, Calif., Best Buy. "People will pay whatever just to get their hands on one."

Many stores reported calm. At a Best Buy in Boston with 140 machines for sale, employees simply gave out tickets for the first 140 in line so that everyone can go home.

At San Francisco's Sony Metreon mall, a "sacred scroll" notebook kept track of the first 505 people in line so they could go to the bathroom or pick up food without losing their spots. Some even got wristbands guaranteeing a unit.




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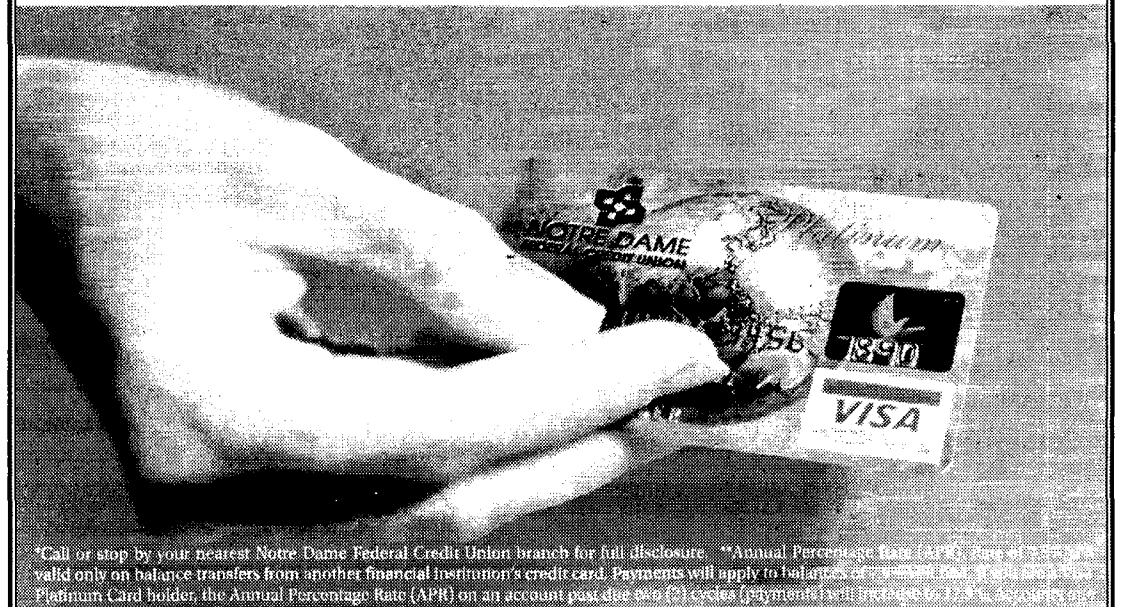
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'Loyal Daughters' part of solution

It drew fewer critics, featured far fewer vaginas and probably went unnoticed by many on campus.

But while in the past there was no avoiding the "Monologues" — a play with material explicit enough to rock a Catholic campus into debate — for those who attended one of this week's productions of "Loyal Daughters," the message was inescapable.

Sexual assault is a problem at Notre Dame. And so is Notre Dame's culture.

When a girl tells the story of how she was raped not once, but twice at a party off campus — and then found herself locked into a tortuously silent semester abroad with the first rapist — it's clear that there's a problem.

When two guys sit in front of an audience, ridiculing a girl for "crying rape to ResLife" as they play video games, it's clear that there's a problem.

And when 25 men and women get up on stage and explain, one by one, how they were abused or assaulted on Notre Dame's campus or during breaks from school, it's painfully clear that there's a problem.

"Loyal Daughters" does a far better job than "The Vagina Monologues" at making its point and pertaining to the University community. It includes males, and it does that in several important contexts: as the wrongdoer and the wronged, as straight and homosexual, as an adult both aware and confused. "Loyal Daughters" also focuses on the

role alcohol plays in sexual violence — a point that is essential to the play's goals, since alcohol abuse is all too frequently a disastrous factor in incidents of sexual assault.

It's impossible to undermine the real stories of real Notre Dame students. And it includes extra material that — while maybe not directly related to sexual assault — points at what several professors and students have referred to as a pervading "culture of silence." It's not easy to talk about sex and sexuality in a Catholic context — and that's why it's necessary to do so.

While the "Monologues" may have enjoyed more visibility, the play generated attention for the wrong reasons. Controversy over whether a skit glorifies lesbian rape or a dominatrix's relationship toward her clients doesn't contribute to the overall goal of rape prevention. Discussion about potential problems within the Notre Dame culture does.

That's exactly what "Loyal Daughters" contributes to this campus — and exactly why it should contribute in the future. A student-written production based on extensive interviews won't breed as much irrelevant controversy.

This isn't an issue that pertains to a small group of people. Sexuality — and the ability to freely address it — concerns every person on this campus. A play that attempts to involve as many of those people as possible in an effort that should be praised, promoted and, above all, continued.

The Observer Editorial

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

'Consent' is no justification

After reading the articles on "Loyal Daughters" in Tuesday's Observer ("Loyal Daughters" draws hundreds" and "Professors, playwright discuss sexual assault"), I was disappointed to find that the real solution to the problem of sexual violence was not presented. However, Professor Gail Bederman did allude to it when she said, "[rape] happens far more often now ... because of a different 'alcohol culture ... and sexual culture.'" This is the crux of the matter. Bederman admits that these harmful cultures are behind the increase in sexual assault.

So what is wrong with these cultures? In the Epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul writes, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest: which are fornication ... drunkenness, revellings and such like ... they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God" (5:19-21). Thus, we believe that drunkenness and fornication (i.e. pre-marital sexual relations) are great offenses against God and kill His grace in our souls.

Obviously, then, these are the issues we ought to be fighting against. The problem with our hedonistic culture and its defenders is that they want to allow these vices among adults (and even minors) as long as they consent to them. According to the popu-

lar culture, pre-marital relations are permissible as long as those involved have made a free choice. However, this is a disordered view of sexuality which leads men and women to focus only on their own desires. Then, once the flames of desire and pleasure are allowed to have free rein, these restless souls are continually encouraged to fuel and satisfy them, and this leads to other vices (promiscuity, abortion, alcoholism, etc.), among which is sexual assault. To put it simply, evil only breeds more evil.

Therefore, the solution is not to encourage these vices among consenting adults, but to recognize them as evil and avoid them while properly ordering our natural desires. This is our Christian duty before God and the only way to truly prevent sexual violence. On the other hand, if you decide to play with fire, there's a good chance that you're going to get burned.

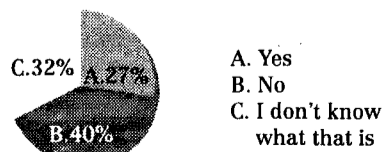
Jonathan Kaltenbach
sophomore
Keough Hall
Nov. 16

EDITORIAL CARTOON



OBSERVER POLL

Do you plan to see "Loyal Daughters?"



A. Yes
B. No
C. I don't know what that is

This poll is based on 519 votes at <http://www.ndsmcobserver.com/>

Submit a Letter
to the Editor at
www.ndsmcobserver.com

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

Plato
philosopher

Fallacies of a free market

In the first half of the nineteenth century, when America was still an unprecedented experiment in democracy, liberal Catholic Europeans such as Lord Acton and Alexis de Toqueville worried whether the two social virtues of liberty and equality could both be realized within it.

**James
Matthew
Wilson**

*The Treasonous
Clerk*

Equality seemed possible, they admitted, on account of the extension of suffrage and the rise of public education. But would not both of these egalitarian programs result in a generalized mediocrity? Everyone may be literate and competent at arithmetic, but the natural genius might suffocate among his spellin' and cipherin' peers. Universal suffrage would guarantee each person a role in the political sphere, but the great mass of citizenry would likely throw its support to the debased demagogue instead of the natural aristocrat because inferior judgment and jealousy usually lead to a blindness less admirable than that of the blindness of justice.

As our current party system endured in the century and more since the end of America's antebellum experiment (after Americans decided the dangers of democratic government were too grave to continue without the absolute check of a federal executive and judiciary), we have typically come to think of the Democrats as the party of equality and the Republicans as the party of liberty. Although such identifications are, to say the least, a stretch, I want to suggest one way in which they utterly misrepresent the true requirements for a just society.

At least since Johnson's Great Society, Democrats have flirted with a European social democratic model of the state, which would seek equality by guaranteeing a comprehensive body of welfare programs covering not prima-

rily education, but all facets of an individual's basic needs. Food, housing and healthcare could all be administered by a massive federally organized bureaucracy.

At least since the Hoover administration, Republicans have paid lip service to a variety of laissez faire economic models whose core principle answers unjustly to the name "liberty." According to this principle, the powers of government should be limited so as to guarantee the greatest latitude possible to the practice of free private enterprise. If the state would get out of the way of business, the market would provide a modern agora unlimited in growth and freedom.

The lesson of the Great Society programs is still being learned in most of our major cities, where literally hundreds of thousands of persons are crammed into high-rise tenements, in which they have no control over their living conditions and have no reason to believe that their domicile could ever be sufficiently theirs to become a home. Most of these egalitarian projects have ended not so much in mediocrity as misery. What is worse, these manifestations of a "classless" and just society have actually become dumping grounds for displaced and superfluous persons as the program of economic "liberty" has spread over several decades.

This project of liberty, in the meantime, has brought about an ever more activist federal government, paving the roads (literally and figuratively) for the unrestrained growth of mega-corporations. I apologize for repeating a cliché, but it is a true cliché, that this supposed economic liberty results primarily in the arrogation of great wealth to very few persons and leaves the vast majority of persons "wage slaves," whose sole freedom is their "liquidity," that is, their ability to move from one job or one town to another as

necessity dictates.

Both of these programs, in fact and principle, pay inadequate attention to the one locus where both liberty and equality may be had: the privately owned home. Although the rise of communism in the east during the last century made the specter of the absolute state expropriating the masses a real threat, in fact the greatest damage to private property has been the free reign of corporations, merely abetted by a servile state. As Fr. John C. Rawe observed in "Agriculture and the Property State" (1936), once the federal judiciary guaranteed corporations the full rights of persons under federal law with few of the restrictions imposed by state law, longstanding efforts to guarantee a wide distribution of private property (land) became impossible. Where once U.S. homestead laws prohibited the ownership of more acres of land than was necessary to provide for the family that tilled it, by the 1930s, corporations had gotten such limits overturned and set up the massive factory farms that now all but dominate American agriculture.

When a society attempts to guarantee as wide a distribution of private property as possible (and that means real ownership, not the mockery of it entailed by the proliferation of mortgages), it demonstrates a cherishing of equality. When that society insists that only real human beings, and not the legal fictions of corporate persons, can own property and that it is part of the common good to foster and protect that ownership, it exemplifies the cultivation of liberty. Our current president has proclaimed that more new homes have been built and bought in the last several years than ever before. If that is statistically true, it hides a more devastating truth. Most Americans who own their homes do so only nominally. A bank or a government agency can wrangle it away with little trouble,

token efforts at fighting "eminent domain" notwithstanding.

The continued expansion of government powers will not resolve this debacle. The panaceas of the welfare state help some desperate cases, but as often serve to rationalize and conceal the consequences of reckless corporate growth. Rather we need small government; the smaller the better. Contrary to John McCain's true Republican posturing, we do not need to limit government that enterprise may free us.

Government should be primarily local, and any business should be smaller still, until politics and economics alike are primarily local affairs. Unless both these forces are reduced to the human scale of the city or county, they will continue to corrode the one field of action in which the person and family can act and be heard. The great error of our experiment in government has been to believe that democracy can simply balloon without losing its legitimacy. On the contrary, size matters. Liberty and equality, insofar as they are possible, are possible only for members of a community in which one can know all one's fellow members and can nip in the bud any acquisitive entity simply on the basis of its getting too big.

Political liberty is not a universal value, but merely a local possibility. The only liberty that can aspire to the universal pertains to Truth and to the Catholic Church and must be addressed in that context, not this one.

James Matthew Wilson is a Sorin Research Fellow, and carries "Who Owns America? A New Declaration of Independence" under his arm or in his heart at all times. His column appears every other Friday. He can be reached at jwilson5@nd.edu

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Leaders needed in politics

In response to the recent Inside Column "Gone before I get going," (Nov. 15), I believe politics are scum campaigns for a reason, the main one being that only scum ever want to get involved in the first place. The author's view that politics are simply too dirty for his hands is a common perception among other would-be politicians. The problem with this is that it maintains the negative connotation associated with campaigning because no one is willing to step up to try and change it.

People with positive intentions see the political arena how it is, not how it could be, and therefore never even attempt to try their hand at a campaign because they feel politics will just be too horrendous to even try. If anyone really cares about politics so much, why doesn't anyone even attempt to change them? I think if these people were willing enough to at least consider a career in politics, they should also be willing to work hard toward changing the process into something more respectable? I agree with the author, politics have become so muddled that morality may as well be a swear word. I, unlike the author, fully intend to dive head-first into a profession most say has no ethics at all, and I will change the arena into something a bit more respectable. I can only do so much, however, and this column disappointed me, as it seems very few other "would be politicians" share my desire. So long as people with good ideals stay away from the area they so despise, politics will never change and the cycle will forever continue.

Adam Joines
freshman
Alumni Hall
Nov. 16

'Loyal Daughters' promotes thought and awareness

Margot O'Brien's letter in Wednesday's Observer ("Play 'problematic' for campus community") is a dispiriting revelation of her inability to understand what a play is. Some plays tell you what to think. But many great plays — including, for example, plays by Shakespeare — take a different route and demand that you think, without telling you what you ought to think.

They present characters who speak and whose actions are dramatized. They do not present us with the author's views or require us to agree with a single moral position. Like so much else in the world, but heightened and intensified in the way that drama so effectively achieves, they question us and ask that we work hard to determine how we react to their events, their characters, their language. They force us to be aware of our ethical response but they do not prescribe what that response must be.

What O'Brien perceives as "morally neutral" may be anything but an abdication of ethical engagement or a form of implicit approval of the events of the play. It can be a superb way in

which drama places the responsibility on us without offering us the easy way out of telling us the right answer. Great drama may be neither quiz nor homily.

Like O'Brien, I have read the script of "Loyal Daughters"; unlike O'Brien, I shall be at a performance tonight to discover how the play in performance engages with my beliefs. (By the by, I am not for a moment saying that "Loyal Daughters" is as good as Shakespeare, only that it appears to work in the same way that Shakespeare's plays work).

For every single one of us at Notre Dame, the Church's teachings on a wide range of sexual acts are perfectly clear and present in our thoughts. Our task is to think through how the Church's teachings and our own ethical beliefs (which may or may not be the same as the Church's teachings) connect with the realities of the experiences of those people on campus which form the basis for the drama that has been created as "Loyal Daughters."

For O'Brien there is no difficulty: her acceptance of the Church's teachings leads her to find a response of prayer and compassion that she eloquently

describes in her letter. That the people whose lives the play dramatizes may find 'nothing wrong with consensual sexual activity' does not mean that the play (or the playwright) finds nothing wrong with sexual activity that is 'homosexual, bisexual, fornication, masturbation, or contraceptive sex' (I quote from O'Brien's letter).

"Loyal Daughters," on my reading of the script, seeks to be true to the material it has gathered. It asks us to judge what is right and what is wrong. It leaves open whether we might, say, disagree with the Church's teachings on masturbation but accept its position on fornication. It never requires that we approve of all the sexual activity it documents. And, above all, it asks what we can do, as members of a community, to prevent the kind of violence that men and women alongside whom we study, work, and live have experienced.

That is a moral demand we should praise Loyal Daughters for asking of us all.

Peter Holland
professor
Shakespeare Studies
Nov. 16

DPAC SPOTLIGHT

Chorale thrives on unique talents, versatility

By RAMA GOTTUMUKKALA
Scene Writer

Bearing the official seal of the University, the members of the Notre Dame Chorale pride themselves on their versatility. Songs from the likes of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Schubert and Beethoven escape their vocal chords weekly. But their greatest pleasure may be the most simple one — seeing their audiences light up, no matter where they play or what they perform.

At a show in Cleveland during the group's 2006 winter tour, Chorale president Michael Suso got a glimpse of just such an occasion.

"It came time to sing the ND fight song and alma mater," the senior said. "When singing, the look of joy on the faces of ND alumni and friends in the audience as they sang along with us conveyed clearly to our entire group for what and for whom we were performing. It was a very humbling experience and stood as a unifying moment for the Chorale."

Comprised of 52 men and women from nearly every major, including both undergraduate and graduate students, the Chorale acts as the official concert choir for the University. Open to students from all walks of Notre Dame life, the group hosts campus concerts and periodically sets out on nation-wide tours.

"Though we are a group of roughly 60 singers, we share in Notre Dame with thousands of alumni and friends," Suso said. "When singing, we represent those that have come before us and those that will take our places long after we have graduated."

Chorale's devotion to its proud lineage takes center stage this Saturday. On the eve of the final home football game of the

season, the vocal troupe will perform in the fall concert alongside the Chamber Orchestra, one of two joint performances this semester. Held at the DeBartolo Center for the Performing Arts, the event will begin soon after the Notre Dame-Army game.

"We have been rehearsing the pieces that we will be performing during our fall concert since September," Suso said. "This concert is our chance to not only sing, but convey the composer's feelings and passions through song."

Among these composers are classic musical poets like Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Richard Wagner and Franz Peter Schubert. And lest the audience completely lose itself in the 18th and 19th centuries, the group makes time for a few sentimental favorites — the Notre Dame Victory March and the Alma Mater.

Transitioning freely between classical, baroque and renaissance music, the Chorale offers its listeners a unique sound rich in tone and emotion. According to Suso, the group's mission is a simple one.

"When performing, as long as we convey the original intentions of the composer and put smiles on the faces of those in the audience, we could not be happier," he said.

Led by director Alexander Blachly and accompanist Päivi Ekroth, the Chorale continues to define itself as a renaissance choir — one that melds the varying talents of its members to breathe life into timeless song. The founder-director of Pomerium, an internationally acclaimed vocal ensemble, Blachly has been active in his field for over 34 years as both performer and scholar.

"He's an esteemed, world-renowned musician — a consummate professional,"



Photo courtesy of Michael Suso

The Notre Dame Chorale will perform a joint concert with the Chamber Orchestra Saturday at 8 p.m. Football tickets grant fifty percent off admission.

Suso said. "We're privileged to learn from such a versatile musician and director."

Ekroth is the perfect representative of the group's strivings for versatility — a talented accompanist who can sight read and play music without any prior knowledge of the piece, Suso said.

"She is truly an invaluable asset to the Chorale and an exceptional musician," he said.

Every year, the Chorale invites new members into its fold. This year's iteration is no different, according to Suso, and has flourished with a unique blend of singers.

"Approximately half of the Chorale is made up of new voices. We have a great blend of new talent and veterans," Suso said.

Beyond this weekend's festivities, the

Chorale has one more signature event on the horizon this semester — dual performances of Handel's "Messiah" Dec. 9 and Dec. 10. Besides their spring concert, Chorale will be traveling to New Zealand next May. If all goes as anticipated, the group will be touring with the prestigious New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

For now, though, Chorale's focus is on just one performance — the next one. Under the bright lights of the Leighton Concert Hall, the group's versatility will once more be front and center.

"Those in attendance will hear classical, renaissance, chant and a taste of what makes Notre Dame great," Suso said.

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Irish Glee Club joins forces with West Point peers

By MARTY SCHROEDER
Assistant Scene Editor

While the Notre Dame Fighting Irish and the Army Black Knights may be squaring off on the gridiron this weekend in a battle between two storied football programs, the Notre Dame Glee Club and the West Point Glee Club will be joining musical forces for a concert tonight. These two programs are full of history — the Notre Dame Glee Club has been in existence since 1915 and the West Point Glee Club since 1903. The program promises to be an excellent opportunity to see not only the Irish Glee Club, but also the Black Knight Glee Club.

Both programs will be performing separate short programs, one following the other, before uniting for a joint program which is sure to impress. The Irish Glee Club will be performing a wide variety of music including "Danny Boy," the sea shanty "Tom's Gone to Hilo" and the Notre Dame Victory March. The Glee Club has also learned the Army Fight Song for this concert, a part of the concert the Irish find particularly important. Also, the two Clubs will be performing a Renaissance liturgical hymn, Franz Biebl's "Ave Maria" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Director Daniel Stowe has put together the music from shows performed through their fall tour. Stowe has been with the Irish Glee Club for over a decade and has been performing marvelously in this position. While completing a doctoral dissertation from Cornell University in

Musicology, he has been the director of the Glee Club and the Notre Dame Symphony Orchestra.

The USMA Glee Club is directed by Randall Wallace and was featured in the film "We Were Soldiers." The author of the book the film was based upon, Lieutenant General Hal Moore (Ret.), requested the help of the USMA Glee Club to help with the music and the request was granted. This follows the Long Gray Line's tradition of service to country by using the group's many talents.

The idea for this concert came from a joint concert the Irish Glee Club sang with the Naval Academy two years ago. The structure of tonight's concert will be similar to the previous concert. The Notre Dame Glee Club thought this would be an excellent time to perform with another one of the service academy glee clubs.

The directors of the Glee Clubs are both talented figures in their field, but the student leaders, Cadet-in-Charge CDT Jim Pleuss ('07) of the USMA Glee Club and senior Nathan Catanese, the Notre Dame Glee Club president, are both thrilled by the prospects of bringing these two glee clubs together even though the two programs differ. The Black Knight Glee Club is co-ed and larger, offering a different perspective on the music they will sing than the fraternal Irish Glee Club.

The spirit of sportsmanship — a quality both of these schools are known for — has led to the Notre Dame group finding places to stay for the visiting Glee Club. The Notre Dame Glee Club members, along with members of Notre Dame Army



Observer file photo

The Notre Dame Glee Club will be performing a joint concert tonight alongside the United States Military Academy Glee Club at the Leighton Concert Hall.

ROTC, will be hosting the Army Glee Club members.

"I think you can attribute that to the hospitality at Notre Dame. It will be a good chance to share Notre Dame with them," Catanese said.

Also, the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Francis J. Harvey, will be in attendance. This would be an honor in its own right, but Harvey is also a Notre Dame graduate. This connection will provide a bridge between the two institutions aside from the music they will be singing.

This will be the perfect addition to the final home game of the season, one that Catanese feels is a great opportunity for

both groups.

"This is a great opportunity because of the tradition of the two schools," he said. "The dual traditions of collegiality from football can now spread to music as well."

The Glee Clubs will be performing in the Leighton Concert Hall tonight at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for the general public, \$6 for Notre Dame faculty and staff, \$5 for senior citizens and \$3 for all students. A special price of \$6 will be given to any faculty, staff or alumni of the United States Military Academy.

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"This is a great opportunity because of the tradition of the two schools."

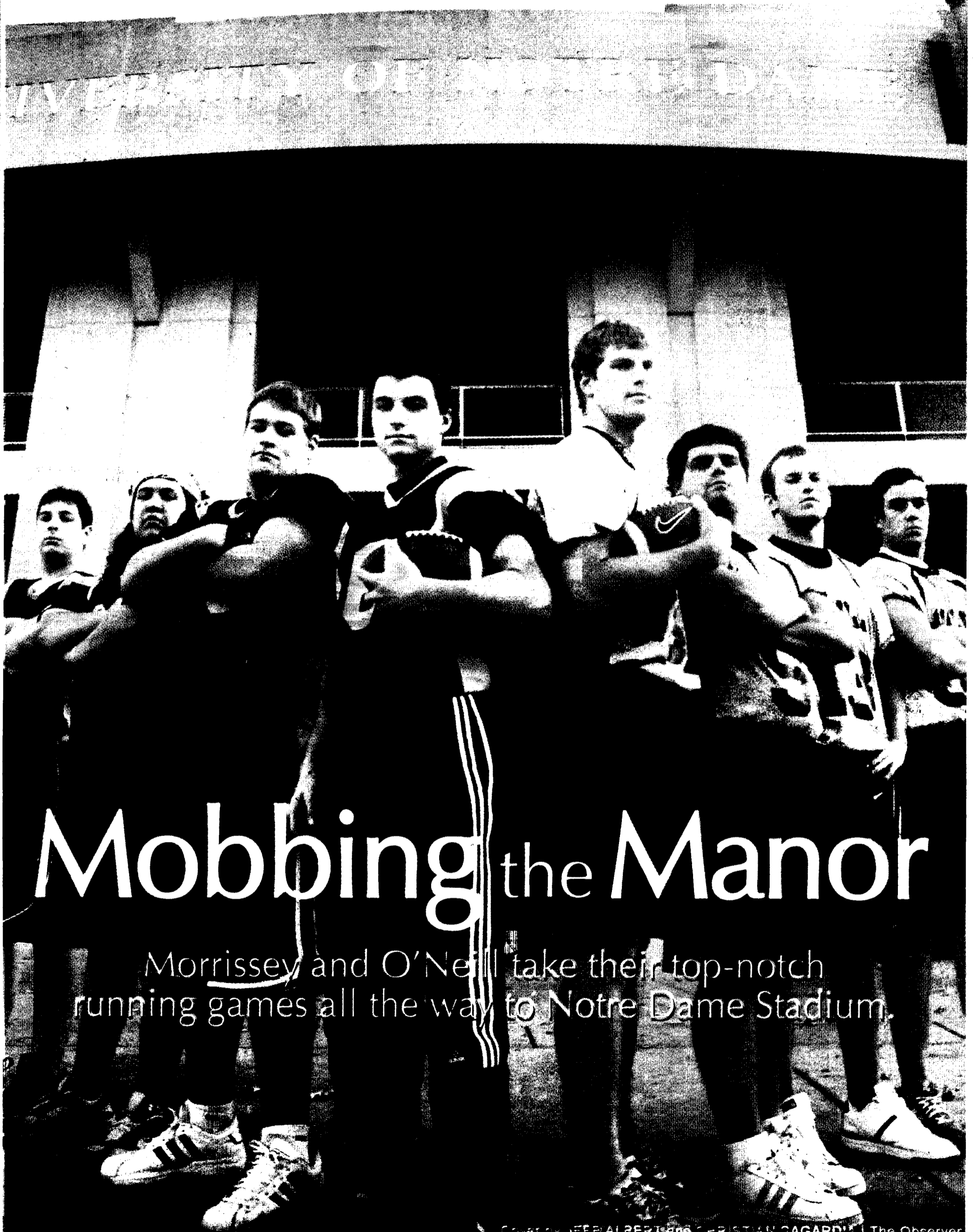
**Nathan Catanese
Glee Club President**

IRISH INSIDER

Friday, November 17, 2006

INTERHALL

THE
OBSERVER



Mobbing the Manor

Morrissey and O'Neill take their top-notch running games all the way to Notre Dame Stadium.

MEN'S INTERHALL

Mob, Manor set for championship showdown

By JOHN TIERNEY
Sports Writer

Morrissey and O'Neill will put the pride of their dorms and their one-loss seasons on the line Sunday in the Men's Interhall championship game at Notre Dame Stadium Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

Both teams advanced to the Championship game with a relatively easy trip through the post-season. O'Neill started off at No. 5, but easily knocked off No. 4 Carroll 21-8 in the opening round. O'Neill then advanced to the finals by virtue of a 12-0 shutout victory over Stanford on November 5. The Mob was led by quarterback Chris Stroh, who threw for 147 yards and completed 12 of his 16 passes. Running back Braden Turner ran for 34 yards on 10 carries with a touchdown, while fullback Mike Mattingly rushed for 47 yards on 10 carries.

Both the running backs and the quarterback credited the offensive line for their performances, as the line opened up rushing holes and gave Stroh time to find open receivers.

Morrissey's opening round game against Zahn was much closer than O'Neill's, with a failed two point conversion by the Rabid Bats marking the difference in the 7-6 Manor win. But Morrissey turned its offense

around with a 27-10 drubbing of Siegfried in a game that was closer than the score indicates according to Manor captain Steve Klein.

Manor quarterback Joe McBrayer threw for three touchdowns and ran for another, while completing 6-of-9 passes in the semifinal win. Morrissey held on to the win thanks to the power running game of Klein, Brian Pieh, and Nick Bencomo, who combined to run for 146 yards on 24 carries.

Like O'Neill's, a large part of Morrissey's victory was the ability of their offensive line to control the trenches.

"The offensive line needs a lot of recognition because of how dominant they have been this season," Manor tailback Brian Pieh said. "The running game, and passing game for that matter, would not have nearly been as successful as they have been if not for the guys up front."

For Morrissey, the championship game will be about relishing the opportunity to finally play in the stadium. After coming up short in the semifinals in two of the past four seasons, the Manorites were finally able to advance to the championship.

"It feels awesome to be able to play in the stadium. I don't know if it will completely sink in until we actually set foot on the field," Klein said.

While emotions are always

important in football, more relevant to the actual outcome of the game will be the play of the teams on the field. In a game that O'Neill captain Pat Conley predicts will be "reasonably low-scoring," he believes that the key to the Mob's success will be dominating in the trenches and controlling the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball.

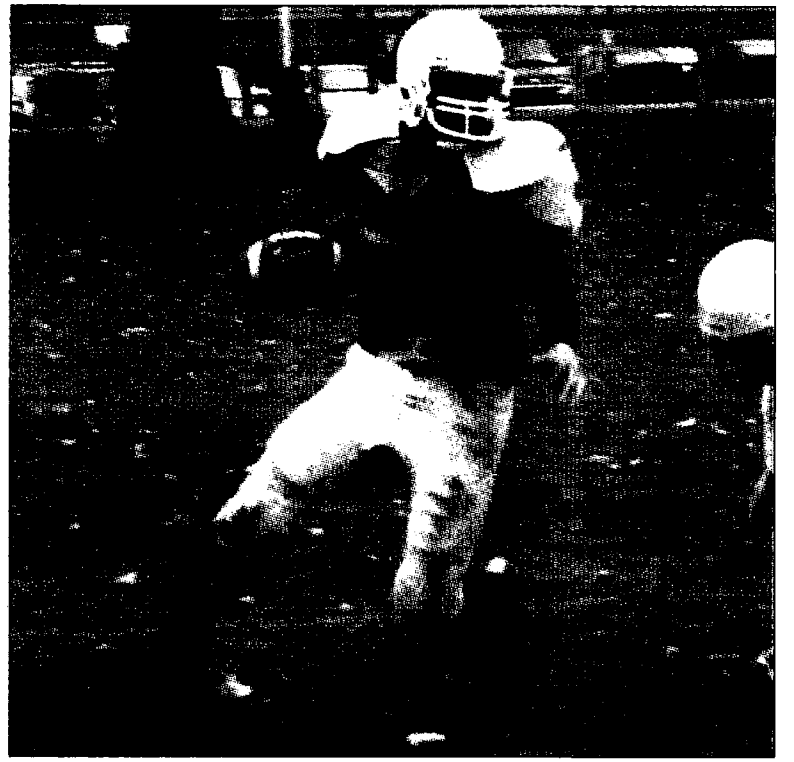
"I think the linemen will make some important blocks that will spring our running backs for a big gain," he said.

Conley is confident in the ability of his team to play at championship level not only on offense, but on defense as well. One main reason for the offensive production the Mob had throughout the postseason was its defense's ability to win the field position battle.

"Our defense has been strong all year and I expect the same on Sunday," Conley said. "Our offense has been able to move the ball very well against all defenses and should continue to be able to on Sunday. A lot of players on both sides are going to make plays."

The Manorites, meanwhile, need to play with focus and determination — something that was important to their play throughout the year.

"We have to come out focused and play our best game of the year. We need to avoid hurting ourselves with penalties and to execute like we've been doing in



GRETCHEN MOORE/The Observer

Mob receiver Nate Forte looks upfield during O'Neill's 12-0 win over Carroll Nov. 5. O'Neill's offense helped the Mob get to the championship game where it will play Morrissey Sunday.

the playoffs," Klein said.

The teams enjoyed having a two-week layoff to heal injuries and allow for extra practice time. "The two-week layoff has been great. The team is rested and ready for Sunday," Conley said.

But after the week off, both

teams are ready to get back to playing games that count.

"The anticipation of playing in the stadium is so great that it can be hard to stay focused in practice," Klein said.

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Crowded backfield keeps offense fresh, defense guessing



PAMELA LOCK/The Observer

Manor tailback Brian Pieh rushes against Keough in Morrissey's 20-0 win over the Kangaroos Oct. 8. Pieh is one of two backs used by the Manor, alongside junior Nick Bencomo.

Two-back system key for Mob and Manor

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

The paradigm was established long ago — one primary running back per backfield. Any more, and controversy will inevitably follow. That idea seems to have shifted.

Both men's Interhall finalists — Morrissey and O'Neill — operate a rushing offense that utilizes two backs.

Manorite tailback Nick Bencomo presents enough challenges to defenses by himself. Bencomo is a dual threat in the Manorite rushing attack, combining strength between the tackles with speed when he breaks into the secondary.

"I don't think I fit into the category of any one runner," Bencomo said. "I just try to run hard every time I touch the ball."

Just when the defense starts to stack the box, freshman Brian Pieh stretches the field with his speed and vision.

"I see myself as more of an open field back," Pieh said. "I am not really a power runner, but if I need to I can run up the middle."

Morrissey is not the only team that has developed a "thunder and lightning" backfield. O'Neill runs a similar system around halfback Braden Turner and fullback Mike Mattingly.

Turner is quick, agile and darts downfield through any hole he can find. But to convert in short-yardage situations, the Mob turns to Mattingly, who complements Turner's quicker running with

a downhill, bruising style. The perfect third-and-short back, Mattingly hits the hole quick and hard. But even with his size and strength, Mattingly is still elusive in the open field.

"I think I can bring both speed and power to the table," Mattingly said. "From game to game I can vary my running style based on the defense we are playing."

The decision to install a multiple-back offense was an easy one for both teams. Morrissey ran a similar offense last year based on the personnel it had at the time.

"The team decided to use a two-back system when it realized the amount of talent that was and continues to be at that position," Bencomo said.

The addition of Pieh to the Manor helped cement the two-back system for Morrissey, which could now utilize the two different types of tailbacks effectively.

"We each offer different styles to the offense and the running game," he said. "If you can keep a defense off balance with the running game, and then employ the type of passing game we have, it is difficult to stop."

O'Neill felt that the contrasting styles of Turner and Mattingly would benefit the team.

"I think our captains just realized that Braden and I had complementary talents," Mattingly said. "Because of this, it would be smart to use both of us as running backs."

Since defenses prepare for what they think they will see from their opponent, adding another factor to the backfield doubles the possibilities defenses must worry about and keeps them from focusing on

any one back. Both teams saw that using different looks and different options are important benefits of utilizing more than one back.

"I think that it stops defenses from keying on one player, which is very important in this league," Mattingly said. "If a team places its emphasis on stopping one of us, the other is usually able to run very well."

Such a successful running game also sets up the pass since defenders are quick to anticipate a run.

"With the confidence I have in our running game, you often see opponent's defensive backs cheat on the run, leaving our very athletic receivers wide open," Mob quarterback Chris Stroh said.

Rather than competitive, the backfield relationships are symbiotic. The backs realize that victory becomes more attainable when they work together and support each other. Morrissey's backs generally receive equal carries in order to keep defenses off guard and a fresh set of legs on the field at all times.

"We have had no conflicts this year whatsoever," Pieh said. "The older guys have helped me develop more as a runner."

Even though Turner is the Mob's running back and Mattingly the fullback, they receive a fairly equal number of touches.

"We feed off each other and enjoy each other's successes," Mattingly said. "Nonetheless, it certainly does fuel you to know that there is another back who can push you to work harder."

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WOMEN'S INTERHALL

Pangborn, PW ready for title game rematch

By MIKE BURDELL
Sports Writer

Different year, same teams.

This year's Women's Interhall championship features a rematch of last year's title game in a showdown between Pangborn and Pasquerilla West.

Looking for a repeat from last year's 13-0 win in the championship, the Purple Weasels understand the energy surrounding the game and believe they will be able to handle the pressure.

"We won [the championship] last year so we know what it's like playing in the stadium," Purple Weasels captain Mo Spring said.

Although the Purple Weasels have aspirations of repeating their title, they aren't the only team going into Sunday's matchup with confidence and excitement Pangborn still has a bad taste in its mouth after last year's championship upset.

"We've been working for this all year. We have been thirsty to get back to the stadium," Phox coach Tom Holder said.

But the Purple Weasels also have a loss to avenge this season, after losing to the Phoxes 13-12 on Sept. 21. But despite falling in the teams' only matchup this season, the Purple Weasels still feel they have improved a lot since

then.

"We've grown as a team over the season. We played [Pangborn] as our third game and we've certainly improved since then so I think it will be a whole new game in the stadium," Spring said. "We're definitely big rivals since we met last year in the stadium, but we'll show that on the field."

Pangborn is determined to finish this year with a win, capping its undefeated season with a title.

"Ever since we lost [the championship game to Pasquerilla West] last year, all of us, especially the seniors, agreed that we wanted it to be our last loss ever. The girls just really want to win the championship," Holder said.

The Purple Weasels feel that the most important thing for them to win is to focus on their own play. A team led by its senior leadership, Pasquerilla West has confidence in its ability to execute its plays well enough to retain the championship. The Purple Weasels believe that no matter how good Pangborn plays Sunday, they will still be able to win if they play their best football.

"Pangborn is a really good opponent. They're a pretty strong team. I think it's more how we play our game than trying to expose their weaknesses. We have to play how we've been playing," Spring



Phox quarterback Katie Mooney stands ready to take the snap during Pangborn's 20-7 win over Farley Nov. 5. Pangborn will face Pasquerilla West Sunday for the Interhall title.

KELLY HIGGINS/The Observer

said.

But on the other sideline, Pangborn feels it can rely on the mistakes it feels Pasquerilla West will make. If the Phoxes are able to effectively exploit the Purple Weasels' weaknesses, they think that will be enough to win.

"Both teams really know each other well, so the team that can avoid turnovers and not give up the big plays

should win," Holder said. "It should come down to coaching, execution and taking care of the ball."

Both teams have used similar styles of play in their returns to the stadium. The Purple Weasels and the Phoxes throughout the season have both relied on the play of their defenses and their quarterbacks — Cara Davies for Pasquerilla West and Katie Mooney for Pangborn.

Because of the similarities and history between the two squads, Holder expects an exciting game Sunday.

"The fact that we fell short last year doesn't play a factor," Holder said. "The teams are very evenly matched, so it should be a good game."

Kickoff is noon Sunday at Notre Dame Stadium.

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Purple Weasel defense takes team back to the stadium

By COLIN REIMER
Sports Writer

"Offense sells tickets; defense wins games."

No matter what worn-out cliché you use, the message is always the same — a successful team or program is always predicated on a solid defense.

That is why it comes as no surprise that the primary reason Pasquerilla West has an opportunity to defend its

Women's Interhall championship is its smothering defense.

The Purple Weasels have shut out three opponents this season, including previously undefeated Welsh Family in the semifinals. Pasquerilla West has allowed just 25 points all season, an average of only 4.2 points in six games.

"We pride ourselves on shutouts and goal line stands," Pasquerilla West cornerback Annie Brusky said.

Pasquerilla West also understands that at this point in the season, defense is essential in winning games because it sets up the offense.

"The defense this season is what ignites our offense," Pasquerilla West captain Mo Spring said. "They get our field position."

The Pasquerilla West defensive unit has been quite efficient this year in setting up their offense for easy scores. But with the lockdown corner-

back Brusky and ball-hawking safety Brigid Bulfin patrolling the secondary, it's a rarity when the Purple Weasels get the ball in their own territory.

This tough secondary is hugely important for Pasquerilla West since teams are much more likely to have passing attacks in the women's league.

"You know they won't run the ball, because you don't get too far doing that in flag-football," Spring said. "There are restrictions on blocking, and less contact in general."

Because of the reliance on the passing game, Pasquerilla West only sends two downlinemen to rush the quarterback — seniors Julie Putnam and Caroline Schmidt.

"We have a lot of intensity, and some great people rushing," said Brusky of her defensive teammates. "Because they bring so much pressure, the secondary can make big plays. Rushing two people isn't a problem."

And while Putnam and Schmidt are busy chasing down the opposition's quarterback, Spring, Brusky and the rest of the Purple Weasels shift their focus to blanketing receivers.

"We like to be an aggressive defense, and try to dictate the pace of the game," Spring said. "But it's all about balance. You don't want to expose yourself too often, or you'll get burned."

In addition to having a strong defensive mentality, the Purple Weasels also have the athleticism needed to make the big play.

"Maureen [Spring] and Brigid [Bulfin] are phenomenal athletes, but we have a balanced team," Brusky said. "There is not a weakness in our secondary. We can shut anyone down."

But athleticism and ability are not the only ingredients to a dominant defense. Spring says that the biggest keys to her team's defensive success are its communication and chemistry.

"We work as a unit," she said. "Everyone knows their role, and everyone executes."

Meanwhile, Brusky said that the excellent communication between her players is the result of years of experience.

"Our starting defense is all seniors with the exception of one player, so we're very familiar with each other's styles of play."

Brusky also discussed several underrated fundamentals that are unique to a solid Women's Interhall defense.

"Flag-pulling is huge. It's not the most glamorous part, but it's very important," Brusky said. "It's also key to have football smarts. It helps to be able to recognize formations that indicate when a team will run or throw."

But perhaps the most important factor in the success of the Purple Weasels' defense is the mentality that they bring to every game.

"We all love the game," Brusky said. "We all enjoy going out and competing on game day."

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Purple Weasel defender Brigid Bulfin, right, reaches for a flag during Pasquerilla West's 21-0 win over Welsh Family Nov. 5. Pasquerilla West's staunch defense has shut down opponents all season.

KELLY HIGGINS/The Observer

IRISH INSIDER

Friday, November 17, 2006

INTERHALL

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Rematch at Rock's House

Pasquerilla West and Pangborn return to Notre Dame Stadium to square off in a replay of last year's championship game.

SCENE *in perspective*

Hollywood infidelity a plague on populace?

A serious look at the role of celebrity marriage (divorce) in our culture

By CASSIE BELEK
Assistant Scene Editor

Diamonds are forever — celebrity marriages are not. Often times when celebrities tie the knot, that sparkling rock on the ring finger is nothing more than a fleeting symbol of a doomed union under the scrutiny of paparazzi and adoring fans. The divorce rate in the United States has reached 50 percent, and while an exact statistic is not available, the divorce rate in Hollywood is certainly higher. When celebrities marry, the question is always “How long is it really going to last?”

The recent weeks and months have brought a slew of high-profile celebrity divorces, the most recent being that of Britney Spears and the newly christened “FedEx.” The message that these celebrity divorces is sending is that marriage is temporary, happiness can be found with someone else and moments of hardship can be evaded instead of confronted.

This message is most evident among those celebrities with short or multiple marriages. Spears’ short-lived first marriage to the non-“Seinfeld” Jason Alexander lasted a mere 55 hours. The childhood friends wed in Las Vegas as a joke only to get it annulled shortly thereafter. The pop princess, a role model to thousands of young girls, showed a blatant disrespect to the institution of marriage and displayed little regret for her actions.

In a slightly longer marriage, Renee Zellweger and Kenny Chesney married after a four-month courtship, but Zellweger annulled the marriage 128 days later, citing “fraud” on Chesney’s part. The marriage between the Oscar winner and the country superstar is an example of celebrities marrying too quickly, only to go for the easy fix when they realize they do not know each other as well as they thought they did. This irresponsibility in choosing a spouse often leads to multiple marriages. Think Jennifer Lopez (three marriages), Nicolas Cage (three marriages), Billy Bob Thornton (five marriages) and most infamously, Elizabeth Taylor (eight marriages).

Of course, the death knell of many Hollywood marriages is a cheating spouse. Infidelity is sad, tragic and unac-



Photo courtesy of g.jubil.dk

Ryan Phillippe and Reese Witherspoon have dominated the tabloid headlines in the past weeks with news of their recent separation and the resulting fallout.

ceptable. However, celebrity couples rarely stay together when one is caught cheating. Nick Lachey, Ali Landry, Denise Richards and Jennifer Aniston all left their respective spouses after reported infidelity. Most recently and shockingly, Reese Witherspoon and Ryan Phillippe announced their separation after reports surfaced that Phillippe carried on an affair with Australian actress Abbie Cornish on the set of their upcoming movie “Stop-Loss.”

Witherspoon and Phillippe may be amicably sharing their children, but the nation is about to observe a bitter custody battle between Spears and Federline. Celebrity divorces are perhaps most tragic when children are involved. They become the victims of the faults of their celebrity parents by being pushed into the limelight as their parents appear in weekly tabloid cover stories.

Are there cases in which divorce is beneficial for a celebrity? Perhaps there may be. Few will argue that Whitney Houston’s decision to finally leave Bobby Brown will harm her more than help her. After 14 years of marriage scattered with drug abuse, Houston seems to be reclaiming her career and her health.

Others will argue that Spears is also justified in leaving her spouse, who is perhaps the most embarrassing man on the planet. Kevin Federline has spent his two-year marriage with Spears squandering her fortune, getting her pregnant and using her fame to launch a “music career” that culminated in the sale of only 6,000 copies of his debut album during its first week. Spears is now in the process of staging a glorious comeback and career resurrection by ending her toxic marriage to her former back-up dancer.

The celebrity divorce mystery is indeed a difficult one to solve. Why do celebrities divorce with such ease and frequency? Perhaps it is because they can afford divorce. Celebrities do not have to rebuild their savings accounts after their wedding day and they could most likely bounce back financially from divorce rather quickly.

Maybe divorce is prominent because celebrities live by a different moral code than the rest of the United States. Vice is a part of everyday life of Hollywood and scandal and gossip are expected by the masses. The media and celebrity watchers pounce upon the details of the latest Hollywood divorce and savor the juicy-

ness of a good scandal. Celebrities have often blamed the media for the demise of their relationships. Whether they use the media as a mere scapegoat or not is much debated, but being under the public gaze does not make maintaining a private life any easier.

Perhaps the rampant failure of marriages is the reason many celebrity couples choose not to marry, but to remain committed partners nevertheless. Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt are the most current couple to take this route. The two will most likely not marry, even though Pitt has officially adopted Jolie’s children and they now have created little Baby Shiloh. The arrangement works for them, much like it works for Johnny Depp and Vanessa Paradis. After one divorce and four broken engagements, Depp remains in a successful eight-year relationship with Paradis and they share two children to prove their happiness.

Despite the consistently high rate of celebrity divorces, Hollywood love is not impossible. Success stories exist, like those of Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson, William H. Macy and Felicity Huffman and Warren Beatty and Annette Benning. However, notice the exclusion of young couples because, as Phillippe and Witherspoon and taught us, forever is not a guarantee. The exception to this cautionary tale would be Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith, who married in 1997. That union appears impenetrable and their doubtful divorce would surely be categorized as one of the trials and tribulations preceding the Apocalypse.

Overall, celebrities can marry happily, but the length of that happiness varies, sending a negative message to the American public. More often than not, it seems, celebrity marriages are doomed from the beginning. However, in typical Hollywood fashion, as one marriage dies another one is born.

The impending nuptial of Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes is the latest internet obsession, but TomKat would do wisely to re-write their vows to take each other “for better or for worse as long as we both shall live or until we get lazy and stop trying.” Perhaps their vows would contain something resembling the truth, instead of the broken promises made by so many divorced celebrity couples before them.

Contact Cassie Belek at cbelek@nd.edu



Photo courtesy of cliffroles.com

William H. Macy and Felicity Huffman, both Hollywood actors, have managed to have a lasting marriage despite the scandal associated with their industry.



Photo courtesy of superiorpics.com

Pop star Britney Spears and Kevin Federline have been maligned due to their overly glamorous relationship and the bitter custody battle to come.

NHL

Wild topple Predators in Nashville shootout

Oilers thrash Blues in St. Louis, Bruins beat Maple Leafs in OT

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Brian Rolston's shootout goal was the difference in the Minnesota Wild's 7-6 victory over the Nashville Predators on Thursday night.

Rolston scored in the second extra round of the tiebreaker after Nashville's Paul Kariya squandered a chance to win the game with a penalty shot with 38 seconds left in overtime.

After Rolston's goal gave the Wild a 3-2 lead in the shootout, Josef Vasicek couldn't find the net on the Predators' final shot.

Nashville scored three goals in each of the first two periods, but the Wild responded with five goals over the final 40 minutes to force overtime.

David Legwand gave Nashville a 1-0 lead with a breakaway goal at 8:09 of the first period.

Minnesota answered at 10:09 when Wes Walz skated alone through the slot and one-timed a shot between the pads of Chris Mason for a short-handed goal.

Ryan Suter ripped a shot from just inside the blue line that beat Manny Fernandez to his glove side at 17:38 for a 2-1 Nashville lead.

Dan Hamhuis gave the Predators a two-goal lead less than a minute later, scoring for the first time this season.

Mikko Koivu scored on the power play with a shot from above the right circle at 2:28 of the second period to bring Minnesota within 3-2, but Kimmo Timonen padded the Wild's advantage again with 7:32 left in the frame.

Pascal Dupuis cut the deficit to 4-3 with 6:54 remaining before Nashville's Vernon Fiddler and Steve Sullivan scored goals 2:13 apart.

Bruins 2, Maple Leafs 1

After being mired near the bottom of the Eastern Conference for most of the season, the Boston Bruins appear to be turning the corner.

Patrice Bergeron scored 34 seconds into overtime to lift the Bruins to their third straight victory, a win over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Thursday night.

Bergeron scored on a rebound of Brad Boyes' drive from the point, putting the puck past helpless goalie Jean-Sebastien Aubin.

"We are getting the results now," Bergeron said. "There is a thin line between winning and losing and when you do the right things, you are on the right side of that line."

Bergeron has scored the winning goal the last three games including the lone shootout goal in the Bruins' 3-2 victory at Washington on Wednesday.

Tim Thomas made 24 saves for the Bruins (7-7-2), who have earned all their victories this season in one-goal games.

"It's starting to come together," Bruins coach Dave Lewis said. "Tim is playing with a ton of confidence and the guys are starting to feel comfortable with each other."

The Bruins hadn't won three straight since Jan. 23-26.

"It is very easy to get frustrated when things aren't going well," captain Zdeno Chara said. "But it's getting better compared to how we were playing before."

Phil Kessel scored a power-play goal giving the Bruins a 1-0 lead when he knocked a rebound past Aubin at 14:09 of the first period.

Kessel, the No. 5 pick in this year's NHL draft, scored in back-to-back games for the second time this season.

Bryan McCabe got Toronto even at 1-1 on the power play when his slap shot went between Thomas' legs with 6:42 remaining in regulation.

"Thomas played well," McCabe said. "He made some big saves late. I thought we had five or six good chances in the last five minutes."

Aubin made 34 saves for the Maple Leafs, who had a four-game winning streak snapped.

"Sometimes you leave it all in practice," Maple Leafs coach Paul Maurice said. "We didn't skate the way I thought



Bruins left wing Phil Kessel, left, and defenseman Andrew Alberts celebrate Boston's 2-1 overtime win over Toronto Thursday.

we would."

Panthers 5, Canadiens 1

Olli Jokinen scored three goals for his second career hat trick and the Florida Panthers broke a four-game losing streak with a victory over the Montreal Canadiens on Thursday night.

The Panthers hadn't won since a 2-1 victory over Toronto on Nov. 2. They dropped 11 of 14 overall.

Chris Gratton and Jay Bouwmeester also scored for Florida, which had lost four of five at home since starting the season 4-0 there.

Tomas Plekanec scored for Montreal, which had a two-game winning streak snapped. The Canadiens went 2-2 during a six-day road trip.

Ed Belfour stopped 27 shots for the Panthers.

David Aebischer made 20 saves for Montreal before being replaced by Cristobal Huet at the start of the third period. Huet stopped 14 of 15 shots but the Canadiens missed a chance for their first three-game winning streak of the season.

Jokinen, who hadn't scored since Florida's last victory, gave the Panthers a 2-0 lead 37 seconds into the middle period when his soft wrist shot went through Aebischer's legs.

After Plekanec cut the lead to 2-1, Jokinen restored the Panthers' two-goal margin at 16:53. He took a pass from Nathan Horton across the crease and waited patiently before lifting the puck over Aebischer.

Bouwmeester made it 4-1,

scoring a power-play goal at 19:35 of the second period. His wrist shot went through the legs of two Montreal players and beat Aebischer low to the glove side. Belfour was credited with the 33rd assist of his 18-year career.

Coyotes 3, Blackhawks 2

Yanic Perrault and Ladislav Nagy scored in the shootout and Curtis Joseph stopped two of three shots in the tiebreaker in the Phoenix Coyotes' victory over the Chicago Blackhawks on Thursday night.

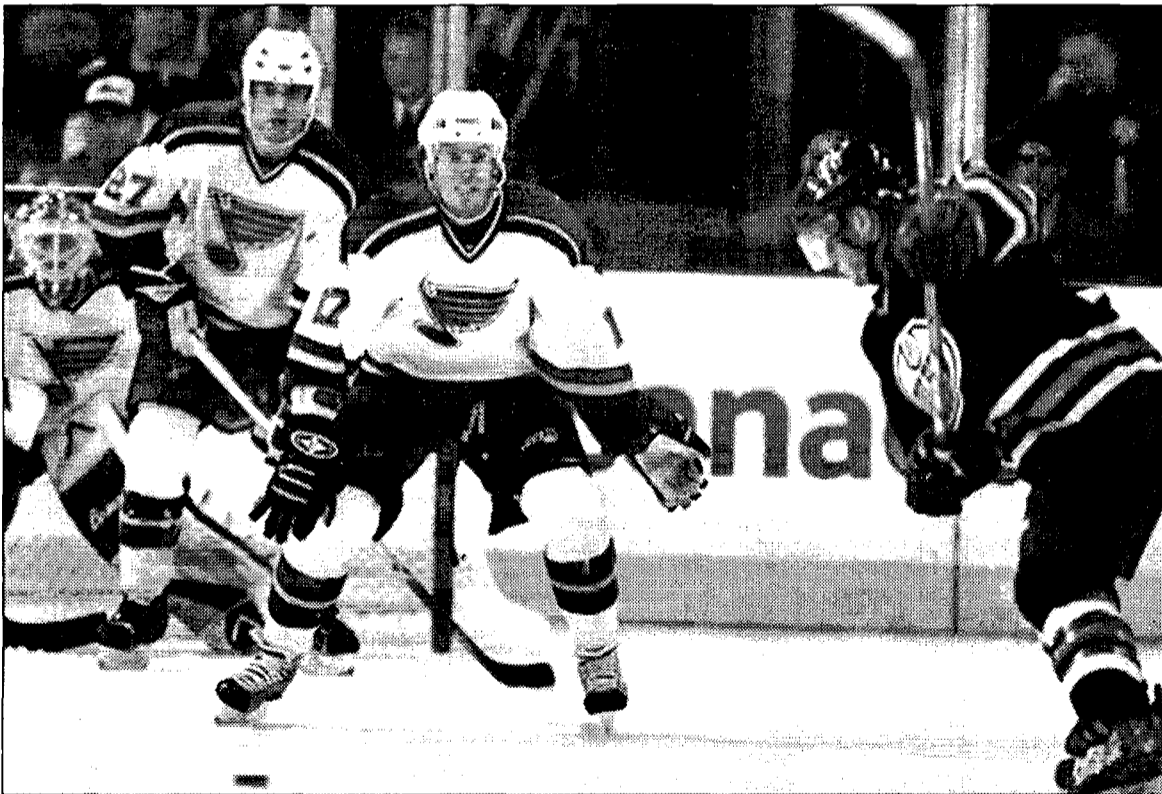
Mike Zigomanis tied it midway through the third period and Yanic Perrault added his third goal in two games for the Coyotes, who won consecutive games for the first time this season.

After Joseph stopped Radim Vrbata with a pad save, Perrault faked a goal, Brian Boucher to the ice and fired the puck into the top of the net. Jeff Hamilton evened the shootout, also shooting high over Joseph.

But Nagy beat Boucher with a sharp wrist shot low to the stick side, and Joseph made a pad save on Michael Holmqvist's forehand attempt to secure the win.

Karl Stewart and Martin Lapointe scored 92 seconds apart midway through the first period for the Blackhawks, who are 2-0-1 in their last four games.

Phoenix tied the game with 11:19 remaining when Georges Laraque worked the puck free in the right faceoff circle and fed a pass to Zigomanis in the low slot.



After losing his stick, Blues center Ryan Johnson (17) attempts to block a shot by Oilers defenseman Marc-Andre Bergeron during the first period of Edmonton's 5-1 win Thursday.

CLASSIFIEDS

The Observer accepts classifieds every business day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Notre Dame office, 024 South Dining Hall. Deadline for next-day classifieds is 3 p.m. All classifieds must be prepaid. The charge is 5 cents per character per day, including all spaces. The Observer reserves the right to edit all classifieds for content without issuing refunds.

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Hi Jen and Scott! Notre Dame isn't all that bad, now is it Scott?

Billy, honestly, how is your heart on the right side of your body? It's incalculable. (from The Office)

AROUND THE NATION

Friday, November 17, 2006

COMPILED FROM THE OBSERVER'S WIRE SERVICES

page 17

NCAA Men's Basketball

Coaches Poll

team	points	prev.
1 Florida	772	1
2 North Carolina	729	2
3 Kansas	711	3
4 Pittsburgh	633	4
5 Ohio State	598	5
6 UCLA	593	5
7 LSU	564	7
8 Georgetown	547	8
9 Wisconsin	545	9
10 Alabama	502	11
11 Duke	432	12
12 Texas A&M	362	13
13 Memphis	356	14
14 Boston College	310	15
15 Arizona	261	16
16 Marquette	258	20
17 Washington	226	17
18 Syracuse	222	19
19 Texas	194	18
20 Creighton	184	20
21 Connecticut	156	21
22 Kentucky	121	22
23 Georgia Tech	103	25
24 Nevada	102	24

NCAA Women's Basketball

Coaches Poll

team	points	prev.
1 Maryland	730	1
2 North Carolina	714	2
3 Oklahoma	675	3
3 Stanford	633	5
5 Tennessee	614	6
6 Duke	576	7
7 Ohio State	558	8
8 Connecticut	507	9
9 Georgia	503	10
10 LSU	447	4
11 Arizona State	395	12
12 Purdue	389	11
13 Texas A&M	378	13
14 Rutgers	318	14
15 Vanderbilt	266	15
16 Baylor	235	18
17 Michigan State	219	17
18 California	184	24
19 Southern	182	21
20 UCLA	130	22
21 Kentucky	89	23
22 BYU	87	19
23 DePaul	68	25
24 New Mexico	65	16

Big East Men's Basketball

team	Record
1 Syracuse	4-0
2 Cincinnati	3-0
3 Marquette	3-0
4 Georgetown	2-0
5 Pittsburgh	2-0
6 St. John's	2-0
7 West Virginia	2-0
8 Connecticut	1-0
9 Providence	1-0
10 Seton Hall	1-0
10 USF	1-0
12 Villanova	1-0
13 NOTRE DAME	2-1
14 Louisville	0-0
15 Rutgers	0-1
16 DePaul	0-2

STERIODS



Track coach Trevor Graham remains free after posting \$25,000 bail. The one-time coach of Olympic champions Marion Jones and Justin Gatlin lied to federal investigators in 2004.

Trainer refuses to testify on BALCO

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Two central figures in the BALCO steroids probe were front and center Thursday, accused of obstructing the federal grand jury investigating performance-enhancing drugs in sports.

Elite track coach Trevor Graham pleaded not guilty to hindering the grand jury's probe, while Barry Bonds' personal trainer was ordered back to prison for refusing to cooperate with the same investigation.

Graham remained free Thursday on a \$25,000 bond, but a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit U.S.

Court of Appeals ordered Greg Anderson to report to the Dublin federal prison by noon Monday.

"We are disappointed," Anderson's attorney, Mark Geragos said of the 9th Circuit ruling. "But it is certainly not over."

Geragos said he is considering asking a 15-judge panel of the San Francisco-based appeals court, or even the Supreme Court, to consider Anderson's plight.

Outside his arraignment in federal district court, Graham did not comment after his attorney, Gail Shifman, entered the plea on his behalf.

"He'll be vindicated,"

Shifman said.

According to a Nov. 1 indictment, Graham, who coached Olympic champions Marion Jones and Justin Gatlin, lied to federal investigators in 2004 when he told them he neither supplied his athletes with performance-enhancing drugs nor informed them about where drugs could be purchased. Anderson repeatedly has refused to tell the grand jury about alleged steroids use by Bonds, whom authorities suspect of lying to a 2003 grand jury. Bonds testified he believed Anderson gave him flaxseed oil and arthritic balm, not steroids.

Anderson, 40, already has been behind bars twice before, after being held in contempt of court for his refusing to testify. Both times, the prison stints were cut short because of legal technicalities.

Now, he could serve more than a year behind bars unless he agrees to tell the grand jury what he knows.

Geragos unsuccessfully argued Anderson shouldn't have to testify about whether he gave Bonds steroids, contending prosecutors have an illegally obtained tape recording of Anderson discussing steroids with an unidentified person.

IN BRIEF

Casey signs one year deal with Tigers

DETROIT — First baseman Sean Casey is staying with the AL champion Detroit Tigers, agreeing to a \$4 million, one-year contract Thursday.

Acquired from Pittsburgh last season, Casey was a hitting star in the World Series. He batted .529 with two home runs and five RBIs against the St. Louis Cardinals, but Detroit lost in five games.

"Everybody is a piece to the winning team," Casey said on a conference call, "and I felt like not winning last year, but getting there — having that taste of what it would be like to win the whole thing — for me it felt a little like unfinished business."

Casey also hit .353 against the New York Yankees in the first round of the playoffs. He missed most of the AL championship series against Oakland with a calf injury, but said he's been healthy since.

"I'm 100 percent," Casey said. "I felt 100 percent during the World Series."

Cardinals re-sign Spiezio to two year deal

ST. LOUIS — Scott Spiezio and the St. Louis Cardinals agreed to a \$4.5 million, two-year contract on Thursday, keeping one of the team's top reserves with the World Series champions.

The deal includes a club option for 2009.

The 34-year-old Spiezio revived his career with the Cardinals last season. He signed a minor league contract and made the team as a utility player, making 61 starts and playing five positions. The switch-hitter batted .272 with 13 home runs and 52 RBIs in 119 games.

He led the team with eight pinch-hit RBIs, including a three-run triple on the final weekend of the season to help St. Louis hang on and win the NL Central title.

The World Series champions' first two moves of the offseason have been retaining key players. Jim Edmonds signed a two-year, \$19 million contract last week.

A's bench coach promoted to Manager

OAKLAND, Calif. — Bob Geren will be promoted from bench coach to manager of the Oakland Athletics, according to a high-ranking baseball official.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the team won't introduce Geren as its new manager until Friday, filling the final managerial vacancy in the major leagues this offseason, one month after the A's fired Ken Macha.

General manager Billy Beane went with the most experience and the familiar face, his longtime friend and former high school baseball opponent in San Diego.

Of the three finalists, a list that also included Colorado Rockies bench coach Jamie Quirk and ESPN baseball analyst and former Texas Rangers pitching coach Orel Hershiser, only Geren had managerial experience.

around the dial

NBA

Washington at Detroit
8 p.m., ESPN

Philadelphia at Phoenix
10:30 p.m., ESPN

NCAA FOOTBALL

Central Michigan at Northern Illinois
8:05 p.m., ESPNU

NBA

McGrady doubles up on Bulls in Houston win

Rockets nearly blow 21-point lead but hang on for victory

Associated Press

Tracy McGrady had 21 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists and Yao Ming had 20 points and 12 rebounds to lift the Houston Rockets, who nearly blew a 21-point lead but hung on to beat the Chicago Bulls 101-100 Thursday night.

Rafer Alston scored 19 and reserve Scott Padgett scored 11 to spark a first-half run as the Rockets beat the Bulls for the seventh time in eight meetings.

Ben Gordon almost single-handedly carried Chicago to a

dramatic comeback win, scoring 30 of his 37 points in the second half.

He scored nine in the final minute and his driving bank shot with 27 seconds left cut Houston's lead to 95-92. After Shane Battier sank two free throws, Gordon swished a 3-pointer with 15.2 seconds left to pull the Bulls to within 97-95.

"I was just trying to be a little aggressive," Gordon said. "I've been struggling with my shot lately, so I wanted to get to the free-throw line. That's what kind of got me going."

Houston also nearly wasted large second-half leads in narrow wins over Memphis, Milwaukee and New York.

"I don't know what it is," McGrady said. "We want to be

great. It's got to change. We can't throw away games like this."

Alston hit two foul shots with 14.4 seconds left and Gordon missed a 3-pointer from the wing. Luther Head sank two free throws with 4.7 seconds remaining.

Andres Nocioni had a layup and a 3-pointer in the closing seconds.

Gordon hit 11-of-22 shots and had six rebounds.

The Bulls' comeback bid was reminiscent of Houston's 92-84 loss to San Antonio on Tuesday, when the Rockets blew a 19-point lead in the third quarter.

The Rockets missed 12 of their first 19 shots before Padgett's 3-pointer late in the first quarter triggered a 20-6 burst.

Padgett scored all of his points

and grabbed five rebounds during the spurt and Kirk Snyder finished it with a three-point play that gave the Rockets a 37-30 lead.

After hitting six of their first eight shots, the Bulls missed 17 of their next 23.

Yao had nine rebounds in the opening half and banked in a turnaround just before the half-time buzzer to put the Rockets up 50-39.

Houston started the second half with a 12-2 burst, capped by McGrady's banked-in 3-pointer. McGrady shrugged his shoulders and high-fived team owner Les Alexander as he trotted down the court.

But the lead was hardly secure.

On Tuesday, Houston led San

Antonio by 19 late in the third quarter, then missed 25 of its last 27 shots to lose. The Rockets also nearly blew big second-half leads in narrow wins over Memphis, Milwaukee and New York.

And about the same time the Rockets had collapsed against the Spurs, it started happening again.

Gordon's pull-up jumper with 3:50 left in the third quarter cut Houston's lead to 74-55 — the exact score when San Antonio started its comeback two nights ago.

"I'm not happy at all," McGrady said. "You've got to be happy about the win, but the overall picture is not good. We know some of those games can slip away."

NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL

Spartans upset No. 19 Longhorns

Junior guard scores in waning seconds to secure MSU victory

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Drew Neitzel scored on a drive with 2.4 seconds left to give Michigan State a 63-61 victory over No. 19 Texas on Thursday night in the semifinals of the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic.

Neitzel, the only junior in the Spartans' starting lineup with two sophomores and two freshmen, took an inbound with 8.4 seconds left.

"Give him credit, he did a heck of a job," Spartans coach Tom Izzo said of Neitzel. "He busted right through. I think they were worried about a shot and they were pretty spread apart."

Neitzel dribbled behind the 3-

point line, from where both teams seemed to be taking the majority of their shots, put the ball on the floor and drove right down the lane for the winning points.

Texas called a timeout and had a final chance, but A.J. Abrams' long shot from a step inside halfcourt bounced off the rim.

Michigan State (4-0) will play Maryland for the championship on Friday night at Madison Square Garden.

The Terrapins (4-0) beat St. John's 92-60 in the other semifinal.

In a game of two young teams, freshmen were key for both.

Raymar Morgan had 18 points for Michigan State, while Kevin Durant had 21 for the Longhorns (2-1), one less than Abrams, a sophomore.

Michigan State finished 9-for-17 from 3-point range, while Texas was 7-for-26. Abrams was

6-for-13 on 3s, well off the 11-for-17 he was in the Longhorns' first two games.

The Spartans used a 12-0 run — nine of the points coming on 3s — to take a 54-47 lead. Abrams hit consecutive shots from behind the arc to get the Longhorns within one.

Abrams hit his last 3 of the game with 5:26 left to pull the Longhorns within 59-58 and Durant made one free throw with 4:02 left to tie the game.

Abrams made two free throws with 2:48 left to tie the game for the last time at 61, and there were five missed shots and five timeouts before Neitzel came up with the winning play.

"We decently guarded Abrams on 3s, he can hot then from all over," Izzo said. "Overall, we did a decent job on him."

Neitzel finished with 15 points and six assists and Maurice Joseph added 12 points for the Spartans.

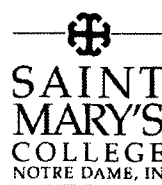


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NCAA FOOTBALL

Slaton, White and West Virginia run past Pittsburgh

Mountaineers total 641 yards of offense in primetime victory

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Two stars, two exceptional games. Pittsburgh has already seen enough of West Virginia's Pat White and Steve Slaton to last a lifetime, and the Panthers still might oppose them two more times.

White and Slaton crossed up Pitt by teaming as a passing combination in a high-scoring first half, then put away the Panthers for the second season in a row with a string of long runs in a comeback second half to lead No. 8 West Virginia's 45-27 victory Thursday night.

The Mountaineers (9-1, 4-1 Big East) beat their biggest rival for the fourth time in five seasons, though not quite as easily as in last year's 45-13 romp in Morgantown in which White and Slaton combined for 399 of West Virginia's 451 yards rushing.

Pittsburgh (6-5, 2-4) led 27-24 at the half before being overwhelmed by West Virginia's playmaking speed in a scoreless second half in which the Mountaineers had 371 of their 438 yards rushing. West Virginia finished with a 641-295 edge in total yardage, outgaining Pitt 373-30 in the second half.

White, the sophomore option quarterback whose quickness again was too much for Pitt to handle, threw for 204 yards and hit Slaton on the running back's first two touchdown receptions this season.

"We knew we had to set the tone from the beginning," White said.

White ran for touchdowns of

64 and 19 yards on the Mountaineers' first two possessions of the second half. He finished with 220 yards rushing against Pitt for the second season in a row as West Virginia's two stars again turned the rivalry very one-sided.

"I've been coaching college ball for a long time, and that's as good a performance as I've seen a quarterback play," West Virginia coach Rich Rodriguez said.

Slaton, the nation's No. 2 rusher, was held to 7 yards on six carries in the first half, but still became the first player in school history to have more than 100 yards rushing (215) and receiving (130) in a game. He had scoring catches of 11 and 67 yards, as well as another 43-yard catch as a slot receiver, and touchdown runs of 15 and 55 yards.

"I was open a lot (as a receiver) and we wanted to get mismatches in the open field," said Slaton, who, like White, is a sophomore. "We're a great combination."

And Pitt might have to face these guys again in 2007 and 2008?

"Pat White is the best quarterback in college football," Pitt linebacker H.B. Blades said. "And Steve Slaton, he does pretty much everything."

Their two-season totals against Pitt: White has 440 yards and four touchdowns rushing and 245 yards and three touchdowns passing. Slaton has 394 yards and four touchdowns rushing and seven catches for 146 yards and three touchdowns as a receiver.

"We're just showing our talent," Slaton said.

Pitt must beat No. 10 Louisville on Nov. 25 to avoid a season-ending five-game losing streak after starting 6-1. The Panthers already are assured of their first losing record in the Big East since 1999. West Virginia remains in contention for a BCS bowl despite losing to Louisville two weeks ago, with games remaining against South Florida and Rutgers.

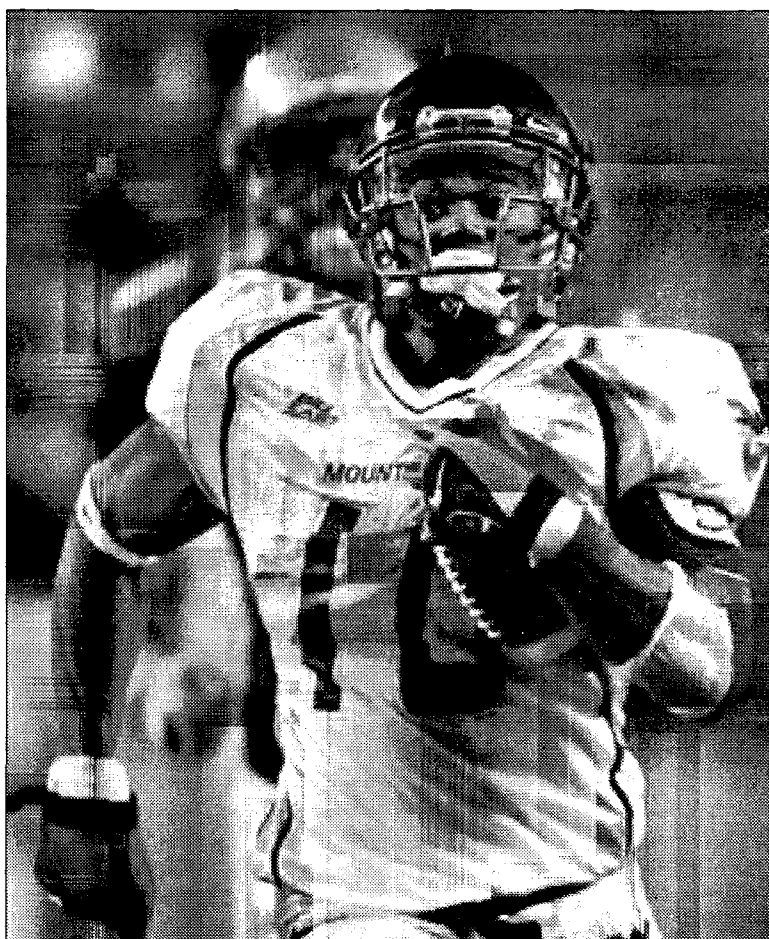
Pitt quarterback Tyler Palko tried to keep the Panthers in the game with two touchdown passes, but was sacked eight times and got nothing going in the second half.

"We were pretty pleased at halftime," Palko said. "We were feeling pretty good. But we couldn't come and out and execute what we wanted to do in the second half."

The 99th edition of the game now known as the Backyard Brawl kicked off one of college football's most awaited weekends, the rivalry week that features No. 1 Ohio State vs. No. 2 Michigan on Saturday.

West Virginia's offense was everything it expected to be in the first half, except for its reliance on throwing rather than running. The major surprise was that Pitt, held to 10 points by Rutgers in its last home game, not only kept up but led 27-24 at halftime as Palko threw touchdown passes of 23 yards to Nate Byham and 15 yards to Oderick Turner.

The play that Pitt fans will most remember is Darrelle Revis' adventuresome 73-yard



Mountaineers tailback Steve Slaton runs for a touchdown during West Virginia's 45-27 win over Pittsburgh Thursday.

punt return down the Panthers sideline that put Pitt up 24-17 with 2:18 remaining in the half.

Revis took off after a thunderous block by wide receiver Derek Kinder so leveled West Virginia's Ridwan Malik that Malik took out one of his own teammates.

The only problem was Revis' return left West Virginia with plenty enough time to score, with White hitting Slaton for 67 yards

on their second pass play touchdown of the half.

After West Virginia was held to 67 yards rushing in the first half, White got outside on the second play from scrimmage of the second half for a 64-yard scoring run that gave the Mountaineers a 31-27 lead. On West Virginia's next possession, White needed only four plays to drive them 97 yards for a touchdown.

The University of Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture, David Solomon, W.P. & H.B. White Director, announces its 7th annual fall conference:

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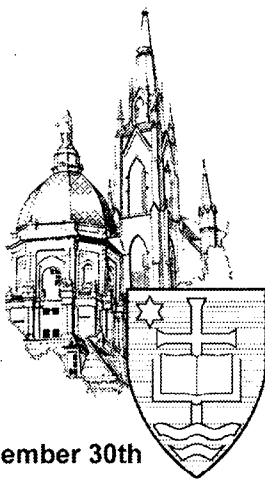
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NCAA FOOTBALL

Hokies, Tigers, NCAA investigating lawsuit

Lawyer allegedly gave cash to former Virginia Tech cornerback

Associated Press

NORFOLK — Two universities and the NCAA are investigating allegations that two pro athletes received cash and other items from a lawyer when they were still in school, officials said Thursday.

Virginia Tech is working "in a spirit of cooperation with the NCAA" to investigate claims against former Hokies football player Jimmy Williams, now a cornerback with the Atlanta Falcons, school athletic director Jim Weaver said.

Weaver said the investigation resulted from a lawsuit that attorney Carl C. La Mondue of Norfolk filed last week demanding Williams and his father reimburse him about \$55,000.

"We're in the early stages of it, but we've got to get to the bottom of it, and our objective is to get to the bottom of the issue as quickly as we can," Weaver said in a telephone interview.

La Mondue also filed a similar lawsuit last week in Norfolk Circuit Court seeking reimbursement for almost \$50,000 in cash and benefits from former University of Memphis basketball star Shawne Williams, now an Indiana Pacers rookie.

The court dismissed that lawsuit Wednesday at the lawyer's request. There was no explanation for the request in court records, and neither lawsuit says why La Mondue gave money to the athletes, who are not related.

Memphis released a statement late Thursday announcing that it is investigating the situation, despite the lawsuit's dismissal, and "will take all necessary action if these allegations are substantiated."

"We have also been in contact with the NCAA and are working cooperatively with that organization to investigate these allegations," university athletic director R.C. Johnson said in the statement.

NCAA spokeswoman Jennifer Kearns confirmed Thursday that the NCAA is working with both schools to investigate the allegations against the athletes.

The NCAA generally does not comment on specifics about investigations, she said.

The NCAA prohibits athletes and their relatives from receiving "nonpermissible awards, extra benefits, or excessive or improper expenses not authorized by NCAA legislation," according to the NCAA's Web site. Such benefits include a loan of money.

Jimmy Williams had not responded to the lawsuit against him, filed in Norfolk Circuit Court.

Williams told the Daily Press of Newport News, Va., that he and his father never accepted gifts or money from La Mondue.

"He's saying he gave us some ridiculous amount of money, which is not true," Williams told the newspaper.

Williams said La Mondue wanted to become his agent, and that he had met with the attorney in November 2005, but that La Mondue "wasn't big enough." Williams hasn't hired a lawyer, and said the NFL Players Association is "handling" the situation.

"I'm not worried about it. I'm good," Williams said. "The truth will come out."

Falcons spokesman Reggie Roberts said Thursday that the team had no comment.

Happy Walters, an agent for Shawne Williams, said Thursday that the claims made in the lawsuit against his client were meritless. He said Williams was traveling with the Pacers and unavailable for comment.

A message was left seeking comment from the Pacers.

La Mondue did not return telephone calls seeking comment Thursday; his office said he was in court.

La Mondue told The Virginian-Pilot newspaper for a story published Thursday that he did not want to discuss the lawsuits because "these are matters that are private."

La Mondue's Web site says his law firm is "ready to assist entertainers and athletes negotiate and prepare contracts."

The lawsuit against Jimmy Williams contends Williams and his father, James Williams Sr. of Hampton, owe La Mondue \$55,149.45, plus interest, for "various services rendered" at their request.

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MLB

Athletics hire Green to replace Macha as manager

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Bob Geren will be promoted from bench coach to manager of the Oakland Athletics, ending a monthlong search for Ken Macha's replacement.

Two A's players told The Associated Press that Geren called them Thursday after he was hired. The team scheduled a news conference for Friday

afternoon to formally introduce Geren as their new manager. He fills the final managerial vacancy in the major leagues this offseason, one month after the A's fired Macha.

General manager Billy Beane went with the most experience and the familiar face, his longtime friend and former high school baseball opponent in San Diego.

A's closer Houston Street said he heard Thursday from Geren, who told the pitcher he got the job.

"I'm really excited," said Street, the 2005 AL Rookie of the Year. "He's already called me and we've spoken a little bit. I spent my first full year in the bullpen. He was the first profes-

sional coach I got a feel for and got to understand. What he brings is someone dedicated to the team and dedicated to his players. He's got a good feel for the team and that's a real positive for all of us."

Of the three finalists, a list that also included Colorado Rockies bench coach Jamie Quirk and ESPN baseball analyst and former Texas Rangers pitching coach Orel Hershiser, only Geren had any managerial experience. He was the first to interview for the job on Oct. 30.

Beane and assistant GM David Forst both were traveling Thursday night and not immediately available for comment. Messages left for Geren went unreturned.

Geren, a catcher for five seasons with the New York Yankees and San Diego Padres, spent the 2006 season as bench coach in Oakland after three seasons as bullpen coach in his first stint on a major league coaching staff.

"I think it helped him quite a bit," Beane said Tuesday in his first and only public comments about the search. "But until you sit in that chair, the only prepa-

ration is really doing it."

Geren joined the A's organization in 1999 as manager of Class-A Modesto, then spent the next three seasons managing at Triple-A Sacramento. He also has managed in the Dominican Winter League and managed during three of his five seasons in the Red Sox organization from 1994-98. He has a 452-390 record in seven seasons as a minor league manager.

A's center fielder Mark Kotsay also received a call from Geren on Thursday with the news — exactly the kind of communication players appreciate, Kotsay said.

"Bob seems to be a good communicator and he probably reached out to everybody on the club and let them know he's the manager of the Oakland A's and is looking forward to managing us," Kotsay said in a phone interview. "Obviously he's very familiar with the team. He's familiar with the staff. His experience over the last couple of years as bullpen coach and bench coach will help him be a great manager for our ballclub."

The 45-year-old Geren, the best man in Beane's second wedding, had to at least have some confidence in his status with the organization: He bought a house in the Bay Area this year.

Neither Beane nor Geren wanted this to be about their friendship but rather strictly

about business, though they believe that having an understanding and a trust certainly won't hurt.

Geren said his credentials should speak to his ability. Beane has long considered Geren a managing material — interviewing him last year when the club briefly parted ways with Macha before re-signing him about a week later.

Geren thought working as bench coach for a season benefited him because he could see what worked and what things he might have done differently in the top job.

"There were a lot of potential candidates and a lot of people

deserving of the job," Street said. "Billy's going to do what's best for the organization. I really wasn't worried about who the manager would be. We trust Billy and his decision making. I think he made the right move."

"Bob is going to bring lot of positives to the table and a lot of baseball knowledge. He's been in the game for a long time and managed at a lot of levels. He's been in some big games as a manager."

Macha was fired after four seasons on Oct. 16, two days after Oakland was swept by the wild-card Detroit Tigers in the AL championship series.

"Bob seems to be a good communicator and he probably reached out to everybody on the club and let them know he's the manager of the Oakland A's and is looking forward to managing us."

**Mark Kotsay
Oakland outfielder**

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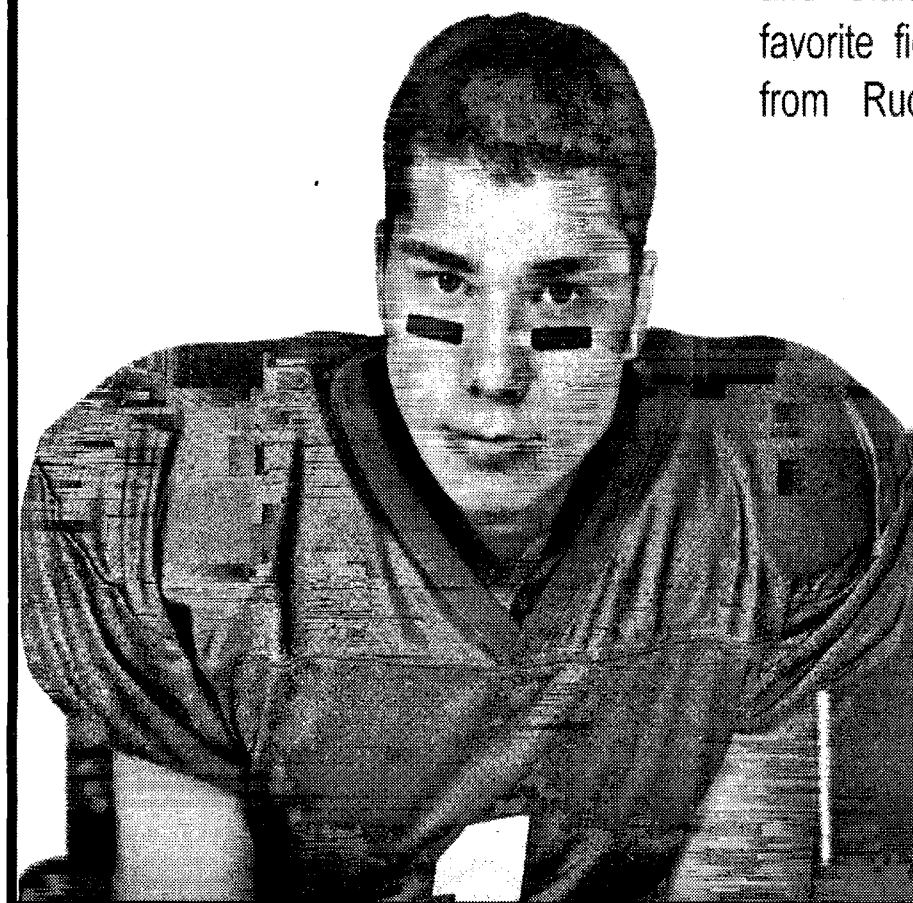
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ND VOLLEYBALL

Bearcats wrestle Irish in Big East

No. 5 seed Notre Dame seeks upsets in league tourney

By KYLE CASSILY
Sports Writer

Notre Dame enters the Big East tournament this weekend in an unfamiliar position, but will face a very familiar opponent.

The No. 5 seed Irish will play No. 4 seed and tournament host Cincinnati in the quarterfinals tonight at 6 p.m. at Fifth Third Arena. The Irish (16-11, 10-4 Big East) won the tournament last year by beating Louisville in the championship and split the regular season title with the Cardinals. But this season has been a rebuilding year as six freshmen have seen significant time.

"The team is very excited," Irish coach Debbie Brown said. "We're disappointed and a little bit frustrated with how things ended up. But they know it's a new season now and everyone is starting at zero and zero. I think we're going in with confidence and believing in each other."

Junior captain Adrianna Stasiuk and sophomore outside hitter Mallorie Croal were named first team All-Big East at the postseason awards banquet Thursday at the University of Cincinnati. Sophomore middle blocker Justine Stremick was awarded second team All-Big East honors.

"I thought they were really well-deserved," Brown said. "It's great for each of them to be recognized — and for the team overall."

Stasiuk missed several matches in the latter half of the season after suffering a high ankle sprain Oct. 22 against St. John's, but Brown said that she is back to her dominating form.

"[Adrianna's] definitely in a

really good place with that," Brown said. "We're definitely keeping it heavily taped, but she's playing really well."

Notre Dame met Cincinnati at Fifth Third Arena a little over a month ago when the Irish were swept 3-0 by the Bearcats. It was the second loss in a three-game skid that also saw the team fall to conference powerhouses St. John's and Louisville before dropping from first to fourth place in the league.

"I think it's good [to play at Cincinnati again] because we've been there earlier in the year and played on the court before," Brown said. "I honestly don't see it as huge advantage for them. We're very ready to play."

In that Oct. 28 match against the Bearcats, the Irish were defeated 20-30, 28-30, 22-30. Cincinnati got out to a strong start in the first game, and the outmatched Irish could not recover, although they put up a fight in the second game.

"Last time we played them, our serving and passing weren't very good at all," Brown said. "That's the basic fundamentals of the game. We need to serve well and put a lot of pressure on them."

Brown said that in preparation for the quarterfinals, the team has been practicing different game and rotation situations with all of its substitutes in an effort to utilize the entire team.

"We've looked at every scenario we could have used them in to maximize all the talent that we have," she said.

In other matches, No. 1 St. John's will play No. 8 South Florida, No. 2 Louisville will face off against No. 7 Connecticut and No. 3 Pittsburgh will battle No. 6 Marquette — all matches will be held today, with the semifinals to be played Saturday and the championship Sunday.

Contact Kyle Cassily at
kcassily@nd.edu

SMC BASKETBALL

Belles set to commence season

Saint Mary's will face nationally ranked opponent in tournament

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Tipping off the season with a new coach and eight freshmen, Saint Mary's wants to look forward. If the Belles are searching for an opportunity to gauge their status, they need look no further than this afternoon's matchup with nationally ranked Wheaton.

First-year coach Jennifer Henley and Saint Mary's take on the Thunder, ranked No. 5 by D3hoops.com, at 3 p.m. in the first round of the Lee Pfund Classic in Wheaton, Ill. Wheaton finished 25-5 in 2005-06 and reached the round of 16 in last season's Division III N C A A Tournament.

The Thunder return four starters from that team, including their entire front court of center Jill Trezn, an honorable mention All-American last season, and forwards Brittany Cooper and Elizabeth Fox.

Henley is well aware of Wheaton's talent.

"They are pretty solid all the way around," Henley said. "Our keys to success is to control the boards at both

ends of the court while trying to contain Jill Trezn and Elizabeth Fox. We must take care of the ball against this experienced team."

For their part, the Belles have three key returners of their own — tri-captains senior Bridget Lipke, junior Alison Kessler and senior Stefanie Broderick.

Running the point, Lipke averaged 5.5 assists per game last season. Kessler led

the team in points with 14.8 points per game and won first-team All-MIAA honors. Broderick saw limited action in 2005-06, but Henley said she adds valuable leadership to the squad.

"Bridget and Alison, along with Stef Broderick, have done a great job helping our freshmen with the transition to the college game," Henley

said. "They are doing exactly what they need to do as leaders."

Lipke, Broderick and Kessler have seen Saint Mary's improve markedly

over the past few seasons. In 2003-04, the squad went 7-19, including 2-12 in MIAA play under coach Suan Bellina. A season later, the Belles earned an 11-15 mark and a 6-10 league record.

Last season, Saint Mary's brought in a new coach, Steve Bender. The Belles again finished 11-15 overall but their 9-7 conference record was the

program's best-ever MIAA mark. After the season, Saint Mary's declined to renew Bender's contract for undisclosed reasons. Henley was hired in July to take over as the third Belles coach in as many years.

"The team as a whole is very focused on what we need to do this season," Henley said. "We are all looking forward to the tough competition we have on our schedule. Our goals are to improve upon last season's success and continue to build this program."

Depending upon the outcome of the Friday games, Saint Mary's will play either Wilmington or Wisconsin-Whitewater Saturday to conclude the four-team tournament.

Contact Ken Fowler at
kfowler1@nd.edu

"Bridget and Alison, along with Broderick, have done a great job helping our freshmen with the transition to the college game."

Jennifer Henley
Belles coach



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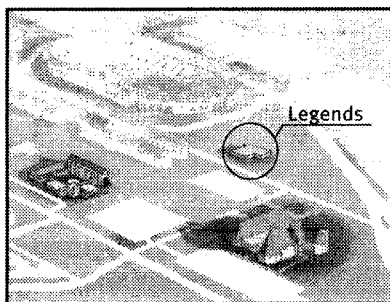
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ND WOMEN'S SWIMMING

Irish Go-pher back-to-back titles

Ranked squad defends Minnesota Invite

By CHRIS HINE
Sports Writer

No. 20 Notre Dame travels to the University of Minnesota this weekend to defend their title in the Minnesota Invitational against 12 other challengers, including the No. 16 Gophers.

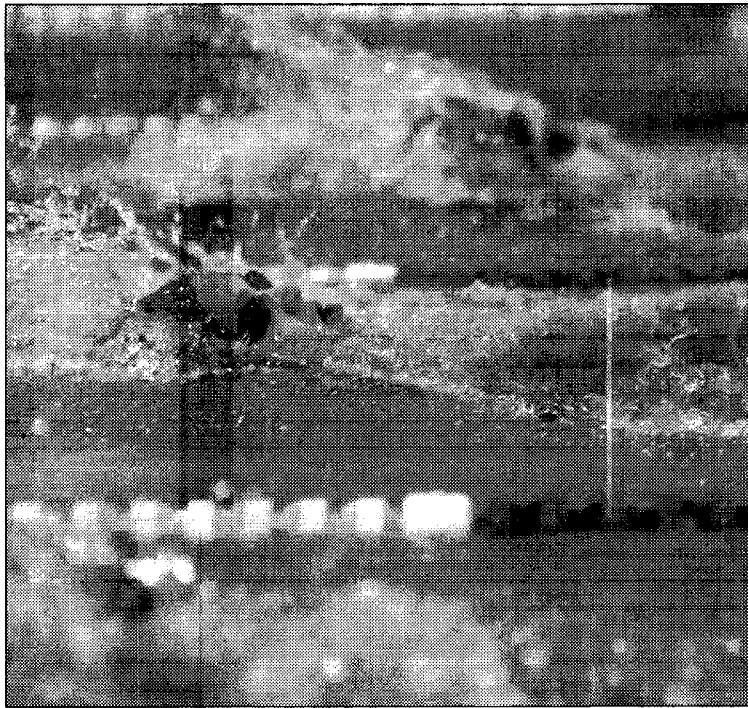
"There are a lot of good teams coming this year," freshman Vivian Healey said. "This year the competition is harder, but our team is also better this year."

The Irish have a 3-0 record in dual meet competition with wins over Purdue, Pittsburgh and Michigan State. This year's 39-member squad features 16 freshmen.

Healey said that invitational meets are a good time for the individual swimmers to focus on improving times to meet Big East and National qualifying standards instead of worrying about swimming multiple events in a dual meet to outscore an opponent.

"Instead of our goal being to beat a certain team, like in the dual meets, you just want to be able to swim a certain time," Healey said. "We want to get good times for the Big East tournament, and we also have the U.S. Open coming up in two weeks."

Healey will try to improve her time in the 100-yard



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer
Irish freshman Stacey Nedud backstrokes in the Dennis Stark Relays Oct. 6 at the Joyce Center. Notre Dame won with 273 pts.

breaststroke. The U.S. Open time is 1:05.19 seconds, while Healey has a time of 1:05.21.

"You need to be really focused. You work on all sorts of things — turns, head position, body position," she said. "It's not just conditioning. Like last week, I worked on head position."

Healey's win last Saturday contributed to Notre Dame's 188-112 win over Pittsburgh. In that meet, senior Katie Carroll set a school record in the 1,000-yard freestyle with a time of 9:49.80 as Notre Dame won 9-of-16 events on their way

to victory.

The day before against Michigan State, Notre Dame won 10-of-13 events in their 155.5-86.5 win. Freshman Ashlee Edgell picked up her first win of the career in the 200-yard individual medley, while junior Caroling Johnson picked up two wins in the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard butterfly.

In their first dual meet of the year, the Irish drowned No. 25 Purdue 185-115. Carroll set another school mark in the 200-yard freestyle while posting an NCAA qualifying time in that event and the 200-yard individual medley.

The Minnesota Invite begins today and will end Sunday.

Contact Chris Hine at chine@nd.edu

"This year the competition is harder, but our team is also better this year."

Vivian Healey
Irish freshman

SMC SWIMMING

Belles gear up for favored Britons

Saint Mary's hopes to ride recent momentum

By BILL BRINK
Sports Writer

Coming off its first victory of the season over Rose-Hulman, Saint Mary's travels to Albion College on Friday with hopes of capturing another win.

The Belles handily defeated Rose-Hulman 114-77, but Saint Mary's coach Ryan Dombkowski said they will have a much tougher time against 1-1 Albion. Last week, the Belles won six individual events, but the top times of Albion's swimmers in five of those events are faster than those posted by Saint Mary's last weekend.

Dombkowski understands the challenge the Belles face, but believes the Belles have a fighting chance.

"On paper, we don't have the horses to run with Albion," he said. "But several of the events should be very close and the point swings could make the meet close if we have the determination to win all of those battles."

The intensity level and excitement of the team helped Saint Mary's beat Rose-Hulman and must be present again for them to swim well against Albion.

"The atmosphere of the meet was definitely a factor against [Rose-Hulman]," freshman freestyle swimmer Lindsey Nelis said. "In order to maintain that excitement we have to once again bond

together as a team and show our support even more."

Dombkowski agrees, placing the burden of motivation on the team.

"Great swims come from preparation and motivation," he said. "The former I can help to take care of during the week, the latter has to come from within themselves and from their teammates."

Nelis was one of four Belles to win individual events last week and one of the three freshmen to do so. She won the 1000-meter freestyle in her very first attempt in the event.

"I had never swum it before, so I wanted to start off well," she said. "Also, my counter was very helpful. She would tell me when I needed to go faster and how close my competition was."

The team's freshmen have been swimming well in the past two meets, taking five of Saint Mary's seven individual victories in those contests, Dombkowski hopes freshman Meredith Lierz can break out as well.

"She's a young swimmer with a raw talent for sprints," he said. "If we can refine her technique and her races, she has great potential."

The Belles need to focus in order to match up against a talented Albion squad.

"Albion is much faster than Rose-Hulman up front and even deeper," Dombkowski said. "We would need to have several upsets to have a chance, but that's why you swim the meet."

Contact Bill Brink at wbrink@nd.edu

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Hockey

continued from page 28

150-pound sophomore goalie Jeff Lerg. Last year, Lerg was named CCHA Rookie of the Year, as well as MVP of the conference tournament. He posted the seventh-best save percentage in the nation at .928.

Lerg held the Notre Dame offense to three goals in their two wins over the Irish in his rookie season.

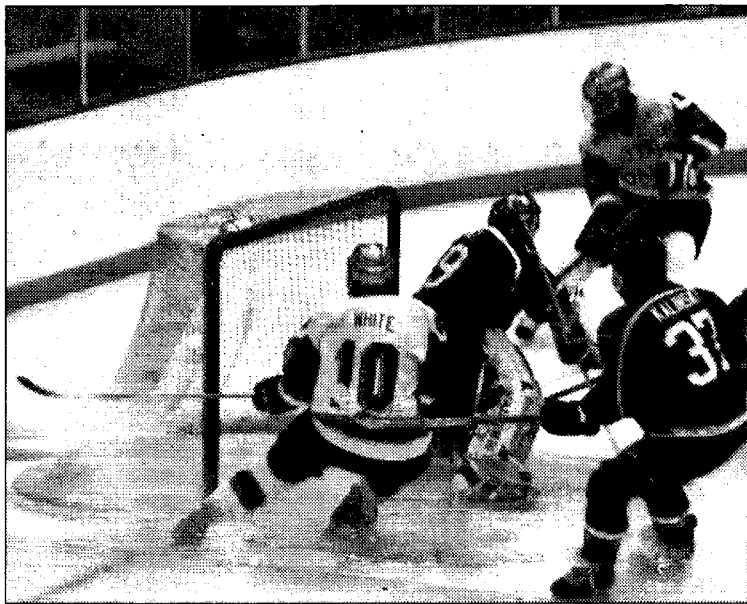
"This weekend isn't going to be about scoring the pretty goals. It'll be about scoring those rebound goals in front of the net because of the way they play their defense," said Sciba, who has one career goal against the Spartan netminder.

With the way goaltender Dave Brown and the Irish defense have been playing so far this year, the team won't need to worry too much about filling up the net.

The defensive unit is currently the top-rated squad in the nation, allowing only 11 goals in their first 10 contests.

"As long as we stick together out there and shut down their top couple lines, I think we will be fine," O'Neill said.

The Spartans top line, made up of three sophomores, is led by Tim Kennedy, who has scored all of his team-leading six goals in the past five games. Kennedy also has three assists in the current hot



Irish center Justin White attacks the net in Notre Dame's 6-1 win over Minnesota State-Mankato Oct. 12 at the Joyce Center.

streak. He is joined by fellow sophomore Tim Crowder, who is in the middle of his own five-game point streak with two goals and six assists dating back to the team's 7-5 win over Sacred Heart Oct. 28.

Notre Dame's young guns have also been performing at the top of their game recently. Sophomore center Erik Condra was named last week's CCHA Player of the Week and the also received national player of the week honors from InsideCollegeHockey.com. Condra had two goals and three assists in last weekend's two home wins over Bowling Green.

With a win and a tie this weekend, Notre Dame could

move into a tie for first place in the CCHA, putting them in great shape as they get into the bulk of their conference schedule in the next few weeks.

"Trying to get to Joe Louis [Arena, host of the CCHA tournament championship] is our first goal, but right now we just want to focus on tomorrow night," Sciba said. "Getting a victory Friday night would be huge, so we can't really look beyond that."

Tickets for the game have already sold out, but 500 seats will be available for Notre Dame students on a first come, first served basis.

Contact Dan Murphy at dmurphy6@nd.edu

Kenney

continued from page 28

Two years later Kenney managed to walk on to play with the Irish.

"It was nerve racking," he said. "[Irish coach Charlie] Weis was really upfront with us. Pretty much everyday you weren't sure if you would be cut but it was a great experience."

Kenney said he is dedicated to playing his role as the opponent's defense week in and week out on the practice field and getting the starters ready to take the field on Saturdays.

Off the field, Kenney has leaped into politics with a two summer internships — one in Springfield, Ill and the other in Los Angeles. While in the city of angels, he interned under governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and met the ex-movie star.

"It piqued [Schwarzenegger's] interest to hear that I was a football player," Kenney said. "I asked him for some advice on how to gain some weight and get bigger."

Although the Governor didn't have any helpful hints for beefing up, the experience was something Kenney will not soon forget.

Kenney also spent a semester

in Puebla, Mexico in order to help with supplementary Spanish major. Kenney was nervous about missing football and campus for such a long period of time but he had to leave in order to fully learn the language.

"If I had to do it again I don't know if I would want to be away from Notre Dame that long," Kenney said.

At the end of his time here in South Bend, Kenney is still uncertain about where he will go or what he will do. A career in politics is a possibility, but he also is exploring his options with graduate schools.

Kenney also wants to stay involved with the game somehow after he hangs up his cleats this winter. Although he never wants to step into Weis' shoes, Kenney would love to coach at the high school level or for youth programs in the future.

Kenney said Belvidere's defensive backs coach was a role model for him both on and off the field.

"He is real good guy who is easy to get along with, but he is very serious when it comes to football," Kenney said.

He wouldn't mind returning to the Bucs to coach along with old mentor, and continue to surround himself in football tradition.

Contact Dan Murphy at dmurphy6@nd.edu

"It piqued [Schwarzenegger's] interest to hear that I was a football player. I asked him for some advice on how to gain some weight and get bigger."

Tim Kenney
Irish defensive back

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- Enjoy a night of music as the South Bend Symphony performs "Salute to the Irish" Friday, 8:00 pm at the Century Center. Cost: \$18 adults, \$16 seniors, \$5 students/children. For tickets call 574-235-9190.
- Autograph session with the 1958 Army Football Team, Saturday, 10:00-11:00 am. Hall of Famers Pete Dawkins and Bob Anderson highlight members of the undefeated 1958 team. Autographs are limited to one item per person and are FREE with full price admission.



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Citadel

continued from page 28

tions on the Leopards the next night, jumping out to an early lead and coasting to a 92-60 win.

After playing two games in two days, Irish coach Mike Brey ran his team through a light workout and film session Wednesday before giving them Thursday off. Brey himself was sick Thursday and unavailable for comment.

The Citadel comes into Sunday's contest 1-2 with losses to Michigan State and Iowa and a win over Ohio Valley. The Bulldogs will play Charleston Southern Friday before heading to South Bend.

Guard Vytautas Valiulis leads The Citadel in scoring with 10.0 points per game, while forward J'Mel Everhart has dominated the boards by grabbing 11.3 rebounds per game.

The task of keeping Everhart off the glass will go to Notre Dame forwards Luke Harangody, Luke Zeller

and Rob Kurz.

Harangody, a freshman, is averaging 15.7 points and 7.7 rebounds so far this season. Kurz is Notre Dame's leading rebounder at 8.7 per game and is averaging 13.0 points per game.

Zeller is averaging 5.3 points and 3.3 rebounds per game this season.

Carter is Notre Dame's leading scorer with 18.3

points per game and fellow guard Colin Falls is the only other player averaging double figures for the Irish, with 10.3 points per game.

The two seniors have combined for 16 three-pointers this year on 46 percent shooting from behind the arc.

Contact Chris Khorey at ckhorey@nd.edu



DAN COOPER/The Observer

Irish guard Russell Carter drives by IPFW guard Quintin Carouthers in Notre Dame's 92-49 win Nov. 10 at the JACC.

ND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Penn State hands Irish first loss of '06 season

Lady Lions pounce ahead early, stay up in blowout victory

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Sports Writer

There was no comeback for the Irish Thursday night.

After falling behind 15-2 to Penn State four minutes into the game, Notre Dame never recovered — losing 75-49 at State College.

"When you have a young team like this, you really need things to go well early I think to get a little confidence," Irish coach Muffet McGraw said. "We made some nice runs eventually. But that was just a little hard for us to overcome."

After a Tulyah Gaines jumper tied the game at 2-2 early in the game, the Lady Lions went on a huge run, capped by a three-pointer from guard Kamela Gissendanner to stretch the lead to 14.

Notre Dame (2-1) was 0-of-4 from the floor in the run and 0-of-2 from the line, in part because of Penn State's tough defense throughout the game.

"We missed some open shots. We missed some free throws when I don't think they were guarding us as tightly," McGraw said. "We needed to get better shots I think. I have to credit their defense with that."

The Lady Lions (4-0) held the Irish to only 27-percent shooting from the field and dominated Notre Dame in the paint. Penn State had six blocks to Notre Dame's two, and out-rebounded the Irish 39-27 — 32 on the defensive end.

Leading this inside stand was center Amanda Brown, who notched 12 points and eight rebounds for Penn State.

Because of this defense, Notre Dame was unable to get things started offensively all night. Irish starters center Melissa D'Amico, guard Breonna Gray and forward Crystal Erwin totaled six points combined.

Notre Dame also lacked a spark off the bench — something freshman Ashley Barlow brought against Bowling Green Monday night with her 16 points and 10 rebounds. Notre Dame's bench was outscored 30-19 by the Lady Lion substitutes, led by freshman guard Tyra Grant — who scored a game-high 19 points.

"Our sixth, seventh and eighth man are all freshmen so when we do sub, we get younger," McGraw said.

Another problem for the Irish in their comeback attempt was Penn State's ability to shoot the three. In the closing minutes of the first half, with Notre Dame down only 12 points Lady Lions guard Adrienne Squire drained a three to stretch the lead back to 15. As the second half began, Squire (nine points) continued her shooting display with another three to counter two Tulyah Gaines free throws to extend the score to 40-24.

"I thought they looked like a veteran, poised team playing at home," McGraw said. "They really, to me, seemed to have a good equal-opportunity type of offense where everybody contributes."

The Irish return home Sunday at noon where they will try to rebound against Western Michigan. The Broncos (0-2) have been a high-scoring team in their two losses, putting up 80 points per game this season.

"We just need to turn around and try to rebound against Western Michigan," McGraw said.

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Contact Jay Fitzpatrick at jfitzpa@nd.edu

Sweet 16

continued from page 28

years, they will face an upstart Colorado squad (14-5-4) led by a national freshman of the year finalist striker Nikki Marshall. In her first season as a Buffalo, Marshall's 17 goals and 38 points have set nine school records. Colorado won a pair of 2-1 games against Colorado College and Denver last weekend in Boulder to earn the trip to Alumni Field.

Notre Dame, meanwhile, enters the match after beating Oakland (Mich.) 7-1 last Friday before struggling to get by Wisconsin-Milwaukee in what coach Randy Waldrum called one of the closest games in the seven years he has been at Notre Dame. Freshman Michele Weissenhofer scored in the fifth minute, as the Irish held on the rest of the way for the win, despite only outshooting the Panthers 9-7 — Notre Dame's closest margin on the year.

"I think we were a little slow in stepping up with the outside backs in to cover some of the positions in the wide areas of the field," Waldrum said. "We spent some time this week refresh-

ing it. It wasn't anything new they threw at us. We just didn't deal with it well."

Irish senior captain defender Kim Lorenzen said Notre Dame's defense will need to control the ball more than they did Sunday to give themselves the best chance to win.

"On Sunday we found ourselves defending a lot," Lorenzen said. "In optimal situations we don't want to be defending as much as we are."

Waldrum said the Irish defense will face a dangerous challenge tonight in Marshall and Co.

"She's deadly fast," he said. "They're going to be one of the better teams we've played this year if the video tape holds up when we get them here in person."

The Irish should be aided by the return of senior defender Christie Shaner who sat out last weekend due to illness. Although Shaner and sophomore Brittany Bock did not practice Wednesday, Waldrum said they were precautionary measures due to the rainy weather this week. He expects both to play tonight.

In addition to Irish health, the weather may affect conditions on the pitch, which has been rained on all week. However, precipitation is expected to stop several hours before game time.

"We're just really focusing on making sure our touches are good, getting used to this awful weather and getting used to these conditions," said Lorenzen about practice this week. "Because chances are it will be like that Friday."

Whatever the weather brings, Waldrum expects his team to be focused and ready.

"At least this time of year I guess you can't be too critical if you're still playing the next game. As disappointing as I thought the performance was, I'd be shocked if we don't come out Friday very good. The kids have had a good week of training."

And they know. They don't need us to beat [last Sunday's game] to death all week. It's behind us. We can't go back and replay that game."

Admission for the first 100 students to arrive at Alumni Field will be waived, as the Irish play potentially their penultimate home match this season.

Contact Tim Dougherty at tdougher@nd.edu

"As disappointing as I thought the performance was, I'd be shocked if we don't come out Friday very good."

Randy Waldrum
Irish coach

"We're just really focusing on making sure our touches are good, getting used to this awful weather."

Kim Lorenzen
Irish captain

NCAA

continued from page 28

and there certainly aren't any easy games in the round of sixteen," Irish coach Bobby Clark said Wednesday after Notre Dame's win over Illinois-Chicago. "Maryland's the defending national champs. We're very aware of the enormity of the task ahead of us."

Notre Dame surprised the two-time defending champion Indiana Hoosiers 2-0 in Bloomington to advance to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA tournament last season for only the third time in school history.

Now the 2006 Irish will try to do what neither the 2005 team nor any group in program history has been able to do — advance to the quarter-final round of the NCAA Tournament. Despite Notre Dame only having four appearances in the third leg of the NCAA Tournament — including this year — many of the Irish players are in a familiar situation.

When the senior class was

in their first year at Notre Dame in 2003, the Irish advanced to the third round before falling to Michigan on penalty kicks. One year later, No. 5 seed Notre Dame was upset in the second round by Ohio State. And last year's team followed its upset win over Indiana with a 1-0 loss at Clemson.

Punching a ticket to this year's Elite 8 will not be easy for Notre Dame.

"Maryland's the defending National Champs. We're very aware of the enormity of the task ahead of us."

Bobby Clark
Irish coach

Maryland looked every bit the defending National Champion on Wednesday night — defeating red-hot St. John's 2-0 in their second round matchup. The Terrapins held a 17-6 advantage in shots on the evening, and their two goals ended a St. John's 674-minute shutout streak — a Johnnies school record.

Maryland, who is currently No. 7 in the NSCAA/adidas national rankings, enters Saturday's game 16-4-1. Including Wednesday night's victory over St. John's, the Terrapins have won 13 consecutive NCAA Tournament games played in College Park.

Contact Greg Arbogast at garbogas@nd.edu

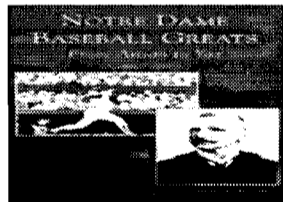
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ND VS ARMY BOOK SIGNINGS

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Notre Dame
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Tom Pagna
The Phantom Letters



3pm-5pm

Sharon Bui
Future Domers
A Child's Guide to
Notre Dame



SATURDAY, NOV. 18

9:30am-11:30am



Connie McNamara
Go Irish



Angie Jurkovic
Notre Dame
Coloring and
Activity Book

11:30am-1:30pm



Karen Heisler
Fighting Irish
Legends,
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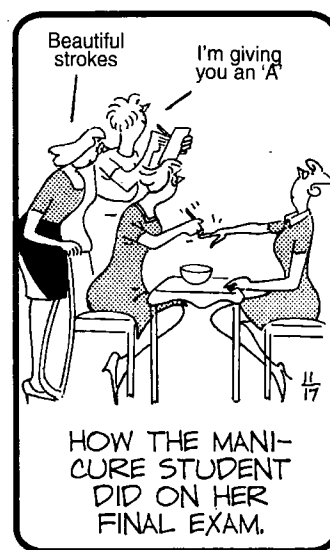
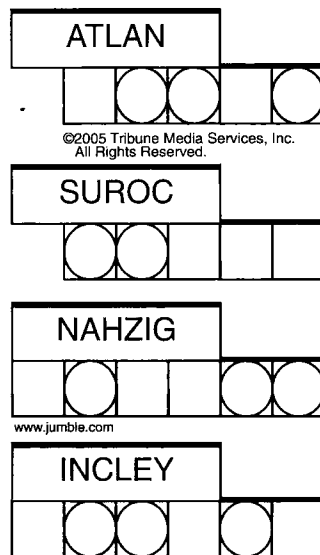


JUMBLE

HENRI ARNOLD
MIKE ARGIRION

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.



(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: AHEAD BASIN WALLOP CASHEW
Answer: Why they watched the hula dancers — IT WAS A "HIP" SHOW

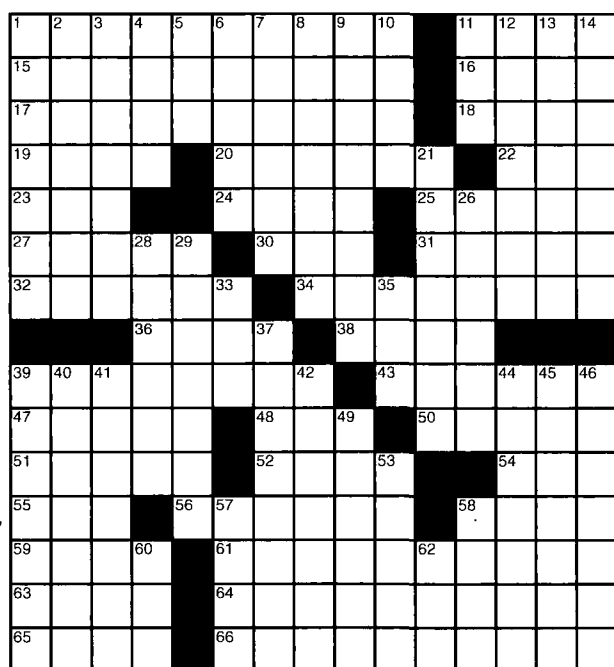
CROSSWORD

WILL SHORTZ

- ACROSS: 1 George Orwell, e.g.; 11 Hotel room amenity; 15 Cabin locale; 16 di bravura (piece showing off a singer's vocal agility); 17 Oscar night activity, jocularly; 18 Darn; 19 Coil; 20 American Indian organization; 22 Honey, in prescriptions; 23 Duct opening?; 24 First name in country music; 25 Take marks off; 27 Red and white, e.g.; 30 Universal Human Rights Mo.; 31 Middle measure; 32 Settled; 34 Will do; 36 Mob money units; 38 Breeze (through); 39 King or queen; 43 "Goodness gracious"; 47 Modern site of ancient Thebes; 48 Drum part; 50 U.S.; 51 Serotonin, e.g.; 52 Breezed through; 54 Kind of test; 55 Hardly a good friend; 56 Nash contemporary; 58 Awning site; 59 Skinny; 61 Animals that are nearly invisible to infrared detectors; 63 Scotland Yard discovery; 64 Cooler by the shore?; 65 Tearing things?; 66 Vocal pessimists

DOWN

- 1 Restaurateurs' banes; 2 "Antony and Cleopatra" role; 3 "___ what?"; 4 Foreboding; 5 Univ. dept.; 6 Pirate tale feature; 7 Some shoe material; 8 Harmonious wholes; 9 Crescent; 10 It follows that; 11 Sorry; 12 Language of the Talmud; 13 Smoothness; 14 They're small and may be golden; 21 Some eastern Canadians; 26 Denounce; 28 Encourages; 29 Blows a gasket; 33 Party person, informally; 41 Investment sales charge; 42 Cage in Hollywood; 43 Queen Elizabeth I had this; 44 Within the realm of people's capability; 45 Holiday spot in el Mediterraneo; 46 Slips by; 49 Assayer's area of expertise; 53 Andrea; 57 Huge; 58 Delight; 60 Pained replies; 62 Outlaw



Puzzle by Nancy Joline

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HOROSCOPE

EUGENIA LAST

- CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Maggie Gyllenhaal, 29; Oksana Baiul, 29; Tammy Lauren, 38; Dwight Gooden, 42; Happy Birthday: You don't usually ask for favors or help but this year you must. Let key people know what you are trying to do and you can move forward. This time, take the help that is out there. It's all about seeing how far you can get this year. Your numbers are 4, 10, 23, 38, 33, 46; ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't let your emotions cause you to make a fuss over nothing. If you take a moment, you will realize you may be acting out of jealousy. Spend time concentrating on what it is you are supposed to be doing. 3 stars; TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will find it difficult to hide the way you feel or to deal with people who challenge you. Added responsibility will develop because of an older relative, child or a love gone awry. You have to make wise choices. 3 stars; GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Think big, put yourself on the line and look for any means to advance, make positive changes or learn something for the future. A social connection made today may turn into a business opportunity in the future. 5 stars; CANCER (June 21-July 22): Someone might not like the choices you are making but you have to be honest with yourself. Don't lead someone on -- it will only hold you back or cause you to miss out on getting to know someone who can make a difference to your life. 2 stars; LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Someone will come to your rescue and, if this person suggests you rid yourself of some things in your life giving you grief, do so. This is a good time to buy or sell items or property. It will help you clear the air and move on. 4 stars; VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take a unique approach to whatever you do today. A partnership may be changing slightly but this can actually be to your benefit. Lay down some new ground rules and speak honestly about your feelings, your plans and your intentions. 3 stars; LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't try to put the blame elsewhere. Own up to your mistake and you can turn things around quickly. A vehicle that will allow you to express yourself emotionally will help and guide you to do the right thing. 3 stars; SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let someone push you around by professing to know more than you. You may be younger or less experienced but you also have a good sense of what you can do and how you can accomplish things. 3 stars; SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Nothing will be easy for you to see today. Don't let someone give you a false impression or push you to make a decision you aren't ready to make. Be sure of where you are headed before you burn bridges. 4 stars; CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't let your emotions influence your decisions. Look at your future. If you aren't clear about something, ask questions but don't make your mind up based on an assumption. 2 stars; AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Stick to the rules and the truth. A problem with technical equipment will cause a misunderstanding. Money can be made if you are straight about the way you are going to make it. 5 stars; PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take a trip or get involved in a group that will make you think about your current lifestyle. It may be time to get involved in a bit of a health regime. A good idea can turn into a cash growth. 3 stars; Birthday Baby: You are proud, reserved and observant. You are strong-minded and will stick to whatever you believe is right. You are a mediator, peacemaker and a protector. Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultation.

THE OBSERVER

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ND SOCCER

Sweet cookin'

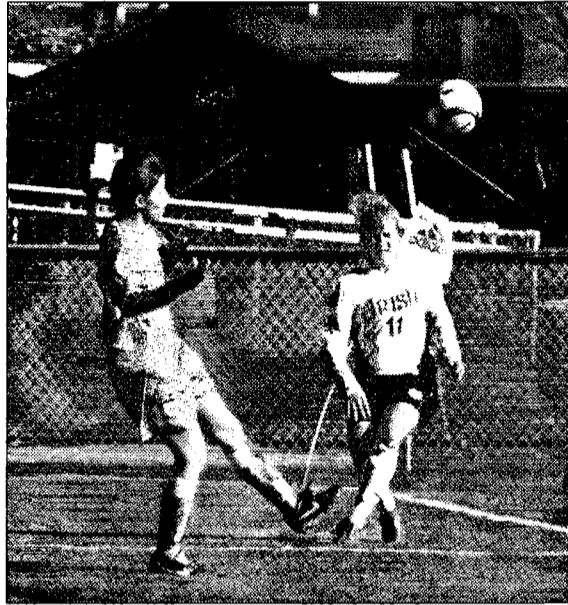
Colorado stampedes into Alumni Field for round of sixteen

By **TIM DOUGHERTY**
Assistant Sports Editor

After squirting by Wisconsin-Milwaukee last Sunday 1-0, Notre Dame hopes to regain its top-ranked form against the Notre Dame region's No. 4 seed Colorado tonight in the Sweet Sixteen round of the NCAA Tournament at 7:30 at Alumni Field.

Though the Irish are making their 12th NCAA Sweet 16 appearance in the last 14

see SWEET 16/page 26



Left, Irish forward Michele Weissenhofer crosses the ball in a 3-1 Notre Dame win over St. Johns Oct. 29 at Alumni Field. Right, Irish Forward Justin McGeeney tackles in a 2-0 Notre Dame home win Oct. 25.



DUSTIN MENNELLA and TIM SULLIVAN/The Observer

Defending National Champs stand in way of Irish and Elite 8

By **GREG ARBOGAST**
Sports Writer

When No. 12 seed Notre Dame takes the field Saturday against No. 5 seed Maryland in College Park, the Irish will not only have a chance to advance to the Elite 8 for the first time in school history — they will also be attempting to knock off the defending National Champion for the second consecutive year.

"There are no easy games in the round of thirty-two.

see NCAA/page 26

HOCKEY

Spartans march into Joyce Center for historic match

No. 5 Notre Dame welcomes No. 4 Michigan State for most anticipated home hockey match since Feb. 5, 1999

By **DAN MURPHY**
Sports Writer

Seven years ago, No. 4 Michigan State and No. 9 Notre Dame played to a 2-2 tie in the last showdown between top-10 ranked teams in the Joyce Center — until

tonight.

The Irish (8-1-1), now No. 5 in USCHO's national poll, will face off against No. 4 Michigan State (5-2-1) in a home-and-home series this weekend. The action starts at 8:05 and will be nationally broadcasted by CSTV. Saturday night's game at

Munn Ice Arena will be televised by Comcast starting at 7 p.m.

"It's going to be exciting. It's our first big chance to prove ourselves," senior defenseman Wes O'Neill said. "We just need to come out and make sure we stay on an even keel and not let our

emotions get the best of us."

O'Neill has four career points (one goal, three assists) against the Spartans, which leads all current Irish players. Senior wing Josh Sciba is not far behind with two goals and an assist in his eight career games against Michigan State.

"This weekend presents a huge challenge to us as a team, and I think everyone is looking forward to that challenge," Sciba said.

The biggest test for Notre Dame this weekend is Michigan State's 5-foot-6,

see HOCKEY/page 24

FOOTBALL

Kenney focuses on sport, political life

By **DAN MURPHY**
Sports Writer

For 6-foot, 180-pound defensive back Tim Kenney, donning the blue and gold for the past two years has fulfilled a life long aspiration.

Kenney grew up just over two hours away from campus in Belvidere, Ill. He is a third-generation Domer, with both his father and grandfather having graduated from Notre Dame.

"I grew up wearing a gold helmet and being a Notre Dame fan all through high

school," Kenney said.

Kenney kept himself busy by captaining his football, basketball and baseball team in his senior year. He was All-State in football in his final season. That year he had 70 tackles and two interceptions for the Belvidere Buccaneers.

The political science and Spanish major headed to the University of Illinois for his freshman year of college. He was in the process of walking on to their team when he learned that he had been accepted to Notre Dame.

see KENNEY/page 24

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Bulldogs make trip to South Bend

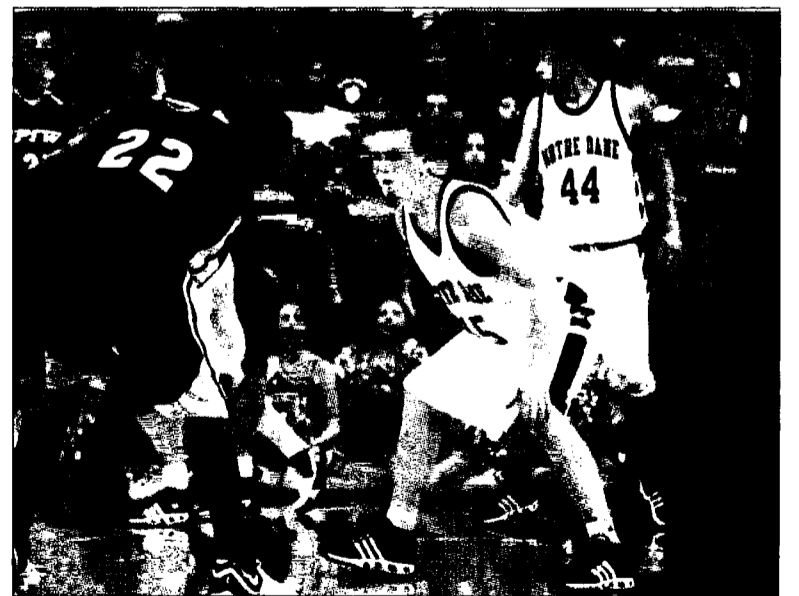
Falls and co. to face The Citadel Sunday

By **CHRIS KHOREY**
Associate Sports Editor

After splitting a pair of games in Indianapolis against Butler and Lafayette, Notre Dame returns home Sunday to play The Citadel at the Joyce Center at 4 p.m.

The Irish (2-1) lost to the Bulldogs 71-69 Monday after senior guard

see CITADEL/page 25



ALLISON AMBROSE/The Observer

Irish guard Colin Falls, right, defends IPFW guard Chris Perkins in Notre Dame's 92-49 Nov. 10 at the Joyce Center.

SPORTS AT A GLANCE

ND WOMEN'S BBALL

**Penn State 75
Notre Dame 49**

Lady Lions freshman guard scores 19 points to lead Penn State over the Irish.

page 25

ND SWIMMING

Minnesota Invite

Nov. 17-19

Notre Dame travels to Minneapolis to face No. 16 Gophers in 13-team field.

page 23

SMC SWIMMING

**Saint Mary's at
Albion**

Today, 5 p.m.

The Belles go on the road as underdogs in dual meet against Albion.

page 23

ND VOLLEYBALL

**Notre Dame at
Cincinnati**

Tonight, 6 p.m.

The Irish face the Bearcats in the Big East quarterfinals.

page 22

SMC BASKETBALL

**Saint Mary's at
Wheaton**

Today, 3 p.m.

The Belles face Div. III No. 5 Wheaton in pre-season tournament.

page 22

NCAA FOOTBALL

**West Virginia 45
Pittsburgh 27**

Mountaineers running back Steve Slaton and quarterback Pat White combine for 399 rushing yards in win.

page 19

IRISH INSIDER

Friday, November 17, 2006

THE
OBSERVER



The Send-off

Notre Dame says goodbye to one of its toughest — and greatest — senior classes.



Photo Illustration by JEFF ALBERT and | The Observer

There's one group to thank for the Irish revival

It took them a little while to get going, not that that was surprising. A few freshman struggles are expected. A legendary program's ineptness isn't.

Notre Dame football didn't know how to win when Brady Quinn of Dublin, Ohio, and Tom Zbikowski of Arlington Heights, Ill., and John Carlson of Litchfield, Minn. and Jeff Samardzija of Valparaiso, Ind. and Victor Abiamiri and Ambrose Wooden of Baltimore, Md., entered school four years ago.

It was broken. One eight-game stretch aside, Notre Dame — the most prestigious football program in America — had been a national side note for 10 years.

Four years later, Quinn, Zbikowski and the rest of the Notre Dame football team is different.

It's a winner.

The reason? It's not Charlie Weis' offense or faster players or longer grass. It's one word.

Toughness.

This senior class is the toughest in school history. Not one group has endured more hard times. Not one group has

turned those bad experiences into wins, wins and more wins.

It's handled the pressure that goes along with being the most talented members of a team, even as freshmen, when Ryan Harris was starting at offensive tackle and Quinn was slotted at quarterback. It's handled a firing that many didn't agree with. It's adjusted to a new coach and a new system.

And now, it's paying off.

Notre Dame has a shot at a national title. Thank Kansas State. Thank Georgia. But most of all, thank these seniors.

They're the reason that Irish fans can talk national title this late in the season for the first time in over 13 years.

That's a long time for the greatest program in college football history to go without serious signs of life.

It's these seniors that brought it back.

It's Quinn, enduring sack after sack against Purdue as a freshman, only to toss touchdown

after touchdown in West Lafayette two years later.

It's Rhema McKnight, keeping mind and body fresh through injury and returning to the starting lineup a better player.

It's Samardzija, growing his hair and his legend with each passing game.

It's Zbikowski, reinventing the punt return from flashy to punishing.

There's others too.

John Sullivan hated losing too much to let it happen on his watch. Wooden has taken more criticism than anyone; but all he does is pick his head up, smile and play. Chinedum Ndukwe doesn't get the publicity of his pro boxing secondary mate, but he hits just as hard.

These seniors have gone from Insight Bowl losers to one of the most publicized, recognized and successful groups of college football players in America. Of course, no matter how talented and tough everyone else is, nothing would have come together without Quinn.

Dublin Coffman's favorite

alum, the senior quarterback couldn't have known what was in store for him. His freshman year, Quinn was interviewed on ESPN's "The Season: Notre Dame Football" after highly touted recruits and brothers Chris and Greg Olsen had just quit the Irish squad.

"Why would anyone want to leave here?" he wondered.

After Saturday, Quinn won't be back. He'll be off in some big city, winning NFL games and calling Weis on the weekends looking for pointers. Maybe they'll talk about the class that started it all — that took a dormant program back to its rightful place.

Quinn and his fellow seniors stuck it out — past Willingham's firing, Kent Baer's one game as head coach and the Urban Meyer search.

They endured beatings at the

hands of Pittsburgh, Boston College and BYU; records of 5-7 and 6-6; blowouts at home to USC and Florida State.

They were the future of a program with not much of a future.

They didn't listen when everyone said Notre Dame football was done, was just like everyone else.

They leave here Saturday, with legacy intact. But they aren't finished.

A young Ryan Harris said he wanted a few national championships by the time he graduated.

An older Harris and his classmates just might get one.

They've come too far to stop now.

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

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Mike Gilloon

Sports Writer

One eight-game stretch aside, Notre Dame — the most prestigious football program in America — had been a national side note for 10 years.

Four years later, Quinn, Zbikowski and the rest of the Notre Dame football team is different.

It's a winner.

CHINEDUM NDUKWE

Ndukwe's all right talking about his best friend

Receiver-turned-safety was forced to drop 20 pounds to keep his starting job for final season

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Many of the questions Chinedum Ndukwe fields center on his relationship with quarterback Brady Quinn. But Irish coach Charlie Weis directed a fair share of focus toward the 6-foot-2 safety's size last spring.

Sophomore safety Ray Herring played his way up the depth chart in March and April, and Ndukwe's job security became an issue.

"It was known throughout everybody that a couple of younger guys were doing well," Ndukwe said. "You can't really let that worry you. You always have to improve yourself as an individual first to help the overall team."

If Herring's play didn't worry Ndukwe, Weis lit a fire under the receiver-turned-safety, who tipped the scales at nearly 235 pounds.

"Coach set a challenge in front of me," Ndukwe said. "He's like, 'I want you to lose 20 pounds.' But I was still pretty cut up. I was like, 'From where?' ... He basically said if I didn't do that, I wasn't going to play."

Ndukwe said Weis' statement

hit home because the safety respected the coach's thorough understanding of personnel adjustments. But Ndukwe isn't so sure that Weis wasn't just using a mental ploy to improve the defensive back's play.

"Everything the coaches do is for a reason," Ndukwe said. "Coach Weis, for instance, is really into the psychology behind sports. I'm not sure — who knows — but he could have just done that to set a fire in me."

And Ndukwe would know. The business major with a concentration in consulting has a dual major in psychology.

"That stuff definitely sparks my interest in a lot of ways," he said. "People do a lot of things for different reasons."

Ndukwe came to the school after his brother Kelechi graduated from Notre Dame and his sister graduated from Saint Mary's. But he came with more than just a family legacy.

The person Ndukwe is closest with at Notre Dame was Quinn. He was Quinn's No. 1 target at Dublin Coffman High School in Ohio, catching 150 passes for 2,174 yards and 24 touchdowns during their high school days.

As they entered Notre Dame together, their friendship helped Ndukwe adjust to the new college setting.

"When you're going to school a lot of times you might not know anyone," Ndukwe said. "First day of school, you're actually driving with a person. ... You're actually coming with somebody, coming with your best friend."

Ndukwe said their friendship has only grown through the past four years. Calling Quinn "a brother" to him, Ndukwe said he never minds answering questions about his high-profile pal.

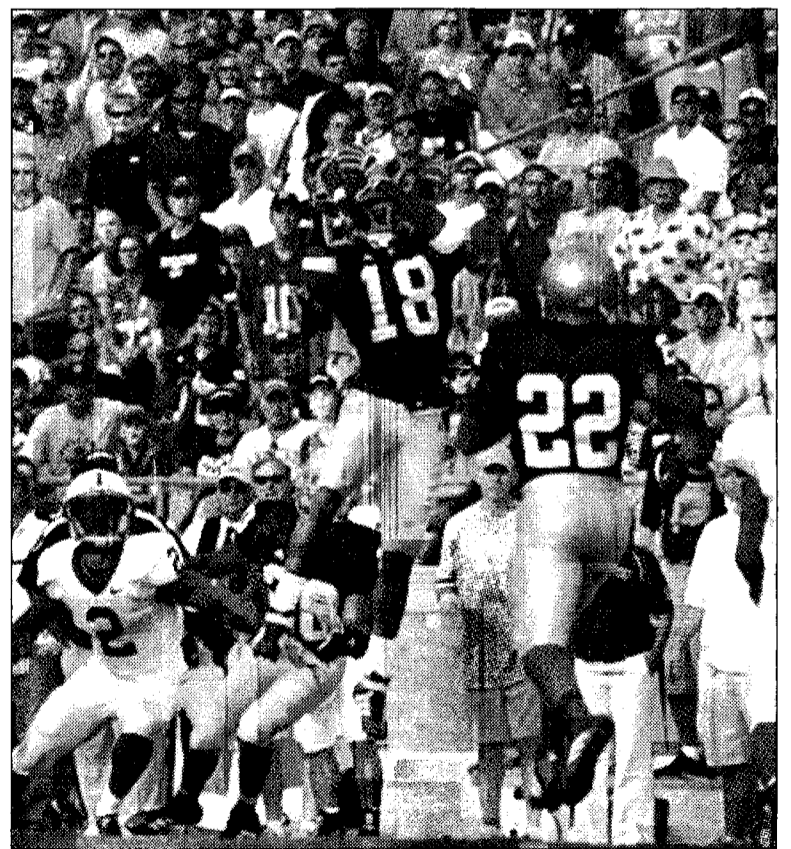
"When you love someone, when you care about someone — you can talk about them forever," Ndukwe said. "There's always things I can talk about Brady because he's close to my heart. He's been like a brother to me."

And that applies both in media sessions and while the two are together away from the football team.

"I'm usually with Brady a lot off campus, so [people] usually just assume I'm 'Ndukwe'," the safety said. "So I just roll with the flow."

As the high school friends' relationship has thrived at Notre Dame, so have Ndukwe's relationships with his teammates. Ndukwe started at safety as a junior, after switching from wide receiver in his sophomore season.

While that may have been a difficult adjustment, Ndukwe said, everyone has their troubles at times — and those similar experiences create bonds.



ALLISON AMBROSE/The Observer

Irish safety Chinedum Ndukwe intercepts an Anthony Morelli pass during Notre Dame's 41-17 win over Penn State Sept. 9.

"Every person's situation is different," Ndukwe said. "Even though they're on the same team as you, they all have certain adversities. They all have ups, they all have downs, and it does bring you closer together, because that's what a team is all about."

Ndukwe's senior season has been his best, and his 22 tackles against Air Force were 14 more

than his career high entering the 2006 season.

"Throughout the past couple years, it's been a roller coaster ride of emotions," he said. "The success of this team is beyond imagination. Having a great time, it's been worth everything we've gone through."

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Tough enough to handle

Why Brady Quinn is who he is and how he's evolved through the years

Editor's note: This story first ran Dec. 12, 2005.

By PAT LEONARD
Sports Writer

Robin Quinn knows Notre Dame coach Charlie Weis places heavy responsibilities on his quarterbacks, so she figured her son Brady would have welcomed the two years to prepare for such a disciplined and demanding offense.

"I said, 'Aren't you glad you got Coach Weis your junior year?'" Quinn's mother recalled asking her son. "Because I was thinking to myself had he been a freshman, just 18, getting the starting position, that would have been overwhelming for him.

"[Brady] goes, 'No, that probably would have been easy as a freshman because that's all you know.'"

The junior quarterback's comment could make Irish fans daydream about what could have been, or it could explain why Weis' offense developed so quickly and efficiently in less than a year with 18- to 21-year old college kids.

At this time last season, Quinn (6-foot-4, 231 pounds) was not thinking Heisman. And he no longer is this year, or so he says. But following a career season in which he set numerous Irish program records, the confident junior quarterback has gained national attention for being the arm of Notre Dame's resurgence to a BCS bowl.

First-year coach Weis has been the face.

Weis brought an offense that already had credibility from his three Super Bowl wins with the New England Patriots. But for many doubters, Quinn has proven the offense can work at more than one level of football, and that he has everything to do with why it does.

He garnered seven first-place votes in Saturday's Heisman Trophy balloting after throwing for 3,633 yards and 32 touchdowns and shattering almost every Notre Dame passing record in 2005.

Former Irish coach Lou Holtz said Quinn "never flinched" in his game-winning drive at Stanford Nov. 26 in a 38-31 win.

"[It was] just ho-hum, another day at work," Holtz said prior to the Notre Dame football banquet on Dec. 2.

And though Quinn did not even

receive an invitation to the Heisman ceremony in New York City, his name's appearance on the ballot made the statement — while Weis has been the mastermind behind the success, Quinn has been its catalyst.

"I think that the success of our offense can definitely be pinpointed to the progress of Brady," Weis said.

Quinn's path to prominence has been rocky at times, but always deliberate.

The big boys

The Dublin, Ohio native has been able to deal with adversity at Notre Dame because he experienced similar athletic obstacles at a young age.

When Quinn's Dublin Football League (DFL) travel team played Gehanna in sixth grade, the opposition included some seventh-, eighth- and even ninth-graders — players who were more physically developed.

"Brady was always a good-sized kid for his age, but not like these kids," his mother said. "One kid was probably 6-foot tall, 200 pounds."

Quinn took a vicious hit that sent him off to the sidelines. His uncle David, a coach at the time, made a comment that stuck with Quinn's mother as one of the most significant developments in her son's athletic career.

"He said, 'Brady, look. This is totally your decision, but there comes a point in your life when you play sports where there's a difference between playing injured and playing hurt,'" his mother said. "If you're hurt or your pride's hurt, and you think you can get back out there, do it. But if you feel like you've really got an injury, you should sit down."

Quinn shook his head, shook off the hit and finished the game.

Fast forward to 2003, his first start as a college quarterback on the road at Purdue — 59 passing attempts, four interceptions, only one touchdown, one sack and a slew of hurries, knockdowns and hits.

The raw talent showed, but the beating was brutal.

"I don't like to hear that word [Purdue], every time I think of that as a mom," his mother said.

Quinn would have to live by his uncle's words for a while. The losses hurt.

Quinn's statistics improved as he gained more game experience, but he won just nine of 21 games

as a starter in his first two years under former coach Tyrone Willingham. Though his numbers were improving, through his sophomore season, the team was not.

Coming from a competitive and athletic family — Brady played baseball, basketball and football into high school at Dublin-Coffman; his father Ty played baseball and wrestled; his younger sister Kelly plays soccer at Virginia; his older sister Laura played field hockey and softball and even modeled — Quinn always has been a perfectionist.

"When we were younger and we had catches, he would throw it — and obviously he has a really hard throw — and I could never catch it," Kelly Quinn said. "He'd get so frustrated at me and say, 'Catch the ball, Kelly.'"

Notre Dame's 31-point losses to archrivals, then, did not sit well with a kid who had the most organized desk in his first grade class.

"He was always a very intense child ... always a perfectionist — in any sports he did, with his room, with his outfits," his mother said. "Maybe he role-modeled me a little bit."

And every perfectionist desires complete control over assigned tasks. Enter Charlie Weis, and a system that gave Quinn the freedom he wanted, the discipline he needed and his first close look (9-2; last-second loss to undefeated USC) at what perfection in college football means.

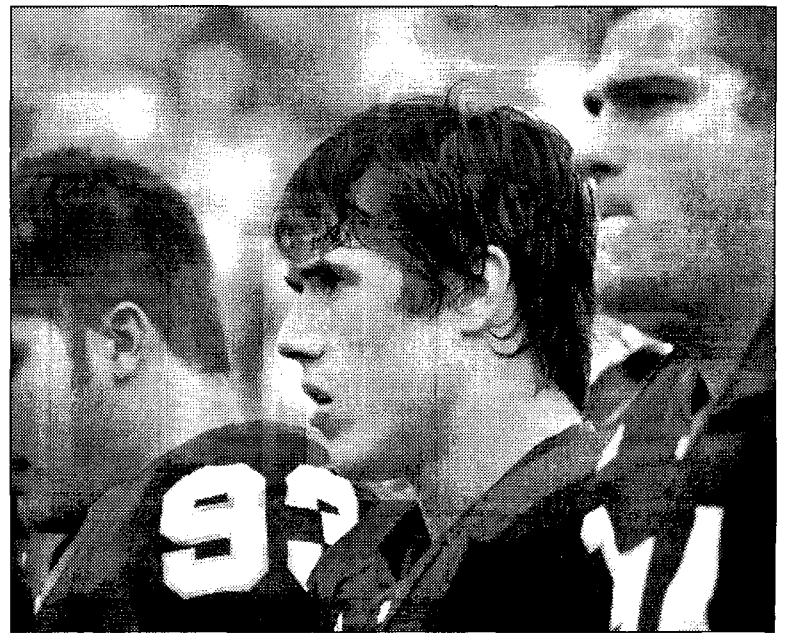
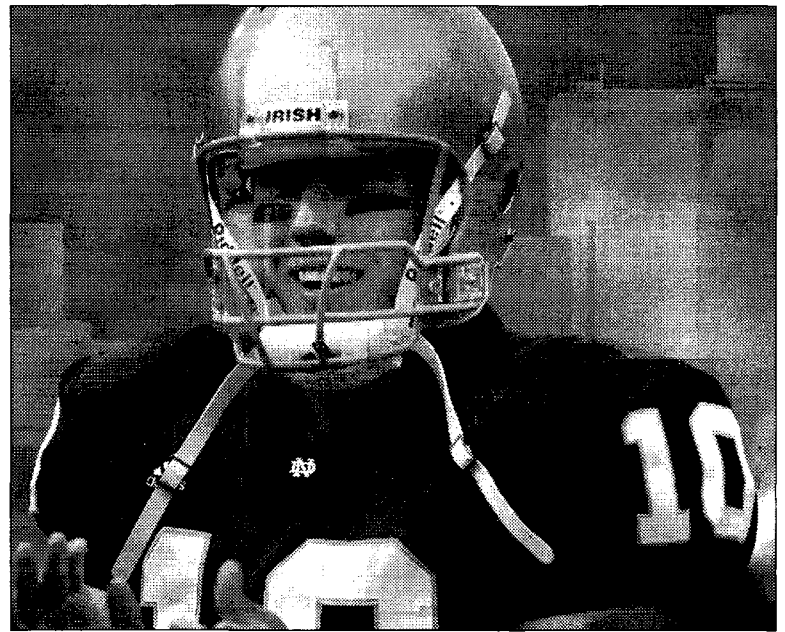
Grown up

Quinn controls most of Notre Dame's offense at the line of scrimmage — at least he has the freedom to. Weis has mandates like any coach, but his major demand calls for someone not wearing a headset on the sidelines, Quinn, to take control.

"The quarterback has to be an extension of [Weis] out there on the field, and while it's tough, I've got to be somewhat of an extension of what he wants in terms of leadership and making decisions as the quarterback," Quinn said.

His maturity and confidence have contributed to nothing short of a Notre Dame offensive revival.

In 2004, the Irish averaged 218 yards per game passing. Quinn had 17 touchdowns to 10 interceptions, and the offensive line gave up 25 sacks. Now, as the 2005 season concludes, Notre Dame averages 334 yards passing and has given up only 16 sacks.



Photos by CLAIRE KELLEY/The Observer

Brady Quinn's spirits have raised along with his play. The Irish say he is more vocal as a leader this season, a characteristic reflected in his confident, focused demeanor on the field.

Quinn's 32 touchdowns-to-seven interceptions ratio already has helped him capture the Sammy Baugh Award — presented to college football's top passer by The Touchdown Club of Columbus, Ohio — and be nominated for a host of others.

"He's more vocal in the huddle, taking charge and being more aggressive," said wide receiver Maurice Stovall, who has caught 60 passes and 11 touchdowns from Quinn this season. "His mental aspect of the game as far as watching film and reading defensive coverages [has improved, also]."

Quinn's statistics have accumulated, the quarterback said, in part because Weis has taught him a lot about erasing short-term memory and not dwelling on mistakes. And Quinn has been able to receive that advice and apply it — no matter how harshly the coach instructs at times — because of his mature attitude.

"I think that Brady was mature enough to realize regardless of the personality or if there had ever been a personality conflict — which it sounds like [Brady and Weis] get along perfectly fine — that Brady knew he was going to respect and appreciate what Coach Weis had to add and bring to the table," his mother said.

Quinn has endless and acute observations about how he has learned from Weis beginning in spring practice and continuing into his BCS bowl preparation.

"[This offense] places a lot of responsibility on the quarterback, and it deals with a lot more mental things coming up to the line of

scrimmage and playing in the game," Quinn said. "I learned that there was a lot more to playing quarterback in different systems and in our particular offense than I had realized before."

But while Weis believes quarterback recruits should be lining up for the chance to play for an NFL offensive mind like his, he understands Quinn's value as more than just a good listener.

In the case of Quinn's development, it's not only what the offense has done for him, Weis consistently says. Notre Dame's success is just as much about what Quinn does for the offense.

Whether or not the Heisman Trophy voters recognize Quinn as being worthy of a New York City visit, the junior knows his place — short of the ultimate goal.

"Everyone who is there [for the Heisman announcement] is undefeated and playing in the national championship," Quinn said. "So it's hard to argue that you should be there when you're 9-2 and playing in the Fiesta Bowl, instead of the Rose Bowl."

Even Weis, who coaches with a demeanor of rationality and tough love, had problems with Quinn not receiving the invite. But his quarterback has come even further, to the point at which he is so realistic and poised and prepared for decisions thrown his way — and about recognizing the improvements still required of him — that he can handle anything.

And if that doesn't work, he can always audible.



MATTHEW SMEDBERG/The Observer

Notre Dame quarterback Brady Quinn leads the Irish out of the tunnel before their Oct. 15 game against No. 1 USC. Quinn passed for one touchdown and ran for another in the 34-31 loss to the Trojans.

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Man of promise

Defensive end Victor Abiamiri was a prep standout in Baltimore. Four years later, he's back to show how far he's come with the Irish.

Editor's note: This story first ran Oct. 27, 2006.

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Victor Abiamiri has made a name for himself.

His attitude is fierce and pointed, his intelligence sharp and his football knowledge top notch. He draws double teams because one man simply isn't enough.

NFL scouts drool when they see a 6-foot-4, 270-pound defensive end with the Irish senior defensive end's foot speed and power. His body size and weight are perfect for the position, and what NFL teams see is upside — something people have always seen in him.

A native of Randallstown, Md., a Baltimore suburb, Abiamiri returns to a home crowd for the contest Saturday following two games in which opposing quarterbacks often found themselves looking at dirt, then turning up to see a white "95" bulging from a deep blue jersey.

But Abiamiri didn't first pick up any of his coveted traits from a whistle-blowing drill sergeant or a pull-your-teach coach. Abiamiri's path to football stardom started with a head coach and defensive coordinator who had a simple mantra: "Fifty men working together, loving each other, cannot be beat."

Growing up Gilman

Abiamiri and Ambrose Wooden never met until August of 1999. They've gone to school together ever since.

Wooden, now an Irish cornerback, remembers when he first encountered the hulky Abiamiri in football practice at the beginning of their freshman year at Gilman School on Baltimore's northern edge.

"He was probably the same size he is now, maybe 40 pounds lighter. I saw him and he said he dunked in fifth grade," the 5-foot-11 Wooden says with a smile. "I was like, wow, I can't even dunk now."

The two would spend the next four years under the tutelage of two men — Gilman head coach Biff Poggi and volunteer defensive coordinator Joe Ehrmann. The two have a unique coaching style that stresses brotherhood over competition.

Their focus on teaching players how to become men — is so different than other programs that Abiamiri calls Gilman "probably the only place in the world" to get the kind of coaching he did. And he soaked it up.

Abiamiri says Poggi and Ehrmann have been "father figures" to him.

"They're probably some of

the best influences I've had in my life," he says. "They, and my own father, turned me from a boy into a man."

Wooden remembers his teammate Abiamiri starting at safety as a freshman, all 6-foot-4 and 215 pounds of him roving in the secondary, ready to make a play. The big man was then known as "Ookie Rock" — a nickname Wooden says comes from Abiamiri's dancing. Abiamiri jokingly said he will haunt Wooden (called "Mo" since childhood) for remembering it.

One day "Ookie Rock" intercepted a pass and started running down the sideline.

"We were going crazy," Wooden says.

He remembers the "big and goofy" Abiamiri looking toward the end zone.

"He didn't make it," Wooden says with a chuckle.

The personality switch

His teammate would become a defensive end with a mean streak that stands in stark contrast from his otherwise soft, intelligent persona. Off the field, he seems more peace-seeker than quarterback hunter.

Brady Quinn laughs about Abiamiri's Jekyll and Hyde. "Vic," he says, is "one of those guys that's a lot of fun to be around."

"It's tough to put into words," the Irish quarterback said with a smile. "He's one of those big, mean guys that really doesn't like to be mean. I think that's why he kind of likes playing football because he's able to go out there on the field and dish it out on the field and be happy."

For Abiamiri, it's simple. When he's on the football field, he's looking to scare opponents. Off the field, he's the man Poggi and Ehrmann helped form.

He says he applies the lessons he learned from Poggi and Ehrmann "in the locker room, in the dining hall, in the dorms." Abiamiri says he makes sure any teammates who are upset or down know they can turn any situation around with hard work.

Yet when inches away from an offensive tackle before the ball is snapped, all he's trying to do is intimidate.

"I actually don't think it's that tough to change your mentality," he said.

Gilman School's motto is simple: "Turning Boys of Promise into Men of Character."

Abiamiri has always had a lot of promise.

The position switch

Poggi and Ehrmann moved Abiamiri to the defensive line after his freshman season, a move that Baltimore high school football would never forget. As a junior, he had 17



TIM SULLIVAN/The Observer

Irish defensive end Victor Abiamiri, right, leaps over a pile to ensure that Stanford quarterback Trent Edwards, left, doesn't escape a tackle in a 31-10 win over the Cardinal Oct. 7.

sacks. As a senior, he recorded 12 more and threw in an interception, for old time's sake.

For colleges across the country, he was the defensive line stud of his graduating class.

"He was everyone's No. 1 at defensive end out of high school," said Tom Lemming, a longtime national recruiting analyst.

"Basically every school in the country was going after him."

After a long recruiting period and at least one report of recruiters trying so desperately to get Abiamiri that they flouted NCAA rules, the academics at Notre Dame lured one of the nation's top prizes to South Bend in 2003.

"Teams saw his size and speed," Lemming said. "He had long arms and long legs, and he was explosive off the ball."

Playing defensive end, a tough image can help, too. Abiamiri has earned that on the field, with 17 career sacks, including six this season and eight in 2005.

Even before he had any, Abiamiri was confident. Just ask former Irish weak side end and current New York Giant Justin Tuck, who Abiamiri says took him under his wing during their two years together at Notre Dame.

"He came in and was about six-foot, 250 as a freshman — about the same size I was as a junior," Tuck said. "He told me he would compete with me for playing time."

That year alone, Tuck had 13.5 sacks. Nonetheless, Abiamiri saw significant action. The freshman started five games and played in all 12; he registered 22 tackles, including four for losses, and a sack.

"There are two things you have to be to play as a freshman — talented and smart," Tuck said. "And he was both."

Eye on the motor man

More than 40 games after Abiamiri first suited up for Notre Dame, pro teams from

across the country are once again looking at his promise and potential.

Projected by some to be a first-round pick, Abiamiri is playing under the careful eyes of scouts. Like he did during his senior year of high school by announcing his commitment after the season finished, Abiamiri is pushing any NFL Draft talk aside.

Like every other Irish player — and most in college football — he says it would be too much of a distraction. Thinking about the weekly jumps and bumps from analysts like ESPN's Mel Kiper would be

overwhelming. It would keep him from his mental preparation, he says — keep him from doing what he needs to do to help his team win now.

And one of the best ways Abiamiri can help his team now is by freeing up other Irish defenders when he faces double teams.

"Victor has put himself in a position now where teams — when we go against anybody, they know where Victor is," Irish coach Charlie Weis said. "I think that he's drawn some special attention."

A lot of that special attention comes from big games, like the two he's had against Stanford. In 2005, he recorded four sacks in the final game of the regular season. This Oct. 7, he added another three against the Cardinal.

"All you can do is help yourself by focusing on the game at hand every week," he says.

If Abiamiri stays as focused as he has been, it'll help the Irish in the short term and — come April — pad his wallet.

After his performance against Stanford and then his sack and two more quarterback hurries against UCLA last Saturday, Kiper has Abiamiri shooting up to No. 10 in his "Big Board" list of the best draft prospects in the nation.

Weis credits much of Abiamiri's success to his ever-churning legs and forceful body push — and that, the

coach says, is something NFL scouts love about the senior just as much as his physique.

"The one thing I do know about [Abiamiri] that I didn't know when I got here is that he has a very, very, very high motor that goes with his athletic ability," Weis said. "There are a lot of people with athletic ability that don't have a high motor [but] he goes high on every play. It presents a problem week in and week out for any [offense] that we go against."

The home option

Abiamiri will try to be a problem once again Saturday in an important game for the senior. He says he managed to get 15 to 20 tickets for family members in the Baltimore area to see his first — and only — collegiate game in the area.

"It's awesome to be able to go home and play in front of family and friends," he said.

But against an option team, his job is a little different.

He will have to replace his bull rushes and swims with mental focus and sharp discipline. As offensive tackles block toward the center of the line and fullbacks come full-steam-ahead toward the corner, Abiamiri's task will be much different.

"We might not even block ol' Victor, much less double him," Navy coach Paul Johnson said Tuesday. "We will read him on the option."

That means Abiamiri will be forced to wait out Midshipmen quarterback Kaipo-Noa Kaheaku-Enhada as he scurries to the corner. If Abiamiri takes the wrong angle or bites at the wrong time, Navy could run right through the Irish defense.

"It's the most frustrating offense in all of football," Tuck said, glad no NFL teams run it against the Giants. "You need a lot of mental preparation."

Abiamiri thinks he has that. He thinks he'll be able to stick to his man on every play and be patient.

For most defensive ends, that patience is tough. But for one who's used to being as calm off the field as he is fearsome between the sidelines — maybe not.

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler1@nd.edu

Tough, 'Zibby' style

Strong safety Tom Zbikowski leads Irish defense with attitude and experience

Editor's note: This story first ran Sept. 16, 2005.

By PAT LEONARD
Sports Writer

The offensive player in him just wouldn't shut up. Tom Zbikowski needed the ball, and he needed it now.

It had been since high school that Zbikowski had run an offense, when he played quarterback, safety and returned kicks at Buffalo Grove High School in Buffalo Grove, Ill. But one touch of the ball was all he wanted.

Never mind that he had already intercepted Michigan State quarterback Stephen Reaves to set up the first Irish touchdown on Sept. 18, 2004.

On a routine Michigan State running play to tailback Jason Teague, with the score tied 7-7, Zbikowski zipped through the line, tore the ball from Teague's hands and bolted 75 yards for the end zone before even Teague could say, "Who's that guy?"

Everyone knows now.

The 5-foot-11, 208-pound strong safety made nine tackles and intercepted Michigan quarterback Chad Henne at the goal line last Saturday. He is the most experienced defensive back in a secondary that, though early in the season, seems to have made huge strides from a rough campaign last year.

And to top it all off, Zbikowski was named special teams captain for this week's game against the Spartans because of his contributions on punt returns.

"Tommy is one of the real leaders of our football team," defensive backs coach Bill Lewis said. "I don't imagine there's

anything that Tommy does that he doesn't do competitively."

As Notre Dame attempts to end Michigan State's winning streak in South Bend, one of the "real leaders" of the Irish has a message to convey.

"Them coming in and winning four straight in our place is really not acceptable," Zbikowski said. "You can't let teams come into your place and win at home."

And like that, "Zibby" — as they call him nowadays — has developed a Keyshawn Johnsonesque attitude that says "Throw me the damn ball," per the title of the former Southern Cal receiver's book. Except Zbikowski doesn't say he wants the ball.

He just takes it.

Zibby the student

Zbikowski's classroom is not always in a school building, with 8,000 other undergraduates and textbooks. His classroom, and that of his teammates, is also the room where he watches film; where coaches dissect the past week's game; where head coaches show tape of mistakes, and mistakes only, in past years' losses.

Irish head coach Charlie Weis showed his squad similar film of Notre Dames' last four home losses to the Spartans this week. But, as Lewis describes, Zbikowski has the toughness and ability to respond to such motivation and encourage teammates to do the same.

"Tommy tries to do everything the way he's coached to do it," Lewis said. "He's very easy to coach."

"What is so important, and what I appreciate about him, is

he takes and goes from the classroom to the practice field and can take things from inside [to the] outside. You talk about a game plan, [and] he can go out on the field then and start to work on executing it."

The strong safety's discipline and work ethic are contagious and evident. Though he red-shirted as a freshman and has only played one full season for Notre Dame, Zbikowski gained the reputation as a confident and experienced player unusually quickly, simply because people noticed his style.

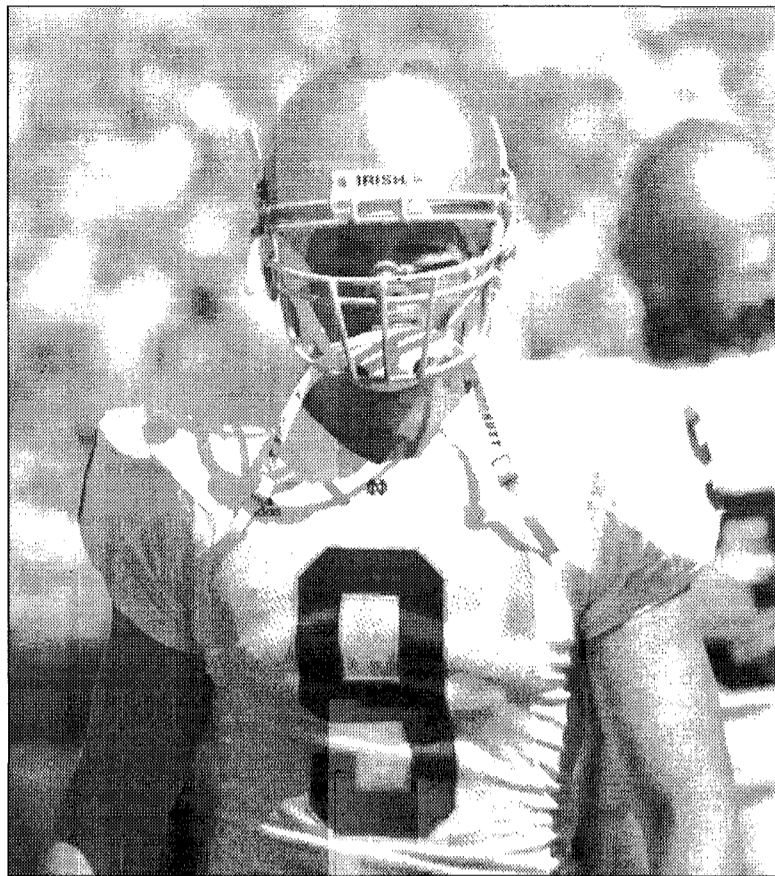
"He's not a boisterous guy, but it's very easy for his teammates to see what he's all about," Lewis said. "Because everything he does on the field he does full speed."

That speed was fast enough to gain recognition as Gatorade Player of the Year in Illinois Zbikowski's senior high school season, when he threw for 1,382 yards and 11 touchdowns, rushed for 1,287 yards and 23 touchdowns, racked up 41 tackles and made three interceptions.

USA Today tabbed him as a first-team All-American. The Chicago Sun Times labeled him the Chicago area player of the year. And Notre Dame made him one of their top recruits.

Right now, fifth-year senior linebacker and defensive captain Brandon Hoyte is already a leader on defense. But Zbikowski's command in the secondary also distinctly benefits the younger players and the entire defense — he called the defense's practices before the Michigan game "sloppy."

"It's not just his confidence," Weis said. "It's his understanding of playing."



TIM SULLIVAN/The Observer

Irish strong safety Tom Zbikowski has seven return touchdowns in his career, two shy of the NCAA record.

Zibby the teacher

Zbikowski could have walked onto the practice field in the spring, turned to face the quarterback, looked to his left and right, and felt completely lost.

He was the only starter remaining in the defensive backfield, albeit one that surrendered too many passing yards and touchdowns through the air last season. Zbikowski instead saw the new season, with the new coaching staff, as an opportunity.

"Whenever he sees something that I could possibly be doing better, he'll mention it," said starting free safety Chinedum Ndukwe. "That's just the kind of guy he is. He'll step up to say 'Maybe you need to take that one more step when you hit someone' or 'Take that extra step when you're backpedaling.'"

"He knows what he's doing back there. He has a good football mind."

Ndukwe is not only new to the starting secondary. He is new to defense altogether. The former wide receiver, who caught touchdowns from Brady Quinn at Dublin Coffman High School in Ohio, is still getting used to tackling rather than catching.

But as Weis has observed through spring practice, fall practice and the early season, the coach believes Zbikowski has had an obvious positive influence on less experienced players like Ndukwe.

"Somebody who's been out there and who's seen things happen at full speed — changing every week — is different than someone who just goes through it in training camp," Weis said. "I think when you have that settling force that checks you in and out of the right coverages and adjusts formations [like Zbikowski does], it really takes some of the pressure off you that you have to be the sole adjuster, especially when it comes to the secondary."

Zbikowski said he believes his role is to get his teammates ready on a week-to-week basis, much along the lines of his coach's mentality. They're on

the same page, as teachers and as competitors.

Zibby the player

Football is his sport, sure. But Zbikowski is also a veteran boxer who takes hits as well as he gives them.

He competed in the Golden Gloves program beginning at age nine, compiling a 60-13 amateur record and earning a national rank. He was also a Silver Gloves national finalist in 1998, '99 and 2000.

His multiple talents, within football and without, distinguish Zbikowski as an athlete and — as Lewis describes him — a competitor. Though the experience in the ring is completely separate from his efforts on the field, the strong safety found a correlation.

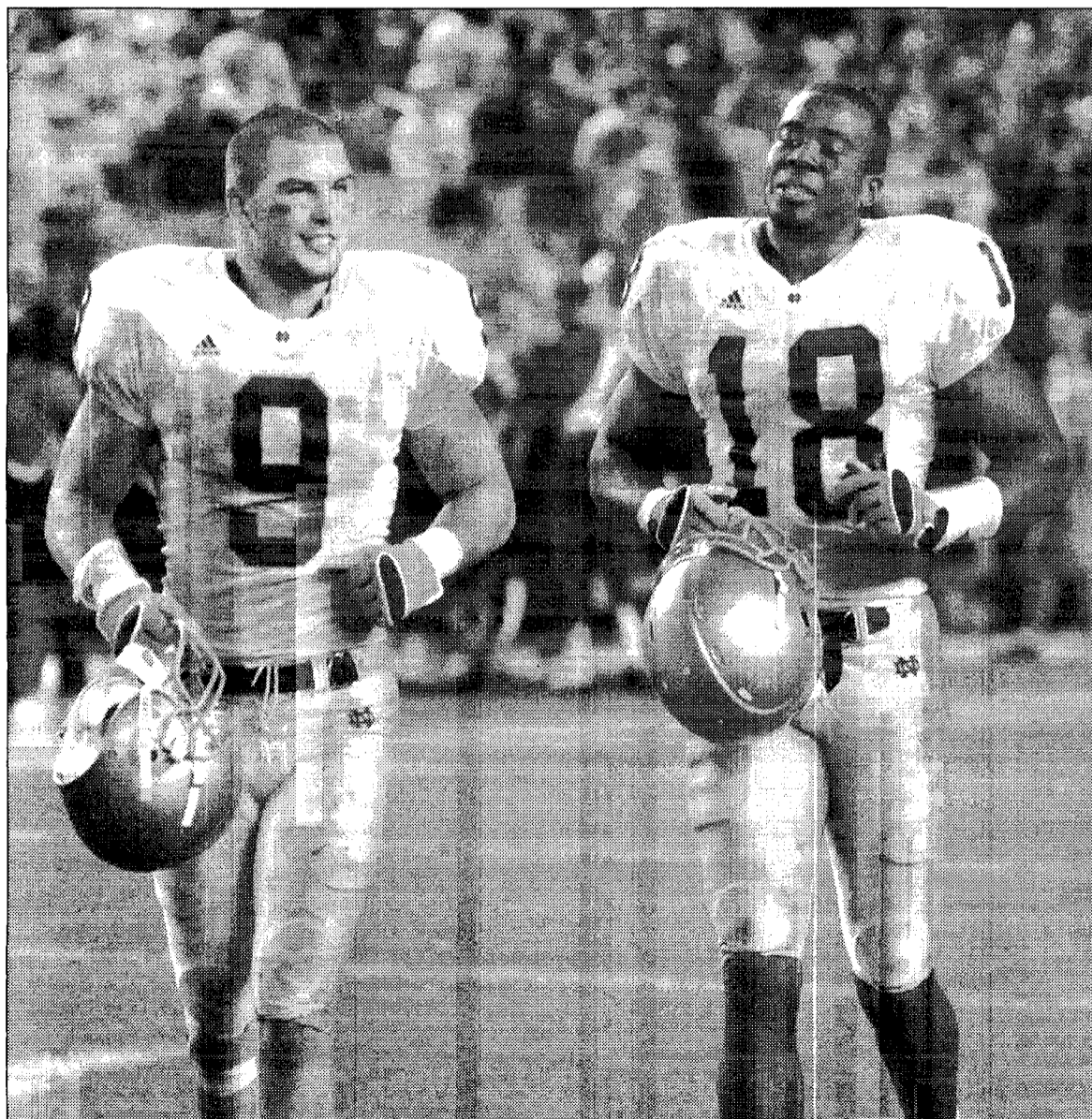
"[Boxing and football] are two different sports," Zbikowski said. "But I guess boxing has always helped me in all my aspects [of football]. When you're winning, you've got to know how to survive without getting knocked out."

Notre Dame finds itself in that exact predicament Saturday against a team that has had the Irish's number in Notre Dame Stadium. Despite coaching and win streaks and rebounds from unsuccessful seasons, it takes attitude to reverse trends, win games and prove a point.

Enter Tom Zbikowski. "What [Michigan State has] been saying in the media, they don't really have any fear when they come in to play us," he said. "But we've got to put fear in them."

And as the Notre Dame defense grows, on the shoulders of a young man who stands under 6-feet tall, so will the abilities of a player who still has a long time to improve — scary, isn't it?

"I think as we go down the road, every week I'm going to raise the bar on Tommy and expect more of him," Lewis said, "because I think he's got that kind of ability."



MATT SMEDBERG/The Observer

Tom Zbikowski, left, runs off Heinz Field after the Irish beat Pittsburgh 42-21 on Sept. 3, 2005. Zbikowski has been a staple in the Notre Dame secondary the past three seasons.

Contact Pat Leonard at pleonard@nd.edu

RHEMA MCKNIGHT

Medical man

Wide receiver had ACL surgery last fall, spent time with sick and injured children since

By ERIC RETTER
Associate Sports Editor

During the past 15 months, senior receiver Rhema McKnight has spent a lot of time in hospitals. After tearing his ACL in Notre Dame's second game of the 2005, which ended his season, McKnight spent time in the hospital rehabbing his injured knee, which has healed enough to allow McKnight return and start each of Notre Dame's ten games this season.

Lately, however, he's been returning to Memorial Hospital for a different reason.

McKnight has become somewhat of a regular in Memorial Hospital's pediatric ward, visiting kids going through tough times.

"Last year there was a teenager that was really facing a lifechanging surgery, something nobody would want to go through, and he was just scared to death," Memorial pediatric nurse Julie Kowalenko said. "I gave [McKnight] a call, and he did not hesitate to come up to the hospital and spend time with him."

Kowalenko said she received a letter from the boy's mother about a month ago thanking her and McKnight, saying that the ball was his "prized possession" and that "all of his friends were green with envy."

From time to time, McKnight also gets letters from the parents of the kids he has visited. After reading them, he generally forwards them to his mother back in Inglewood, Calif.

"I guess she's making a scrapbook," he said.

Kowalenko said McKnight's relationship with the hospital started when she was introduced to him through senior Brandon Lenk, who was McKnight's roommate for two years. Kowalenko also noted that that Notre Dame center

Bob Morton and quarterback Brady Quinn have dropped by on similar occasions.

"They do so much for us and they never think of it as a big deal, but it's a huge deal," she said. "[The kids] look up to them, they watch them on TV. They don't think of them as local TV, they think of them as movie stars."

McKnight, however, downplays his involvement.

"It wasn't anything serious," he said. "She called me, asked me if I could come down, and I was like, 'Cool, no problem.'"

As recently as last week, McKnight met Kowalenko at the concourse of Hesburgh Library to sign memorabilia and visit Memorial. When he arrived, he faced a young interviewer who wanted to know everything from his favorite color to whether or not he got to choose his jersey number.

McKnight, whose favorite color is blue, explained that he was No. 1 in high school, but that, upon arriving at Notre Dame as a freshman, the only single digit available was No. 5, so that was the jersey he chose.

"Rhema answered every single question," Kowalenko said.

◆ ◆ ◆
If things had gone according to plan, McKnight would be wearing the jersey of an NFL team somewhere. McKnight, who has contributed since his first game in a Notre Dame uniform, led the Irish in catches in both 2003 and 2004 — with 47 and 42, respectively — and his career was about to take off under then-first year head coach Charlie Weis's offense.

However, the knee injury he sustained in a play in that season's second play — where he still came down with the catch — altered the course of his plans. McKnight spent the year watching the sidelines, but he says that year helped him

change his perspective.

"As you get older, things become repetitive and you don't continue to enjoy every moment," McKnight said. "I'm not taking things for granted this year."

While he had already established himself as the first player to celebrate in the endzone by the student section after home wins, McKnight rededicated himself to having fun on Saturday afternoons.

"A big thing is that I've learned to make sure I enjoy it, because it can be taken away from me at any moment," he said. "Winning a football game is tough, a lot of people don't realize that, and anytime you win a game you gotta make sure you enjoy it."

Despite missing a whole season, McKnight regained the on-field relationship he had enjoyed with Quinn before Notre Dame's first official snap.

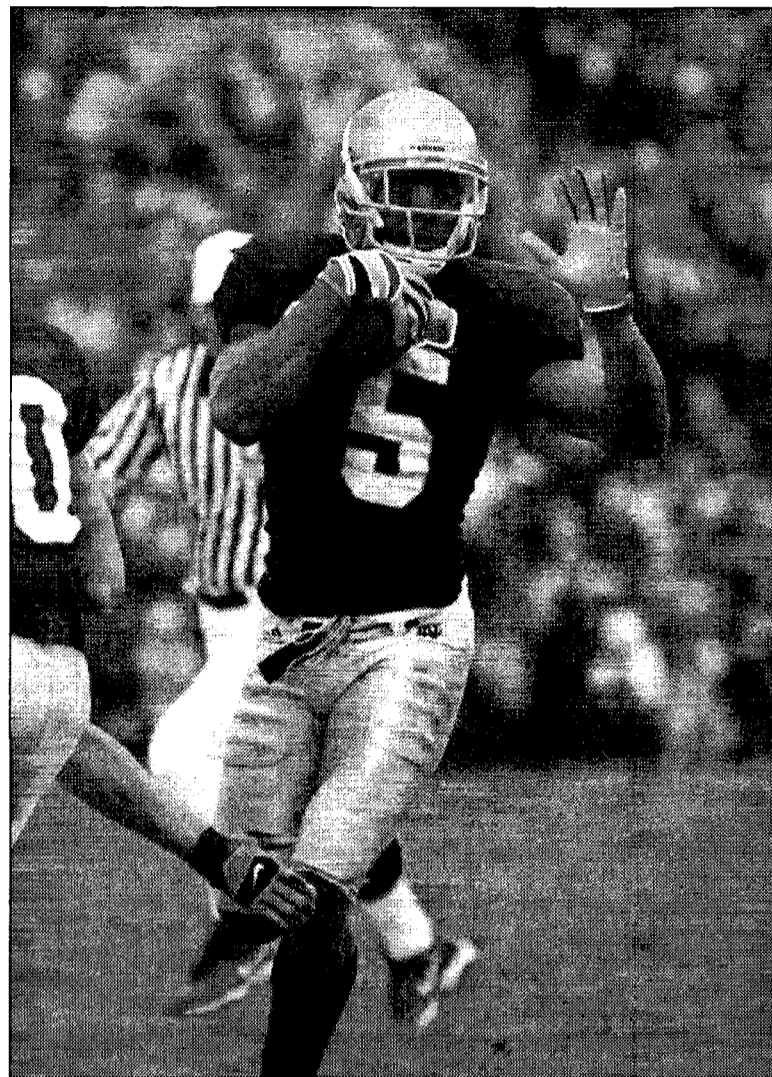
"The good thing is we'd done it before prior to my injury," McKnight said. "We got to picking it back up during the summer, [and] hopefully we'll keep progressing throughout the rest of the year."

In his final season, McKnight has been a pivotal player for the Irish, catching 55 passes, a team high he shares with senior receiver Jeff Samardzija, for 726 yards and 12 touchdowns — a team high he owns alone.

In last Saturday's 39-17 win over Air Force, McKnight set the Notre Dame career reception record with his 158th catch, and he is not surprised that he has had the kind of success he has had this season.

"In the offense we have, you know we're going to sling the ball around a little bit," he said. "It's more about us going out and making plays."

As McKnight's final game at Notre Dame Stadium approaches, he reflected on last season's senior day and



TIM SULLIVAN/The Observer

Irish receiver Rhema McKnight picks up a block on a 5-yard reverse against North Carolina Nov. 4.

saying goodbye to the class he came in with.

"It was tough not being able to go through it the first time and watching those guys leave," he said.

However after five years — which he noted have seemed long at times — he is ready for his home finale.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said. "There's definitely a different buzz in the air, with the [senior] students, it's their last game, too."

◆ ◆ ◆
Outside of football, the major difference between McKnight's two senior seasons is his academic standing. McKnight, who graduated last December, is currently pursuing a masters degree in psychology. McKnight said the structure of his graduate classes offers a sharp contrast to his pursuits the past four years.

"It's not like everything is in class or due the next day," he said. "A lot of the things you do are on your own in terms of research."

He also draws equal contrast between graduate student housing and on-campus dorm life, where he lived until graduating.

"I was close with a lot of guys, especially in my section," he said. "I had a great time."

After moving into graduate student housing, he lived with a French student until early this semester. At the moment, McKnight — a consensus extrovert — does not know his current roommate's name.

In addition to psychology, McKnight also graduated with a supplementary major in Spanish and a degree in computer applications.

Perhaps surprisingly, in his time as a student, he has grown into quite a computer buff, and he discovered a pas-

sion for technology.

"A lot of the schoolwork I had was on computers, and [I found] I love computers," he said. "I love what they have to offer."

McKnight said he followed the budding interest because of current trends in the professional market.

"That's the way the world's going now," he said. "Technology is improving every day, why not pick up something that'll last me a long time?"

However, when he first came to Notre Dame, McKnight was not nearly as well versed in the technological language.

"I wasn't exactly the fastest typer," he said.

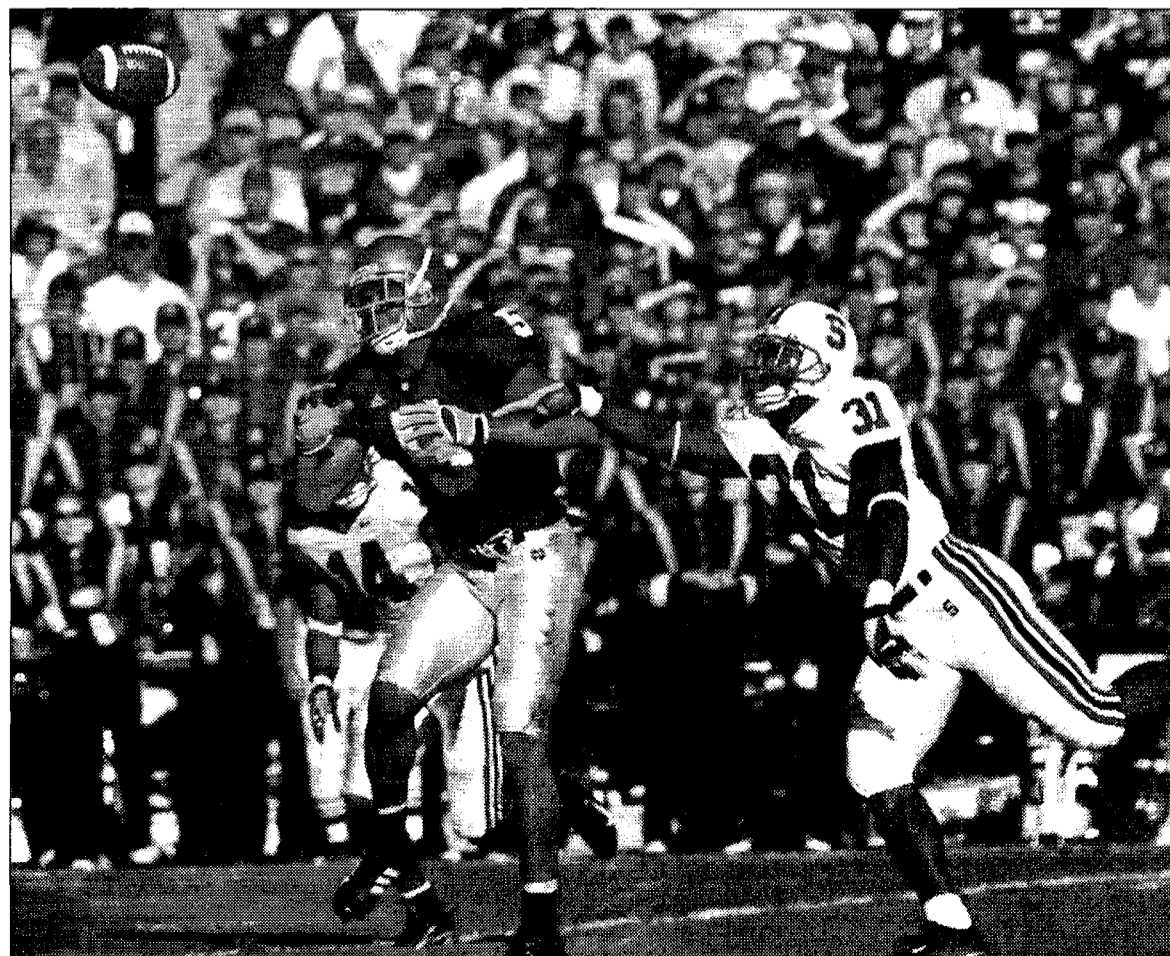
And right now, McKnight's focus remains on football. After the season winds down, he will begin preparing for April's NFL draft and exploring the options that he had plan on exploring a year ago. Despite his focus on preparing to enter the ranks of the professional athletes, McKnight will still be a student next semester.

Even before his college football career is over, McKnight has already started thinking about life after the NFL.

"I have aspirations of playing in the NFL, but nothing's guaranteed," he said. "I want to make sure I set myself up in terms of my long term future, whether it's going back to the inner city working with kids or hopefully owning my own practice and doing other psychology things."

In preparing to walk away, McKnight credits his time in South Bend with helping him get ready for both athletic and academic professions.

"I've come a long way," he said.



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish receiver Rhema McKnight, left, battles Cardinal cornerback Wopamo Osaisai for a pass. McKnight suffered a torn ACL in 2005 and came back for the 2006 campaign.

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MATT AUGUSTYN AND JOHN LYONS

The overachievers

Two walk-ons have a whole lot more than football to fall back on, but their experience at Notre Dame has been shaped by the team

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

In the backfield of Notre Dame's scout team offense are a fullback who worked as a parliamentary intern in London and a pre-med student on his way to medical school.

Tailback John Lyons and fullback Matt Augustyn both played football in high school but came to Notre Dame for its academics. Each ended up on the gridiron within two years and have been the recipients of extraordinary understanding by the coaching staff.

Augustyn was believed to become the first player in program history to study abroad for a semester while on the team. A political science major, Augustyn traveled to London for his spring semester for a junior and worked as an intern for Adam Holloway, the conservative minister of Parliament from Gravesham.

"I was willing to drop it to be on the team," Augustyn said. "But both [Irish running backs] coach [Michael] Haywood and [head] coach [Charlie] Weis said no, there would be no penalty. And there hasn't."

When Augustyn returned to the States from England, he took an internship with Congressman Chris Chocola for the summer and worked out to gain back the 20 pounds of muscle he lost in London.

For Lyons, Weis extended his understanding during summer camp as the tailback prepared to take the Medical College Admission Test.

"During the last week or so of camp, Weis said from here on out whatever you want to miss, you can stay in your room to study to get ready," Lyons said.

From physicals to MCATs

Now Lyons, who was team captain and an all-conference selection at O'Gorman High School in his hometown of Sioux Falls, S.D., is just waiting to hear back from medical schools.

"I was a decent high school football player," Lyons said. "I applied to Notre Dame early action and got in here. Not having football offered, I had planned on pursuing academics and just forgetting football. But after watching the first season, I decided I had to try out."

So Lyons filled out the necessary forms in the winter of his freshman year and headed onto the practice field.

"People watch the movie Rudy and see, 'We're going to beat the hell out of you for five days, and whoever's still standing will be the one,'" said Lyons, as his voice deepened to imitate a movie narrator. "But that's not really how it is."

Lyons said he went in for a

physical and a workout, where trainers determined whether walk-on hopefuls would not risk injury to themselves or other players. He passed that test and won an invitation to spring practice to show the coaching staff what he could do.

The tailback said former Irish running back Jeff Jenkins gave him advice on the first day of spring practice. When Lyons admitted he was nervous, Jenkins told him that the collegiate game was 'no different' from high school ball — 'except the players are bigger and faster.'

Even though he's still on the team three years later, his first impression that day was not the best.

"The very first practice I had, we were on the 'jugs' machine," Lyons said. "This is the very first thing I've done in spring ball, the first thing I'm doing in practice with the team. ... The [ball] fires out right through my hands and hits me in the face. My mouth guard goes flying and my helmet's on sideways."

Drive and recognition

Augustyn took a slightly different trail on his way to the team. After graduating from Our Lady of Good Counsel High School in Wheaton, Md., the fullback spent a post-graduate year at the prestigious Phillips-Andover Academy in Andover, Mass.

New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick also attended the school, and Augustyn met Irish coach Charlie Weis, then Belichick's assistant in New England, during his year there.

Augustyn deferred acceptance from other universities to study at Phillips-Andover, and he jumped at the chance to come to Notre Dame.

"I was looking at a bunch of other schools, mostly Ivies, Navy [and Virginia]," he said.

"But Notre Dame was the only place I was willing to go to give up football."

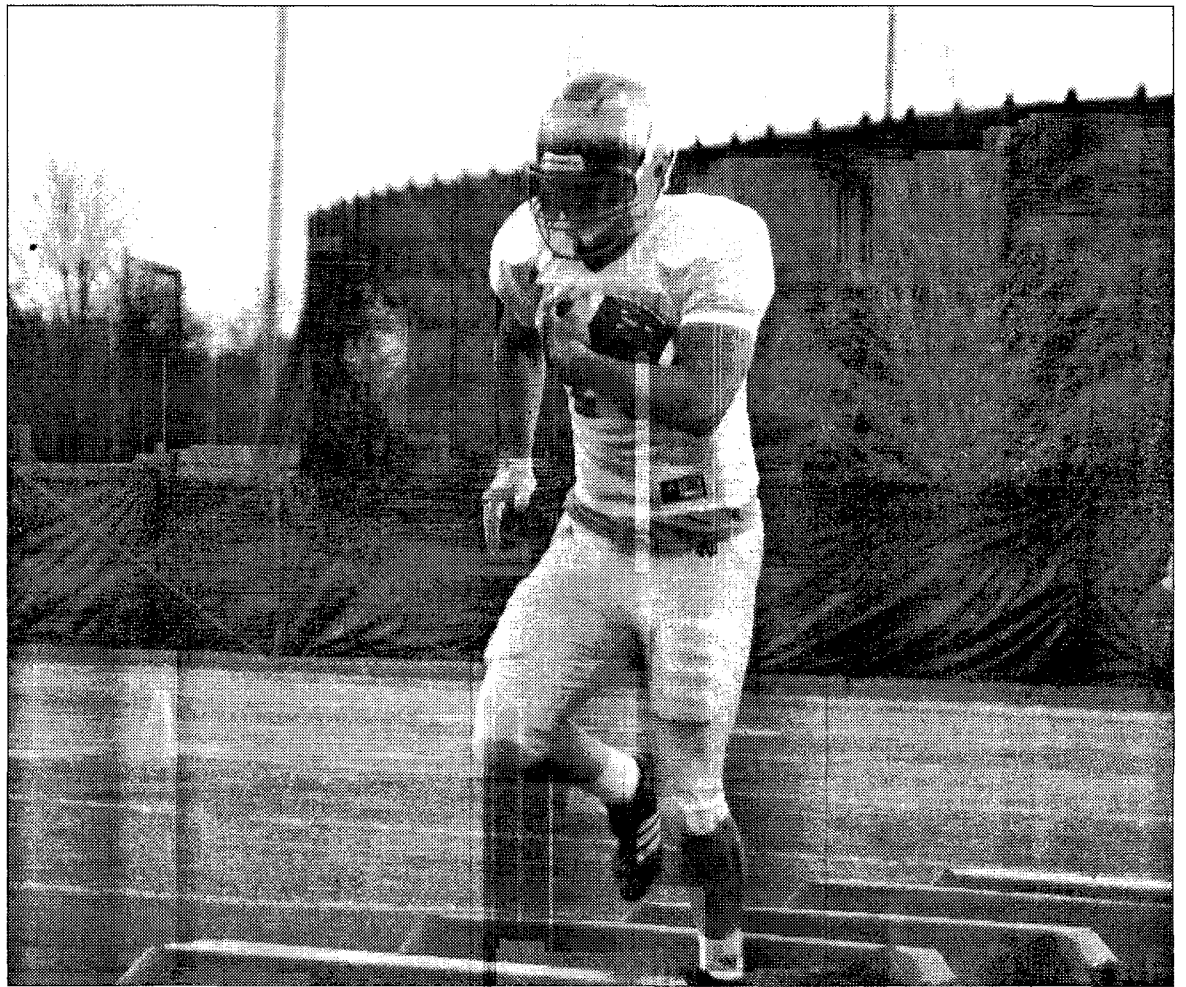
But he didn't truly give up football. Augustyn played tight end for Alumni Hall as a freshman and talked to former Irish coach Tyrone

Willingham about walking on to the varsity team as a sophomore.

Willingham told him to wait a year before trying out because Notre Dame had so many tight ends. When the walk-on tryouts came Augustyn's junior year, Willingham was gone and Weis was in charge.

Augustyn made the team as a fullback, and, he said, felt welcomed by the players, which was important.

"Anyone would be lying if they said going into Notre Dame, walking on with guys



QUENTIN STENGER/The Observer

Senior fullback Matt Augustyn high steps in practice Nov. 8. Augustyn studied in London as a junior and interned with Adam Holloway, a conservative member of Parliament.

who are the best in the country, isn't intimidating," Augustyn said.

The experience that breaks any lingering ice best, he said, is when the team lives together in O'Neill Hall during August as it gears up for the season.

"The best time where most people come together is probably summer training camp because that's where you are isolated," Augustyn said. "It's 105 guys, or, in our case, 97 last year, and the coaches and trainers. There's no one else. You talk to you're family for maybe ten minutes before you go to bed. You're up at six, you go to bed at eleven. ... You're literally with each other eighteen hours a day. That's where team unity comes from."

Not an end

Going forward, both Lyons and Augustyn hope to continue their education.

"I'm probably looking to work in the business realm for the next couple of years before I look into law school," Augustyn said. "So that way I have some sort of financial foundation to pay for it, so I'm not 100,000 dollars in debt."

Lyons said he has other intentions.

"I just figure I'm going to go dig myself in, nice and deep," Lyons said. "I'm pre-med so I'm going to take my loans from here and pile on some more loans for med school, hopefully, and go from there."

But the focus for both right now is on Army.

With sophomore starter Asaph Schwapp's injury earlier this year, Augustyn has seen the field in late-game situations.

"It sounds awful, but Asaph's injury — I've kind of benefited from," Augustyn said.

Lyons is still searching for his first game experience. As the show-team tailback, he's used to facing a first-team

defense in practice. But that also means he's used to expectations of failure.

"If we're down running scout team, it's sort of anticipated that you're going to lose," Lyons said. "We're going up there against the first-team. We're not anticipating six, seven-yard gains."

As their final home game approaches, Lyons and Augustyn have worked together for two years — with the 6-foot-3, 220-pound Augustyn working every practice to open holes for the 6-foot-1, 200-pound Lyons. Now, they hope

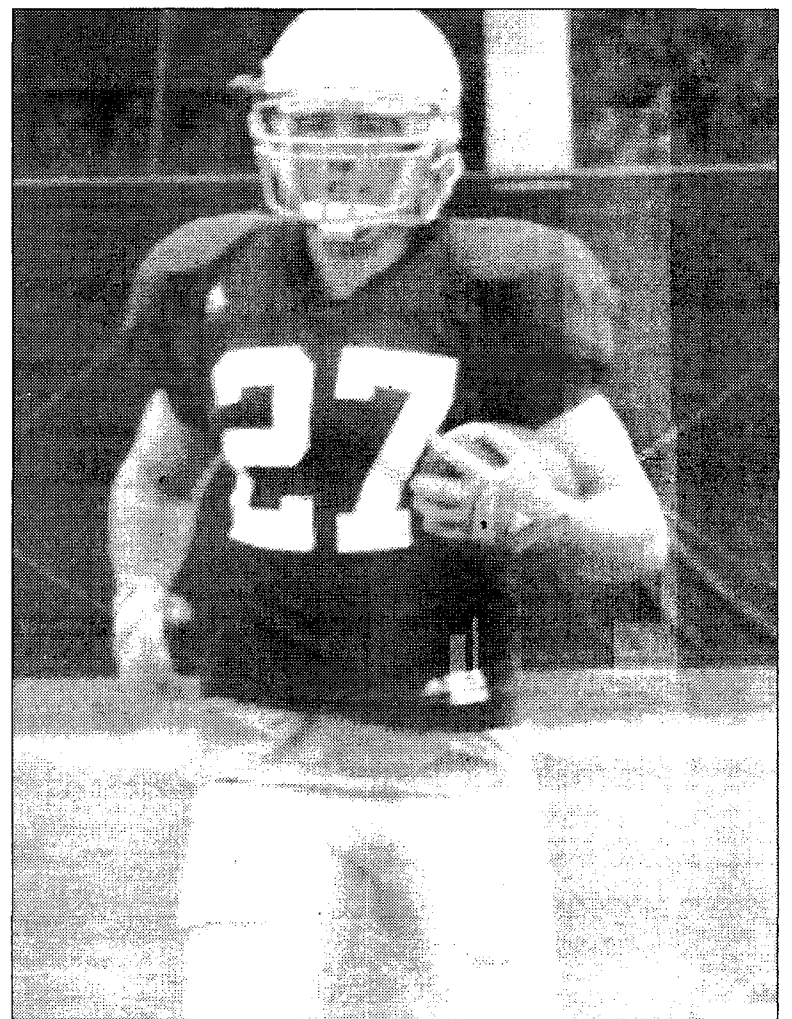
that work on the show team will replicate itself Saturday at Notre Dame Stadium.

"It would be great to block for John [in the Army game]," Augustyn said. "It would be a fantastic thing."

And if either crosses the goal line, they'll know exactly what to do.

"All the walk-on guys have 19, 20 touchdown celebrations planned," Lyons said. "Of course you have expectations to do something fun."

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FRANCESCA SETA/The Observer

Notre Dame tailback John Lyons finishes a drill during Notre Dame's practice Sept. 27.

Nothing off the top

A nationally ranked wrestler in high school, Trevor Laws is Notre Dame's resident free spirit

By RAMA GOTTUMUKKALA
Sports Writer

On a team where the hair-style makes the man, Trevor Laws' long, au naturel locks stand out with the best of them. Tom Zbikowski may have his Mohawk and Jeff Samardzija his shag, but Laws can admit to setting the trend with his mane.

"It's a natural look, man," Laws said with a laugh. "It's nice and easy to take care of, so I like it."

Except for a brief — and regrettable — period during his freshman year, the senior defensive tackle has kept his distinct look largely unchanged since his earliest days wearing the blue and gold.

As a freshman, his senior teammates buzzed down his hair to a clean shave. For Victor Abiamiri, Laws' roommate and a fellow defensive lineman, that story remains a fond memory — one that reveals as much about Trevor the person as it does Laws the football player.

"He had the hair exactly the way he has it now," Abiamiri said. "[I remember] all the seniors that cut his hair, and how sad he was and how funny he made it by turning it around."

"He made a negative thing into a positive thing. That's Trevor in a nutshell. He'll take things that might not be going his way and turn them into a positive."

Service with a smile

With a geniality his teammates love and admire, Laws overcame his Samson moment with a smile. Still, he can barely comprehend that his Irish career may be coming to a close.

"Time flies, it really does. I can't believe that I'm a senior [with] some big choices coming up here," Laws said. "It's just all about enjoying it, man, these moments. You've got a short time here, so just try to enjoy it while you're doing it."

Laws' easy smile and cheerful disposition have made him popular among his teammates and his coaches. When he's not terrorizing the opposing team's backfield, Laws can often be spotted laughing and cracking jokes on the sidelines.

"It's real important for me, in all facets of my life, to enjoy what I'm doing," Laws said. "Especially during games and on the sidelines with all your boys, it's hard not to have a good time for me."

While the average defensive lineman seems to scowl twice as often as he smiles, staying loose and enjoying the game remains one of Laws' priorities — much to the delight of his teammates.

"I think Trevor's kindhearted, fun-loving personality rubs off on everybody," Abiamiri said. "If things are going tough, he has a good way of making a joke about things. Anytime I'm around him, I always find that I'm laughing at him or laughing at myself or laughing at anything, you know."

In fact, Laws probably smiles too much, jokes defensive line coach Jappy Oliver. Oliver has seen Laws grow close with the rest of the defensive line over the last few years. Aided by their chemistry on and off the field, Laws and his linemates have become a steady rock for the Irish defense.

"I think that's why I've enjoyed this group so much, because they're always ragging on each other — I get on them for something, they get on me. It's a great mix. Trevor's one of the characters of the group," said Oliver, pausing for emphasis. "Probably the character."

Oliver isn't the only member of the Notre Dame football family to use the word "character" to define Laws.

"When I first met Trevor, he was the same way he is now," sophomore middle linebacker Maurice Crum said. "So I was like, 'Man, who is this character here? Is this guy ever serious?' But once I saw him on the field in play, I was like, 'I see when he gets serious.'"

'A great technician'

As a person, Laws has changed little from his freshman year — he's still smiling. But on the field, his progression over the last three years has been hard to ignore.

"From the first time I met him till now, he's grown as a person and as a football player," Oliver said. "He's getting better and better."

A highly touted recruit coming out of high school, Laws

was the Gatorade Player of the Year in Minnesota and a USA Today first-team All-American. Laws enjoyed his role as a two-way starter, contributing to the stat sheet and his team from three different positions — full-back, linebacker and defensive lineman.

But like most two-play athletes in high school, he had to face the harsh reality of life as a defensive end — the only touches he'd get would be ones he'd have to work the hardest for.

"It was tough knowing that I had to give up touching the ball every now and then. But I looked in the mirror and knew that I wasn't going to be a running back forever," Laws joked. "I tried to enjoy what I could in high school."

Focusing on technique and strength, Laws has steadily tapped the potential of his 6-foot-1, 283-pound frame at one of the toughest positions in football.

"One of his strengths is that he's a great technician, takes pride in it, and he's just done a good job for us," Oliver said.

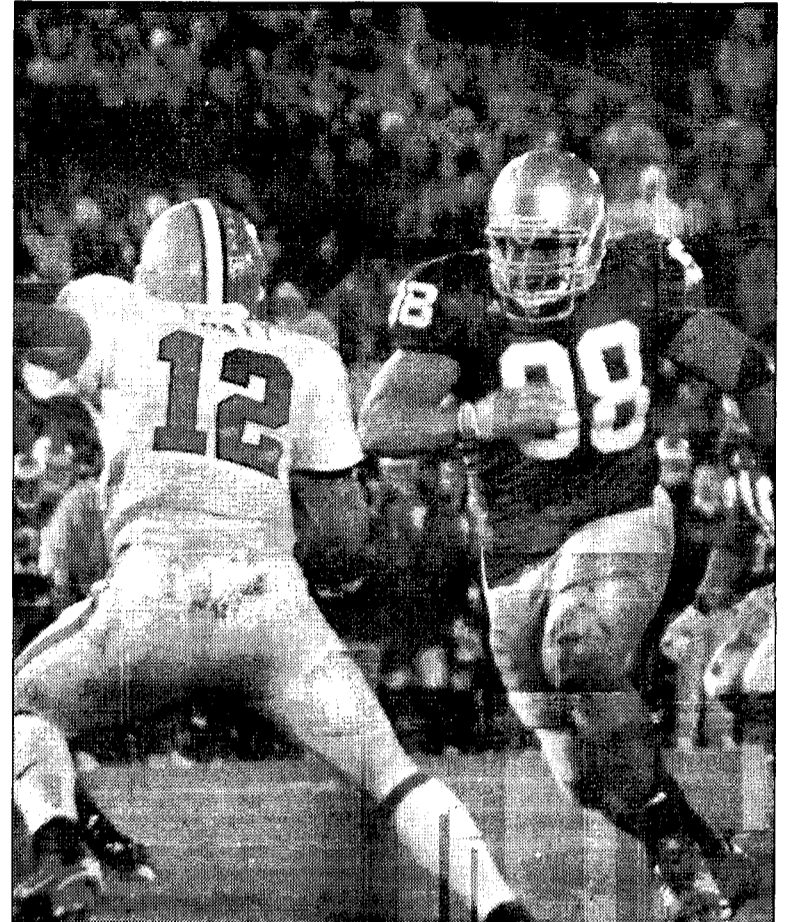
That attention to detail served Laws well in another high school sport — wrestling. Although he calls football "his first passion," Laws had every reason to consider attending a top-notch wrestling program like Iowa or Minnesota.

He helped his Apple Valley High team to three consecutive state titles as a sophomore, junior and senior. He finished his career with a 142-5 record (49-0 his junior year) that made him a three-time All-American and the No. 1 heavyweight wrestler in the nation.

"I took up wrestling to improve my football skills, actually," Laws said. "I also love wrestling, but I always knew that if I was good enough to make it in football, it would prepare me in terms of agility."

Laws' teammates are no strangers to the tackle's shifty moves on the mat. Senior offensive lineman John Sullivan — another nationally ranked heavyweight wrestler in high school — is a prime target for the occasional rumble for old time's sake.

While these throwdowns are more infrequent nowadays, Laws has made his wrestling supremacy loud and clear.



FRANCESCA SETA/The Observer

Irish defensive tackle Trevor Laws chases Tar Heels quarterback Joe Dailey in Notre Dame's 45-26 win over North Carolina Nov. 4.

"They can't touch me," he joked.

Living the great outdoors

A proud native of Apple Valley, Minn., Laws exudes a Midwestern warmth he credits to his family and friends. An admitted outdoorsman, he enjoys camping, wakeboarding and summer snowboarding in the off-season.

As the middle of three children, Laws fondly remembers his first brushes with football — in the front yard with his two brothers.

"My family's real close and we're always doing something as a family. They're a big part of my life," Laws said.

Both of his siblings attended the University of Minnesota, where his younger brother is still an undergraduate.

As for Laws, a marketing major, entering the workforce is still a few years out depending on how long he pursues a professional career in football. Beyond the gridiron, his dreams revolve around sports marketing.

"I've been looking into that lately; maybe help marketing for a pro team or something like that," Laws said. "It's pretty interesting."

For now, though, he's still got time left in South Bend. When Laws gets nostalgic, his most vivid memories are those involving the deafening roar of a crowd, whether it was at a road contest down in Tennessee his sophomore year or playing spoiler to a top-10 Michigan team at home.

"One of the first games I played in was versus Michigan [in 2004]," Laws said. "Everybody rushed the field and I got in for the game. I got a [tackle for loss] like one of my first few plays in there and I remember going crazy, so that was a big moment for me."

Iron chef, animated warrior

With the last two games of the season — and possibly the end of his collegiate career — loom-

ing, Laws has made a point of noticing the little things about his life at Notre Dame, whether it's in the huddle or relaxing with his teammates.

"Every time you go out on the field ... you remember those little moments within the game," Laws said. "They are so numerous, but it's hard to recollect right now. Looking beside you and knowing you have guys that you can count on so much is a great thing."

Laws hasn't yet made up his mind about returning for a fifth year, saying that a lot will depend on projections of where he'll end up in the NFL Draft. For that reason alone, his teammates and coaches are savoring the remaining time they'll have with him. Even if those memories involve serving up a good meal, another of Laws' many talents.

"One great thing I can say about him is that he's a great cook," Abiamiri said. "He whips up some good pasta at times ... He's got some good eats."

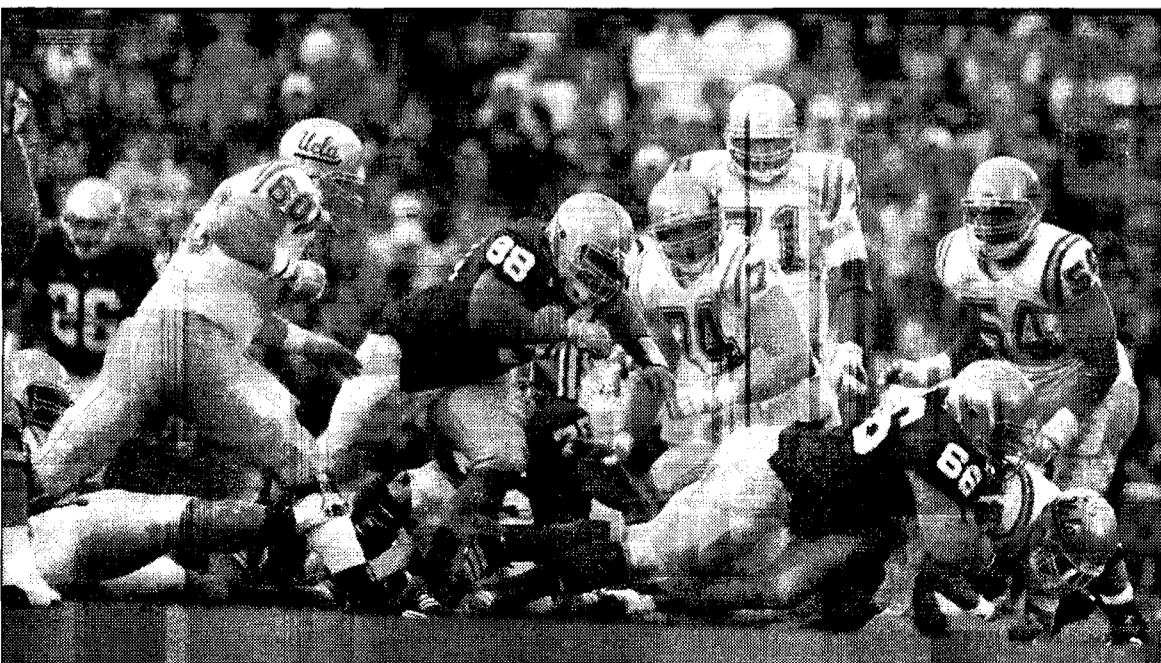
As for Laws' best dish? Abiamiri doesn't hesitate.

"Probably his barbecue chicken with baked beans and corn bread. He does that pretty good," he said.

Whether it's his play on the field, his antics off it or his excursions as a wrestler, chef and prankster, it's clear that Laws will be missed when he hangs up his gold helmet — by his teammates, the fans and the program in general, according to Oliver.

"That personality is contagious, now," Oliver said. "Because when somebody's down or they're hurting, if you've got somebody who's got a great spirit about them and can put a smile on somebody's face, that picks them up. That makes them practice harder and work harder."

"We'll miss a lot of that, because he's contagious."



FRANCESCA SETA/The Observer

Irish defensive tackle Trevor Laws (98) jumps on the pile as teammate Derek Landri (66) sacks UCLA quarterback Patrick Cowan during Notre Dame's 20-17 victory over the Bruins Oct. 21.

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BOBBY RENKES

Texan will head home for position with KPMG

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Bobby Renkes has always been a good student.

When the Dallas Morning News named Renkes one of the top-20 players in the region as a junior in high school, "the Texas schools" began recruiting the place kicker. But a leg injury in the second game of his senior season kept him off the field so much that it scared away the Lone Star State's top three universities — Texas, Texas Tech and Texas A&M — from offering Renkes a scholarship.

"It was kind of tough because I thought I might have been able to get a scholarship," Renkes said. "But it was really sort of a blessing. ... Had that not happened, I might not have ended up at Notre Dame."

But the diligent student had some other options. Several Ivy League schools showed interest in Renkes, and his grades opened other avenues for him to attend a football school.

He turned down those prestigious universities in the Northeast and enrolled in South Bend as a non-athlete who still had hopes of wearing a college uniform.

Four years later, Renkes will graduate a semester early, take more classes in the spring and begin his professional career with financial powerhouse KPMG back home in



Irish kicker Bobby Renkes (14) stretches with Notre Dame long snapper J.J. Jansen during the team's practice Tuesday. Renkes will take a job with KPMG in Dallas after graduation.

Dallas.

"I'll save my parents a semester's worth of tuition," Renkes said.

Renkes interned with the firm last summer and jumped on the chance to work as a certified public accountant, provided he passes the CPA exam. And it was the kicker's school — not his sport — that helped him fit in with the company.

"It was amazing, the Notre

Dame connection," Renkes said. "Just talking to anybody at the Chicago office, everybody from Notre Dame [who works for KPMG] goes to Chicago. But as soon as Dallas knew that they had a chance to get a Notre Dame person, they were all over it."

Renkes said Dallas KPMG partner Rick Ehrman, a Notre Dame graduate, was one of his best influences during his internship.

"He kind of took me under his wing," Renkes said. "Every time he comes up for a game he calls me about the tailgate."

Renkes has gotten into four games as Notre Dame's kickoff specialist this season — starting at the position from Georgia Tech through the Michigan State game. He averaged 61.4 yards per kickoff on 21 attempts before freshman Ryan Burkhart (29 attempts, 58.9-yard average) took over the

starting job.

"If I didn't see the field one bit, I would have been just as happy being a part of the Notre Dame team," said Renkes, who didn't start playing football until his standout junior season in high school.

After playing soccer "forever," Renkes saw his first collegiate action on the gridiron only three years after his first-ever football appearance. Against Stanford in 2004, he had three kickoffs of 58, 59 and 50 yards — the last being a touchback after a personal foul penalty against the Cardinal.

"It was a little overwhelming," said Renkes of that first appearance.

Renkes got five more starts that season, making 20 more kickoffs with three more touchbacks. He finished the season with 1,319 yards for a 57.3-yard average.

Renkes didn't see any action as a freshman or junior, but the senior with a 3.674 GPA (and 3.733 GPA in the spring of 2006) is happy with his four years at Notre Dame.

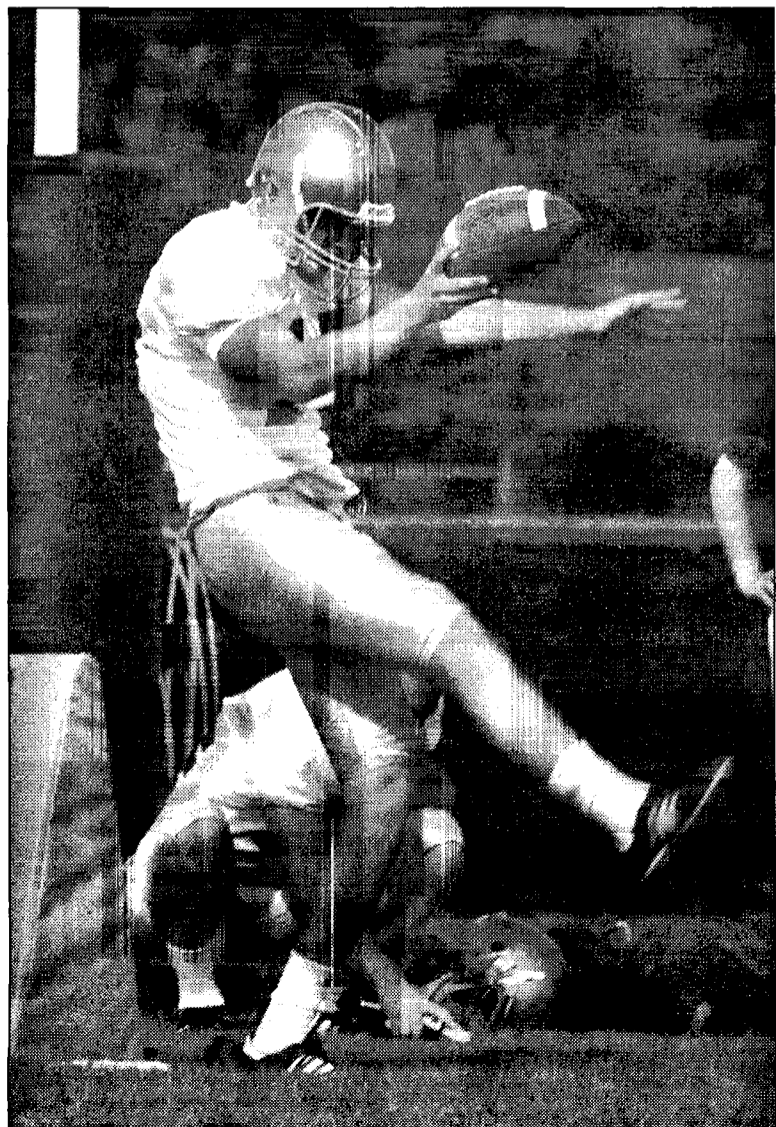
"I always grew up thinking of Notre Dame as a great school to go to," Renkes said. "I looked at a lot of the Ivy League schools for academic purposes and a lot of the other schools for football purposes, and Notre Dame was the one that really put the two together."

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GEOFF PRICE

Price always was the Kid with the Big Leg

The senior punter's first coach was his father; a technique change boosted his yardage this summer



DUSTIN MENNELLA/The Observer

After waiting in the wings for three seasons, Irish punter Geoff Price has averaged over 45 yards a boot as a starter.

By CHRIS KHOREY
Associate Sports Editor

From the time he first kicked a soccer ball, Geoff Price has been the Kid with the Big Leg.

The senior Notre Dame punter discovered his talent while playing the "other football" in early elementary school.

"In soccer, when I played goalie I could punt the ball really far," Price said. "It started out as a hobby and then I realized I had a little talent."

Price's journey from talented elementary schooler to Division I starter has been a process of refining his technique and trying to harness the howitzer leg he was blessed with.

His first coach was his father. "One day my dad and I were out in the yard and he punted a spiral and I said 'Wow, how did you do that?'" Price said.

Later, Price gave up soccer and became a standout high school punter in Colleyville, Texas and college football opportunities started rolling in.

There was only one place Price wanted to go — South Bend, Ind.

"I was a big [Notre Dame] fan growing up," Price said. "I remember coming home from a soccer game and seeing them on TV and wanting to come here. It was a life long dream."

His first three years playing

for the Irish were frustrating, however. Behind D.J. Fitzpatrick on the depth chart, Price struggled with his consistency. He would boom kicks 60 yards and then have one go off the side of his foot or, worse, get blocked.

Price knew what he had to do to correct the problem, but for some reason he couldn't put it into practice.

"When I was kicking and D.J. would see something, he would try to correct me," Price said. "I would do the same thing with him. In fact, I think I could explain things to him better than I could do them myself."

Then, once Fitzpatrick graduated and Price was thrust into the starting lineup this year, everything suddenly clicked.

"My problem was trying to kick the ball too far, and I was overstriding," Price said. "Now I try to stay short and compact and it's paid off."

Price practiced by putting a towel a couple of yards in front of him and making sure he kicked the ball before he got to it. Suddenly, he was consistent and talented.

It was the recipe for star-

dom.

After punting just twice his first three years on campus, Price has averaged more than 45 yards per kick this year and played a key role in several Notre Dame victories, especially the 14-10 defensive struggle victory over Georgia Tech Sept. 2.

With the success, Price has experienced a sudden celebrity.

"It's been fun," he said. "There's been a lot more attention. A lot more people come up to me and say 'good

job' and I have no idea who they are. I've gotten some random IMs and Facebooks. I try to take it all in stride and enjoy it, because how often does that happen?"

Price has another year of eligibility remaining, an option he will discuss with Irish coach Charlie Weis after the season. But right now the Kid with the Big Leg is focusing on the present.

"I'm not too concerned about next year now," Price said. "Right now I'm just living in the moment with this team."

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"My problem was trying to kick the ball too far, and I was overstriding. Now I try to stay short and compact and it's paid off."

Geoff Price
Irish punter

RYAN HARRIS

Of faith and football

An anchor of the Irish offensive line, Ryan Harris has gone from reality show star to freshman All-American to aspiring politician

Editor's note: This story first ran Sept. 29, 2006.

By KATE GALES
Associate Sports Editor

MTV. ESPN. Next up, C-SPAN?

Notre Dame senior left tackle Ryan Harris has started 36 games on the Irish offensive line and been featured on MTV's "True Life" series — but he really wants a career in politics.

It might not be the typical life path for a student-athlete, but Harris isn't typical.

He's a devout Muslim at one of the nation's most famous Catholic universities, where he embraced living on campus and being part of the Notre Dame community. After football, he's thinking about law school and politics.

But right now, he's ready to help the Irish offense get back on track — even though his football career got off to an inauspicious start.

'I don't know how' to hit

The Minnesota native remembers watching the Minnesota Vikings at family events, sitting alone in front of the television and trying to make sense of the game. Later, he'd go to his father — who played college football at the University of Wisconsin-Stout — with questions.

"My first question I tried to figure out was why they always ran into where everybody was, up the middle," he said. "When they were running the ball, why don't they just run around everybody?"

Over time, he picked up on the nuances of the game. But eighth-grade football brought another humbling moment.

"I'll never forget the first day we got pads," he said. "Everyone made fun of me because someone said, 'Hey, let's hit,' and I said, 'No.' And they're like, 'Why not?' and I said, 'I don't know how.' Everyone laughed at me."

Retelling the story, he even laughs at himself. He can laugh now because, as a standout at Cretin-Durham Hall in St. Paul, Harris starred on the defensive and offensive

lines.

"Especially being a bigger kid when you're younger, you go to a sport where they need bigger people," said the 6-foot-5, 292-pounder. "It's definitely something you can enjoy and be yourself in."

He was widely recruited out of high school, but his decisions came down to two schools — Notre Dame or Miami.

"For all the reasons that people love Miami, I loved Miami," he said.

But his family loved Notre Dame, and Harris felt it fit what he wanted in a school.

"I wanted to come out with a degree that meant something," he said. "I also wanted to have the most competitive athletic schedule and environment I could, and Notre Dame — it doesn't get better than that."

His own celebrity fit club

Harris was the smallest lineman at Notre Dame when he arrived, and one of the smallest — if not the smallest — lineman recruited in his year.

That's why, when MTV's "True Life" wanted to do a segment on positive weight gain, they called up Cretin-Durham and asked for Harris.

The segment aired without much fanfare for Harris and his family at home. But when he arrived at Notre Dame, it was clear that more than a few people had seen the show.

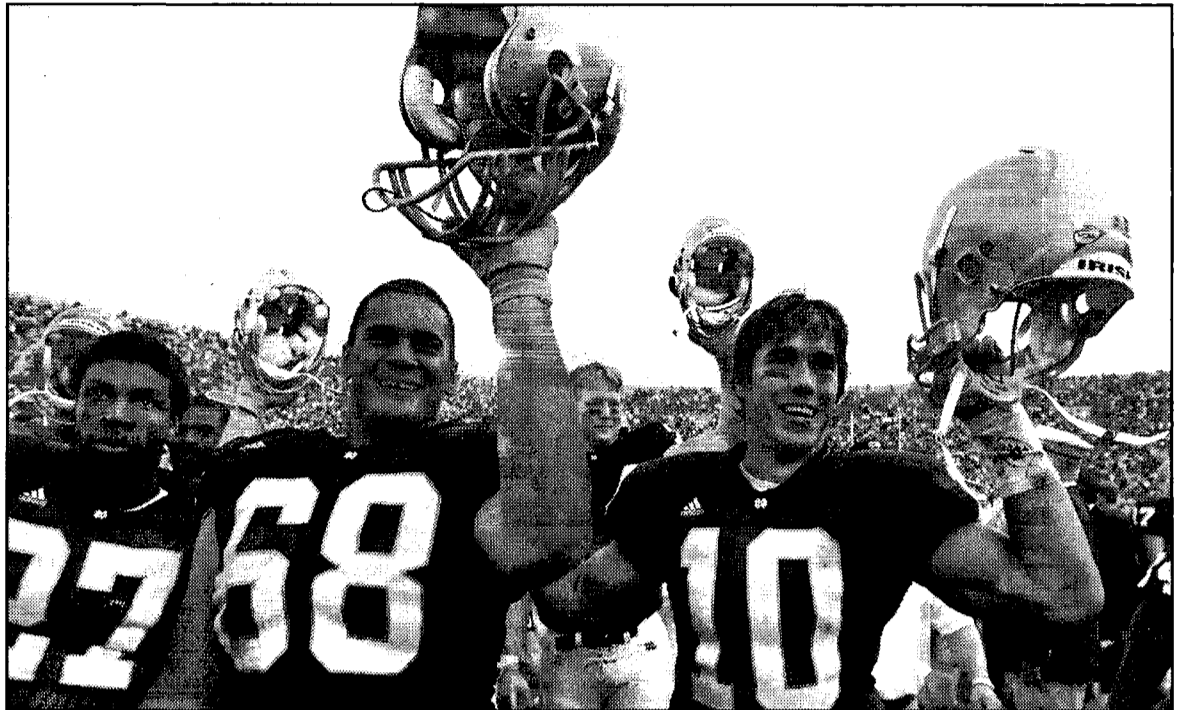
So did his new teammates in South Bend make fun of him?

"All the time," he said. "I mean, all the time, especially when I first got here as a freshman. That was the joke, they were calling me names, MTV, you can imagine coming in as a freshman. They're just looking for a reason to get on you, that was definitely my reason."

Some on-lookers told him he needed to gain 50 pounds to be successful as a college offensive lineman.

Maybe that's not quite right. He's gained about 17 in the past four years and was on several preseason All-American award watch lists.

Over the most recent off-season, he focused on strength



Irish left tackle Ryan Harris, front, celebrates Notre Dame's 41-17 victory over Penn State with quarterback Brady Quinn, right, and defensive back David Bruton Sept. 9.

conditioning, particularly in his upper body, which he perceived as a weakness.

"I needed to get stronger," he said. "And that's still something I strive for, something I worked on all summer, from May until — well, I'm still working on it."

On down the line

Harris' first start was at Pittsburgh in 2003 — an upset victory for the Irish and a memorable experience for the true freshman. That was the night Julius Jones broke the school rushing record with 262 yards.

He played right tackle and started the final eight games of the season for the Irish, becoming only the third true freshman in Notre Dame's history to start for the unit. Rivals.com rewarded him with a first-team spot on its Freshman All-America team, and The Sporting News had him as a second teamer.

As a sophomore, Harris moved to left tackle, one of football's most challenging positions, to protect Irish quarterback Brady Quinn's blind side.

"I think there's a lot more expected of you," said Harris about the position. "I expect a lot of myself. I was very humbled because there's so many things that come with being the left tackle, so many things that I can take pride in, I just think being there's been real fun for me."

Offensive linemen are judged by the success of the unit, and most of the facets of the offense depend on how strongly it plays. Harris has embraced the opportunity to excel as an individual and as part of a group.

"You've got four other guys," he said. "If one of you makes a mistake, it can cause problems across the board. As a unit, you protect the quarterback — everything starts there. If we don't protect, Brady can't throw to [Jeff] Samardzija or Rhema [McKnight] or anyone else."

And then there's the running game.

"If we don't block, Darius [Walker] can't run in the holes and he can't get yards,"

Harris said. "We really take a lot of pride and onus of responsibility on ourselves, and that's what makes it so special, to be part of a unit and also being an individual."

At times, left tackle is a lonely position. Harris often finds himself in one-on-one situations.

"Every play I'm going against somebody — and usually it's alone," he said. "There's a lot of responsibility resting on my shoulders but that's what I love."

Offensive linemen don't usually make the stat sheets, but for Harris, winning the game means that they've done well enough.

"If we win, we did something right," he said. "Then if Brady's been hit, if Darius doesn't get a lot of yards, those are definitely things that we look at the next day in film and try and correct for the next week in practice."

As a freshman, Harris' highlight was Jones' record-breaking game against the Panthers. As a sophomore, he recalls beating Michigan 28-20, and as a junior, nothing compared to the USC and Stanford games.

"But you think that's it, and then you come out with a game like last week against Michigan State," he said. "It's just every year, it's something phenomenal, and you're like, 'I could not have had that experience anywhere else in the world.'"

'My own way'

Harris is far from finished with his football career. But he's already making plans to take what he's learned at Notre Dame outside the campus.

He hopes to go into politics or teaching after graduation.

"I wanted to prove to myself that I could handle the academic rigors of Notre Dame and do both things — I'm not

just an athlete," he said. "[There are] so many rivalries, every week, so much exposure, and you're in the classroom the next day. It's the best of both worlds. I'm just very happy I've been able to take advantage of both opportunities."

Harris will graduate with a double major in political science and economics — a subject he says "just makes sense to me."

Service work and volunteering are an important part of the time he spends in South Bend, and he said he made lifelong friends as a resident of Siegfried Hall.

But Harris' Muslim faith is also a central part of who he is. Being at a predominantly Catholic school, he said, doesn't make being Muslim harder.

"It's easier," he said. "Because people understand the religious component of life, people understand that faith is an everyday thing — not something you do just

"Being in an environment where they practice faith and appreciate faith and there's so many opportunities for people to exercise their faith really makes it easy for me to feel welcome."

Ryan Harris
Irish left tackle

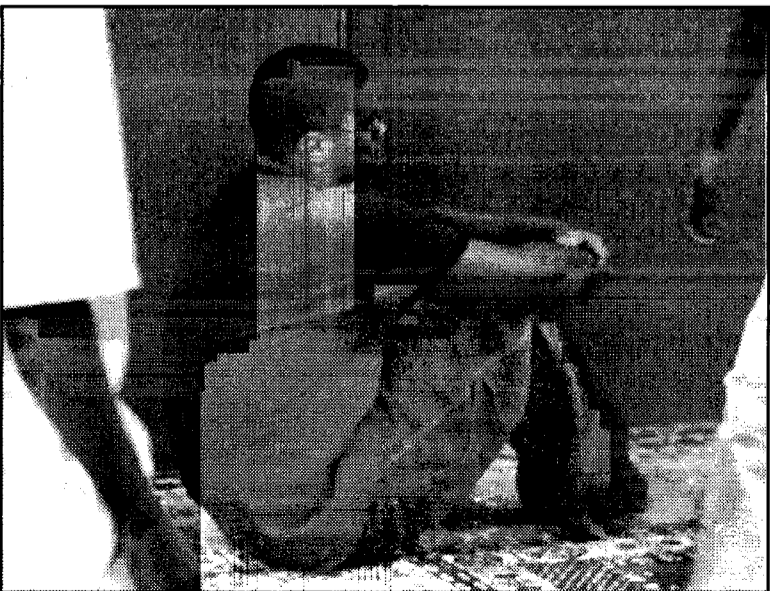
once a week. Being in an environment where they practice faith and appreciate faith and there's so many opportunities for people to exercise their faith really makes it easy for me to feel welcome and for me to do the same in my own way."

From faith to football, Harris has taken on every aspect of his life in his own way.

Harris has many goals for his life after this season and his graduation. But wherever he goes, Notre Dame will go with him, he said.

"The morals and principles that Notre Dame teaches — to be a Notre Dame man," he said. "For me it definitely means someone who is a contributing member to the community and who stands for ethics and good things."

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Ryan Harris sits at the Islamic Society of Michiana mosque in South Bend on Sept. 11, 2004. Harris is a devout Muslim.

NICK BORSETI

Blue-collar senior values dedicated teammates

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

Nick Borseti talks with a thick New England accent and a straightforwardness that fits perfectly with Charlie Weis' style.

Borseti is a fan of football players who like to keep their focus in two places — between the sidelines and on their classes.

"The social atmosphere as

opposed to other colleges isn't much to tote about," Borseti said. "I just like the fact that people who come here, come here to play football, and that's it. They come here to play football and get a good education, and they're not concerned with the social atmosphere or any of these outside influences. You've got a really dedicated student athlete when they come here."

Borseti is a student-athlete whose path has taken him from his first academic love to another.

He began as a mechanical engineering major but switched to industrial design because football interfered with his engineering classes.

"Academics are really important coming here," he said. "I'm an industrial design major now, and I'm in love with that major as well. It's definitely important that I'm leaving with a degree, and I'm proud of it."

With that degree, Borseti said, he hopes to enter the world of product design. He singled out

automobiles and consumer electronics as specialties he would like to work on, and he said his classes at Notre Dame have been helpful in that regard.

"They do a great job each year narrowing you down and down and down, until you're really just taking classes focusing on what you want to do with your major," Borseti said. "This isn't the type of school [where] you have to be embarrassed being a football player. ... When teachers do recognize me as a football player, they don't treat me any different."

And that's just how Borseti would have it. He credits his father, John, with his work ethic.

"Everything I've done I've worked for," he said. "I never got anything handed to me."

Borseti said most of his teammates have the same dedicated mindset as him, and that's why he respects the team so much.

"It's always great coming to a program and onto a team because you immediately have 100 friends," he said. "We have a lot of good guys on the team and they make lifelong friends."

Borseti's favorite moment in his Notre Dame career dates back to his first career appearance, on kickoff coverage in the second game of his sophomore season — Notre Dame's 28-20 victory over Michigan.

"That game I had a good hit and a good tackle," Borseti said. "In film session the next day, they rewound it a couple of times, so that felt good."

And the fact that the unranked Irish beat the then-No. 7 Wolverines made it only sweeter.

"I remember when everyone rushed the field after the game, and I raised my

helmet — it felt a lot better knowing I was part of the victory," he said.

Because Borseti did not play as a freshman, he can apply for a fifth year of eligibility. But the senior said anything ahead of the upcoming game is past his planning period.

"We get it drilled into our heads so much that it's game-by-game," Borseti said. "I'm not really looking ahead."

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PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish linebacker Nick Borseti (56) covers running back Travis Thomas in Notre Dame's annual Blue-Gold game April 22 at Notre Dame Stadium. Borseti is an industrial design major.

CARL GIOIA

It was always all about the kickoffs for Gioia

By CHRIS KHOREY
Associate Sports Editor

When Carl Gioia came to Notre Dame games as a little kid, he didn't focus on the quarterback or the running game.

He focused on the kickoffs. "I remember coming to the games when I was little and at kickoffs everyone was yelling and I thought, 'I'll come here if I can do that a couple times,'" Gioia said. "It

is a little bit different, because kickoffs, especially at Notre Dame have a lot more adrenaline. The whole crowd goes wild."

The senior kicker has been able to kick off more than a "couple times" during his career in South Bend.

While backing up Nick Setta and D.J. Fitzpatrick on the depth chart, he was used by coaches Tyrone Willingham and Charlie Weis as a kickoff specialist. During his sophomore and junior years, Gioia

bounced in and out of the starting lineup, depending on the game plan.

"Kickoffs take a lot out of your leg, so you kind of have to rotate guys," Gioia said of the lineup changes. "Plus, different guys have different skills and sometimes the game plan is different."

Although he didn't trot out to kick off in every game, Gioia kicked off 44 times his sophomore and junior years, often in the cauldron of noise in Notre Dame Stadium that

attracted him to the job in the first place.

Once he got on the field, however, Gioia realized that booting a ball in front of 80,000 people is not as easy as it looks.

"[Crowd noise] can actually be counter-productive because as a kicker you have to be calm and concentrate," he said.

During those two years, Gioia was able to learn from Setta and Fitzpatrick.

"Those were two top-of-the-line guys," Gioia said. "They were just as good of friends as they were teammates and players. Just looking at their work ethic, they really taught a lot to me and [senior punter] Geoff Price and [senior kicker] Bobby Renkes."

Now in his senior year, Gioia has become the consistent starting placekicker — Notre Dame's main option for field goals and extra points. Gioia is 7-for-11 on field goals and 39-for-43 on extra points this season.

The year didn't start well, however. In his first start, Sept. 2 against Georgia Tech, Gioia missed two field goals.

The set back didn't faze him, however. Gioia made two field goals the next week against Penn State.

"It was just another work week," Gioia said. "I just went through my routine and did fine against Penn State. It's like in other sports, a shooter misses a shot or a pitcher gives up a home run, you have to have a short

memory."

Gioia has passed on that wisdom to freshman kicker Ryan Burkhart.

"He's good a really good leg and he's got a good head on his shoulders," Gioia said of the newcomer. "He has to fine tune things, as every freshman does, but he'll have a great career."

Coming out of high school in Valparaiso, Ind., Gioia was offered a chance to start right away in the Ivy League for Harvard, Columbia or Yale, but he chose to walk on in Division I for the Irish.

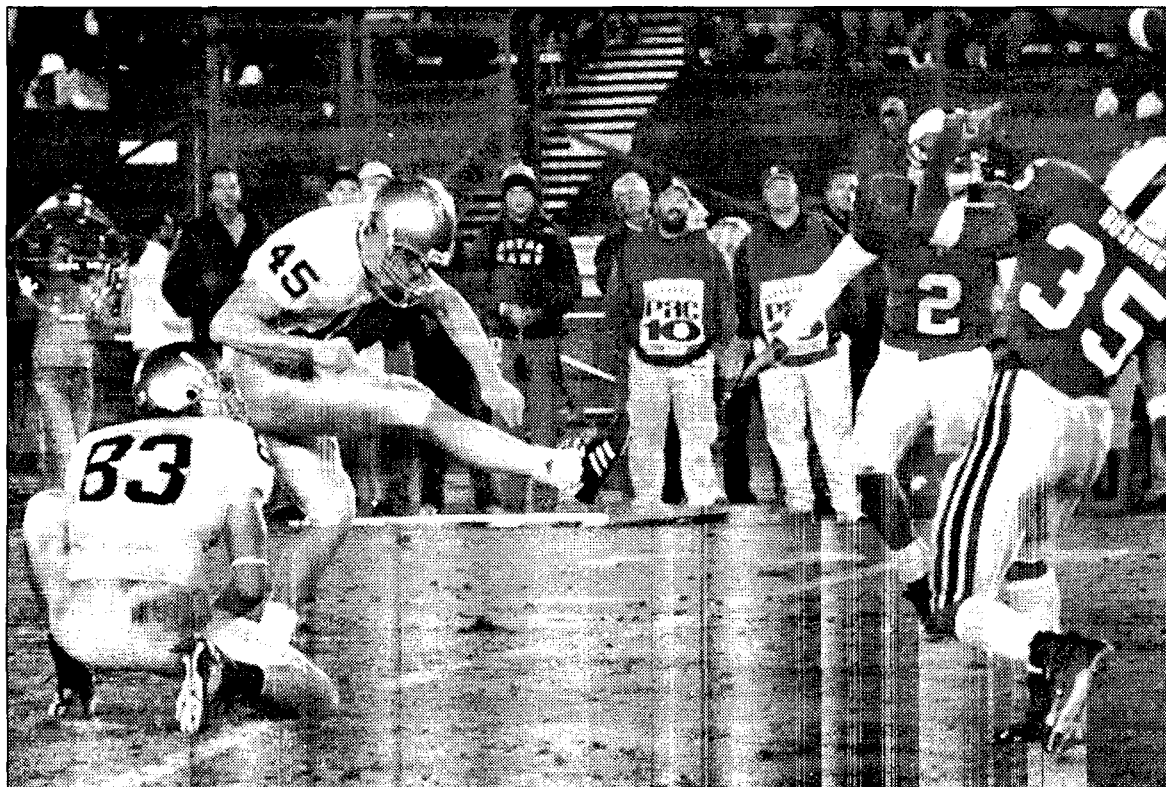
Gioia said the academic drop off was so small and Notre Dame's football advantage so big that his choice was easy.

"The Notre Dame degree is just as golden as getting to the NFL and playing football," he said.

Gioia is one of only two Irish players in a pre-professional program, and, although he has another year of football eligibility that he might use, he has applied to several dental schools.

"It can get pretty rigorous," Gioia said of playing football and studying one of the University's toughest majors. "I had two midterms last year the Thursday before USC. I'll be better for it in the end. The nice thing about Notre Dame is I feel prepared for anything I might end up doing."

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MEGAN SOTAK/The Observer

Irish senior kicker Carl Gioia boots an extra point during Notre Dame's 38-31 victory over Stanford in Palo Alto, Calif., last season.

DWIGHT STEPHENSON, JR.

Defender just the latest in a line of athletes

By DAN MURPHY
Sports Writer

Dwight Stephenson is a family man, and the Stephensons are a football family.

The senior defensive tackle grew up in Delray Beach, Fla., with his parents, brother and sister.

"Everybody looks out for each other, and everything is based on working for the family," he said. "The best thing I learned from my family is to know how to give to the people that you love."

While at home, Stephenson attended Pope John Paul II High School where he played three sports — track and field, basketball, and football. He won three varsity letters in football and served as the captain for the Eagles in his senior season.

Then a linebacker, Dwight had 22 tackles for loss and 27 sacks in his senior campaign — good enough to earn him all-county honors and a spot in the Cali-Florida All-Star game.

Stephenson, who now wears No. 57 for the Irish, has a strong football pedigree. He was born to a hard-working mother and an NFL Hall of Famer. His father, Dwight Sr., spent four years at Alabama, where he was named an All-American center, before going on to play with the Miami Dolphins for seven years.

"He's been around great

football all of his life, but now I think he's just proud to see his son playing football and trying his hardest." Stephenson said.

The 6-foot-2, 250-pounder has battled a deep defensive line for playing time the past two seasons. Last year Stephenson played in six games for the Irish on defense and made nine appearances on special teams.

"I think the coaching staff just feels it's unfair to unleash me on regular college football players, but when they do it'll be quite an experience," he said.

Stephenson had the same level of confidence when moving from his linebacker position to the defensive line after his freshman year. The only change was in the first few steps for him, after that he just needed to get to the ball.

When Stephenson isn't waiting to be unleashed on the gridiron, he spends his time working on a degree in management from the Mendoza College of Business.

"As long as football is available to me I'll be chasing it," he said. "But my second passion is in business, I love big business."

Stephenson is interested in development companies and investment banking. Football has kept from gaining as much as experience as he would like to, but he has managed to find ways to get a taste of the business world.

He has spent short stints interning with several companies and has done a lot of work with his father who now runs a Florida construction company. Sometime down the road, he wouldn't mind getting himself into sports management.

In the meantime, he has more pressing issues on his mind. This Saturday against the Black Knights may be the last time that Stephenson

has the privilege of running out of the tunnel to the tune of 80,000 screaming Irish fans. He isn't too worried about the end quite yet.

"It's going to be exciting at that time, but after the game it will be more present [that it's over], before then we have a game to play ... my mind is going to be focused on [kicking] Army's butt."

"I think the coaching staff just feels it's unfair to unleash me on regular college football players, but when they do it'll be quite an experience."

Dwight Stephenson, Jr.
Irish defensive lineman

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MEGAN SOTAK/The Observer

Irish defensive Dwight Stephenson, Jr., says he hasn't seen action because coaches fear for the safety of opponents.

JOE BROCKINGTON

Linebacker steps up when his number is called

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Sports Writer

On Sept. 30, Notre Dame's starting defense took the field against Purdue with one key addition — outside linebacker Joe Brockington in his first career start for the Irish in four years.

"This year when I started against Purdue was one of my best moments because I finally got on the field," Brockington said. "It's been a journey since I've been here."

Brockington's journey to Notre Dame began in central Pennsylvania, where his mother raised him and his sister on her own.

"She worked two jobs pretty much since I was born — supported my sister and I by herself," Brockington said of his mother. "We've had hard times but she definitely got an A-plus in the whole mothering thing because her two kids are pretty successful."

While in high school at Palmyra High School in Palmyra, Penn., Brockington was already a standout football player, rushing for 1,046 yards and registering 110 total tackles during his junior season. Even though he was sidelined by a shoulder injury in his senior year, Brockington was still recruited by schools in the Big East, ACC, Big Ten as well as Notre Dame.

"[Picking Notre Dame] was a combination of academics and the coaching staff that was in place at the time," Brockington said. "It was a more of a decision my family and I made together; my family felt it was the best opportunity for me."

Another major influence in Brockington's decision was whether he would get to play Penn State — the favorite team of many of his friends and neighbors.

"I know a bunch of people that said I should go to Penn State or else I wasn't good enough to play college football," Brockington said. "It was definitely something I looked at when I was looking at schools so I can show everyone in my area that I can play college football."

Brockington was redshirted his freshman year, missing his

second consecutive season.

"It was tough. I was practicing so I had that type of aspect still there. I was still practicing, still doing some things," he said. "It was definitely tough, it was hard to deal with, but talking with my family they helped me get through it."

Brockington continued to work while at Notre Dame, but at his academics if not athletics. Brockington entered school as a business major intent and spent his sophomore year in the Mendoza College of Business before switching in his junior year to become an American Studies major with a minor in computer applications.

"Then I was looking into different majors, and I decided on American Studies because the classes they let you take were just more interesting than any other major I could find in arts and letters," Brockington said of his decision.

But despite the hard work Brockington exerted on the field and in the classroom, he feels the most important part of his experiences here at Notre Dame were those that happened with his friends outside of football, the kind of regular students he might not have met at another university.

"The interaction that you have with other students is different than at other schools," he said. "All through college I haven't [roomed] with a football player. It's helped me meet some new people. Now I look

back on [dorm life] and it helped build some relationships that I will have for the rest of my life."

But despite the great memories from Notre Dame, Brockington's journey is at a crossroads. Because of his red-shirt freshman year, Brockington could come back for a fifth year under the Dome or leave school to start life in the real world.

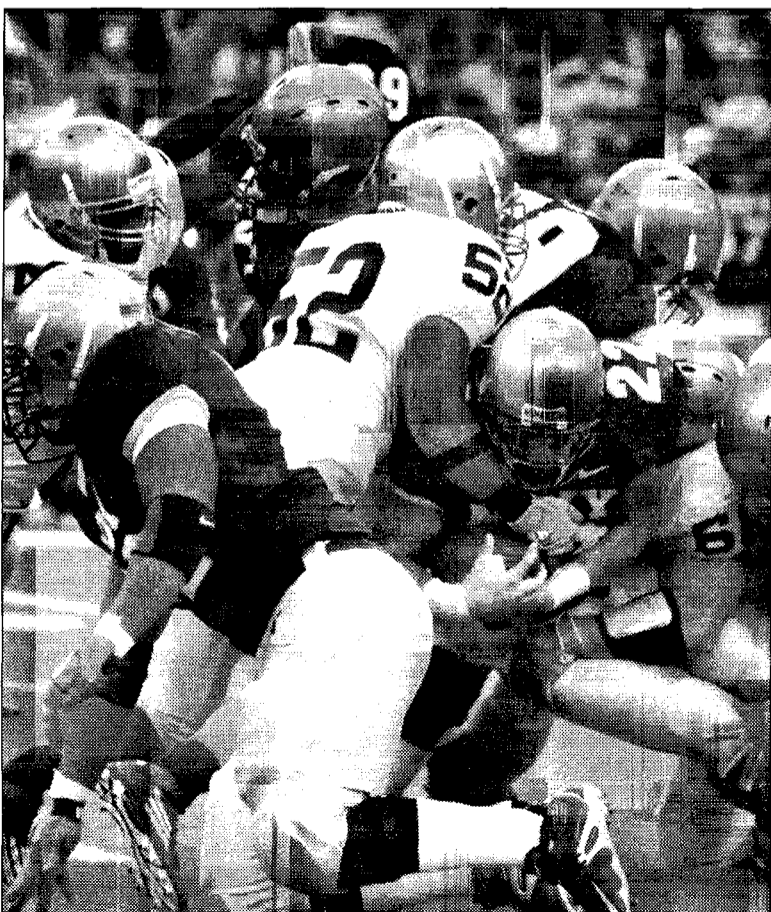
If Brockington does decide to forego his fifth year, he plans to take the LSAT in June, work all of next year and then enter law school. But, with the chance to play in Happy Valley next season as the Irish travel to Penn State, Brockington says he may return.

But even if Brockington does return for his fifth year, he knows that law school will be his next step.

Regardless of when he leaves, Brockington says the most important thing he will take with him is not the games played on the field or the lessons learned in the classroom, but the people he met here.

"The people that I actually met here, the friends that I made here just because the people that actually go to school here kind of grew up in a different situation than I did," Brockington said of his favorite experience at Notre Dame. "It was good because I learned some things from them and they learned some things from me."

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MEGAN SOTAK/The Observer

Irish linebacker Joe Brockington stuffs Midshipmen fullback Adam Ballard during Notre Dame's 38-14 win Oct. 28.

DAN CHERVANICK

Positive outlook is a common thread for lineman

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

The smile on Dan Chervanick's face tells his story this year.

The fifth-year senior was a defensive lineman until last spring, when Irish coach Charlie Weis moved him to the offensive side of the ball to

help compensate for Notre Dame's thin depth chart. After playing two seasons and recording just two tackles in his first four years at Notre Dame, the transition lifted his place on the depth chart, but his work ethic rewarded him in another way.

The valedictorian of Holy Name High School in Reading, Pa., Chervanick was both dedi-

cated and important to the team with the offensive line situation in question. And he had some experience on offense. Along with winning all-league academic honors in Berks County, Pa., Chervanick was an all-league offensive tackle and defensive interior lineman.

With Chervanick's mother helping move in his sister Marie, a junior at Notre

Dame, in late August, Weis awarded Chervanick a scholarship for his dedication.

"My mom was crying," Chervanick said. "And I called my dad, and told him, 'You know those loans [for my post-graduate year]? Don't worry about them.'"

Chervanick said his father had just come home from a long day at work and warned him that the good news better not turn out to be a joke.

It wasn't. Every time Chervanick talks about one part of his five years, his feelings almost invariably boil down to four words.

"It's just been great," he said time after time.

Like many of his fellow seniors, Chervanick, whose brother Mike walked on to Pittsburgh's football team, said the mid-week work and optional lifting sessions are the toughest part of the season — but also the place where he has forged the strongest bonds with teammates.

"The friends I've made — it's been wonderful," Chervanick said. "I wouldn't give it up for anything."

The tireless work that led Chervanick to a 3.596 four-year GPA at Notre Dame — and a 3.75 average his final undergraduate semester — impressed his coach, who likes to treat football as a business. But such a relation-

ship should probably be expected, with Chervanick earning a degree in accounting as well as history.

And he already knows exactly what he'll be doing with the business degree and the Master of Science in Accounting that he will have earned by May.

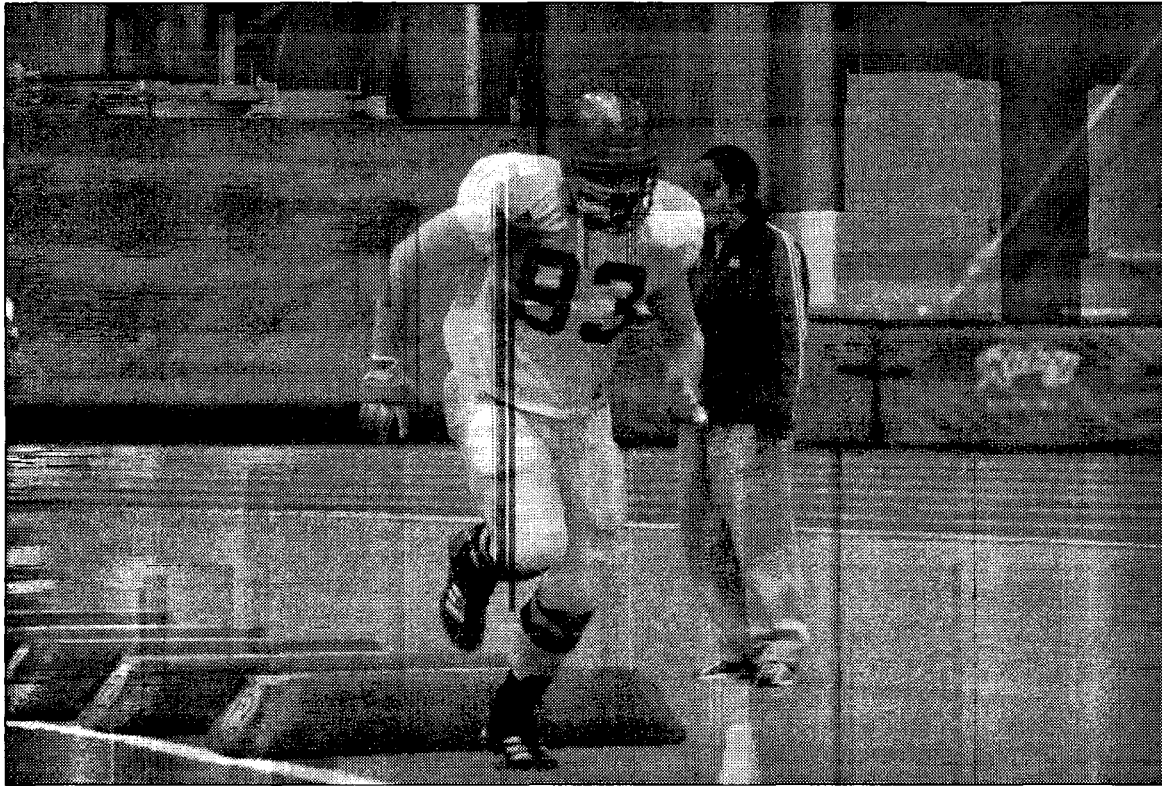
Chervanick interned with Citigroup this summer and, after interviews with New York financial powerhouses Merrill Lynch, Cantor Fitzgerald and others, he accepted a position at UBS next fall as an analyst in the company's fixed-income sales and trading program.

He said the competitive nature of Wall Street, where he just wants "to get a shot," correlates perfectly with his background in football.

And Chervanick said he already knows of a few Notre Dame graduates in New York working their way up corporate ladders. Chervanick said the demands for perfection and teamwork at Notre Dame give him a solid foundation for a lower-Manhattan business mentality.

But as the Army game approaches, Chervanick has a second chance to soak up the memories from practices and team meetings, until the final lap around Notre Dame Stadium.

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler1@nd.edu



MEGAN SOTAK/The Observer

Irish senior Dan Chervanick runs with the defense in 2005 before making the switch to offensive line. A fifth-year senior, Chervanick accepted a job with UBS for his first post-graduate job.

DAN SANTUCCI

Santucci brings defensive mentality to O-line

By KYLE CASSILY
Sports Writer

Fifth-year offensive lineman Dan Santucci has had to switch to a different side of the ball and swap positions mid-game, but the one thing that has remained constant for the starting right guard has been his teammates and his ability to adjust to change.

In spring practice before his third year at Notre Dame, Santucci was asked by former Irish coach Tyrone Willingham's staff to switch from the defensive line to the inside of the offensive line. The proposition came after he played in all 12 games his sophomore season on special teams and made a brief appearance against Stanford at defensive tackle, earning his first monogram.

"At first it was a little bit of disappointment, because I'm sitting there playing D-line and all of a sudden I get moved," Santucci said. "But when they asked me, and I went home and thought about it, that night — I swear to God — I was just really excited."

He carried that excitement over onto the practice field that spring and made a big enough impression to earn a recurring spot in the trenches in 2004. He played in 11 games at guard — including 45 special team appearances — and made his first start, at left guard, against Oregon State in the Insight Bowl.

The hardest part of the change, Santucci said, was sit-

ting back on pass protection, when he had been accustomed to playing aggressive with the defensive pass rush. He already knew, however, how to block for the rush after playing tight end in high school.

"It was about after the sixth or seventh game, at Navy of my junior year, I felt like after that game — I played almost all half — and I felt comfortable starting," Santucci said of the position change. "I just got more and more comfortable as the year went on, just worked hard at it and tried to get better."

And Santucci, a Chicago native, knew a little bit about working at things to get better before he enrolled at Notre Dame. During his junior year at St. Patrick High School on the city's north side, his team went 2-7. But the following season, he led the Shamrocks to a 7-4 record and a playoff win — the school's first since 1988.

The summer prior to that season in 2001, Santucci turned down scholarship offers from Nebraska, Purdue and Northwestern to accept a scholarship from then-Irish defensive line coach Greg Mattison — the weekend after Mattison offered it.

"I got offered a scholarship and being from Chicago, going to a Catholic school and watching Notre Dame my whole life — it was a pretty easy decision," Santucci said.

Santucci had only a season to settle into his new role as an offensive lineman, before his role was rattled yet again with

the entrance of Charlie Weis in 2005.

Weis instituted a four-man rotation between the two guard positions and center, rotating Santucci with current seniors John Sullivan and Bob Morton and current New England Patriot Dan Stevenson. He accepted the change in stride, and despite his desire to play every down, he looked on the positive aspects of it — mainly a chance to take a breather and to gain trust in his fellow linemen.

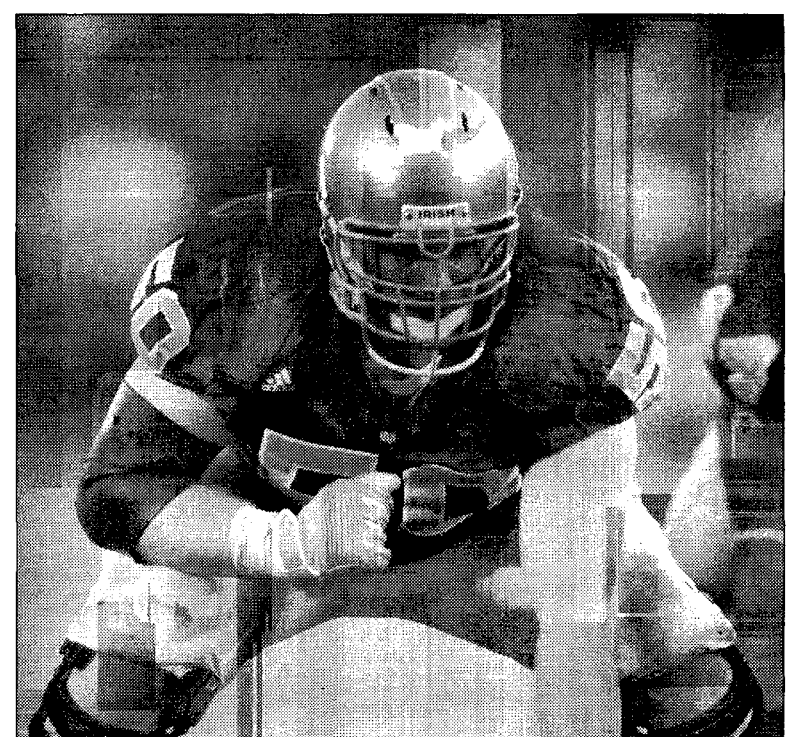
"Everyone went with it and everyone was excited about it," Santucci said. "I think it made us closer together knowing that whoever is in there, you could trust them at that position."

And that trust carries over well past the sidelines of Cartier Field and the locker rooms of the Gug for Santucci, Sullivan, Morton, senior Ryan Harris and the man they are tasked to protect.

"We're all tight, we go out to eat every Thursday night at Bruno's Italian," Santucci said. "We go eat there as a group, we sit there and watch the Thursday night game, half of it — Brady [Quinn] goes. We hang out other times, watching Monday Night Football, things like that."

Santucci said his favorite moments in college will always be the sight of all the offensive linemen rushing into the end zone every time they score and mobbing the receiver or running back in celebration of a solid drive up field.

"The main thing for me is



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish offensive lineman Dan Santucci lines up during Notre Dame's 34-31 loss to USC Oct. 15, 2005.

playing with the guys, my friends and stuff like that, that I made here," he said. "The tight senior class that we had, being a big veteran class, just being able to go out there everyday and have fun and play with them, are all memories that I'll take with me."

Santucci will put aside the marketing degree he already earned from the Mendoza College of Business and pursue football into the professional ranks after the season ends. But for the time being he is focused only on Army and his

last run down the tunnel into Notre Dame Stadium.

"I think before the game I'm going to be focused on winning the game and at the task at hand," Santucci said. "But I think after the game, it's going to be a little bit of a different experience. I really don't know how to say it now before I experience it, but it'll definitely be a special day — something I'll remember the rest of my life."

Contact Kyle Cassily at kcassily@nd.edu

HEAD TO

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Notre Dame



Charlie Weis
second season at
Notre Dame
career record:
18-4
at Notre Dame:
18-4
against
Army: 0-0

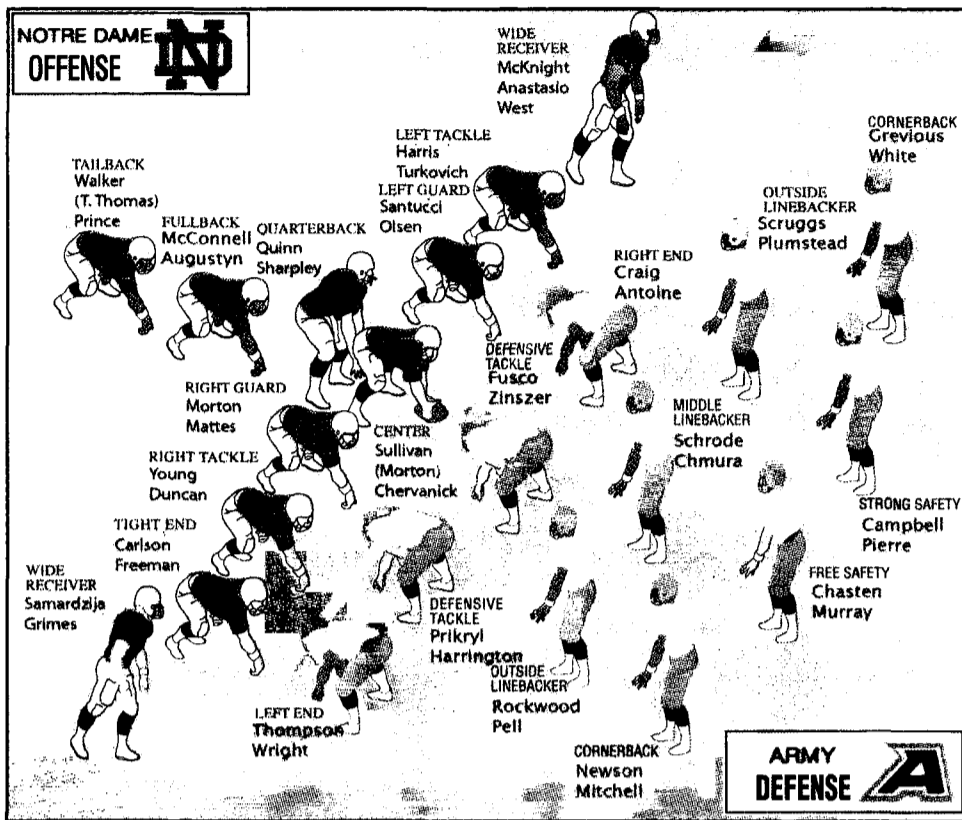
Charlie Weis
head coach

Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	YR
1	D.J. Hord	WR	6-1	192	SO
2	Darrin Walker	DB	6-1	175	JR
3	Darius Jones	RB	5-11	208	FR
4	Demetrius Jones	QB	6-4	202	FR
5	Rhema McKnight	WR	6-1	212	SR
6	Ray Herring	DB	6-0	189	SO
7	Craig Cardillo	K	6-0	170	SR
8	Raeshon McNeil	DB	6-0	175	FR
9	Tom Zbikowski	DB	5-11	203	SR
10	Brady Quinn	QB	6-4	227	SR
11	David Grimes	WR	6-0	170	SO
12	Zach Frazer	QB	6-4	215	FR
13	Evan Sharpley	QB	6-2	207	SO
14	Bobby Renkes	K	6-0	195	SR
15	Leo Ferrine	DB	6-0	186	JR
17	Geoffrey Price	P	6-3	186	SR
18	Dan Gorski	QB	6-3	196	SO
19	Chinedum Ndukwe	DB	6-2	219	FR
18	George West	WR	5-8	179	FR
20	Terrail Lambert	DB	5-11	188	JR
21	Berry Gallup Jr.	WR	5-11	175	FR
22	Ambrose Wooden	CB	5-11	197	SR
23	Chase Anastasio	WR	6-2	203	SR
24	W. David Williams	DB	5-10	170	JR
24	Brandon Erickson	WR	6-0	178	JR
25	Munir Prince	RB	5-10	175	FR
26	Wade Iams	DB	5-9	188	JR
26	Travis Thomas	RB	6-0	215	SR
27	David Bruton	DB	6-2	187	SO
27	John Lyons	RB	6-1	205	SR
28	Kyle McCarthy	DB	6-0	189	SO
29	Jashaad Gaines	DB	6-0	195	FR
29	Jake Richardsville	WR	6-0	180	SO
30	Mike Richardson	DB	5-11	193	SR
31	Sergio Brown	DB	6-1	184	FR
32	Luke Schmidt	RB	6-3	230	FR
33	Nate Whitaker	K	5-9	165	FR
34	James Aldridge	RB	6-0	209	FR
35	Ashley McConnell	RB	6-0	247	SR
35	Tim Kenney	DB	6-0	180	SR
36	Dex Cure	RB	6-1	215	FR
37	Junior Jabbie	WR	5-11	190	JR
38	Nick Possley	WR	6-1	183	JR
39	Ryan Burkhardt	K	5-11	185	FR
40	Kevin Brooks	TE	6-2	230	FR
40	Maurice Crum, Jr.	LB	6-0	220	JR
41	Scott Smith	LB	6-3	234	SO
42	Kevin Washington	LB	6-1	231	SO
42	David Costanzo	WR	5-9	170	SO
43	Eric Maust	P	6-1	180	FR
43	Mike Anello	DB	5-10	180	SO
44	Asaph Schwapp	RB	6-0	250	SO
45	Kris Patterson	WR	5-11	174	SO
45	Carl Gioia	K	5-10	183	SR
46	Michael Planalp	TE	6-4	230	SO
46	Kyle Charters	LB	5-11	195	JR
47	Mitchell Thomas	LB	6-3	240	SR
48	Steve Quinn	LB	6-2	220	JR
49	Matt Augustyn	FB	6-3	220	FR
49	Toryan Smith	LB	6-0	230	FR
50	Dan Santucci	OL	6-4	290	SR
51	Dan Wenger	OL	6-4	285	FR
52	Joe Brockington	LB	6-1	212	SR
53	Morrice Richardson	LB	6-2	228	FR
54	Anthony Vernaglia	DB	6-3	221	JR
55	Eric Olsen	OL	6-4	290	FR
56	Nick Borsetti	LB	6-4	238	SR
57	Dwight Stephenson	DL	6-2	252	SR
59	Chris Steward	OL	6-5	340	FR
60	Casey Cullen	DL	6-1	238	SR
61	J.J. Jansen	LS	6-3	242	JR
63	Jeff Tisak	OL	6-3	305	SO
64	Dan Chervanick	DL	6-1	259	SR
66	Derek Landri	DL	6-3	263	SR
68	Ryan Harris	OL	6-5	288	JR
69	Neil Kennedy	DL	5-11	260	JR
71	Bartley Webb	OL	6-7	290	FR
72	Paul Duncan	OL	6-7	292	SO
73	Matt Carufel	OL	6-5	288	FR
74	Sam Young	OL	6-7	292	FR
75	Chris Frome	DL	6-5	268	SR
76	Bob Morton	OL	6-4	292	SR
77	Michael Turkovich	OL	6-6	290	SO
78	John Sullivan	OL	6-4	298	SR
79	Brian Mattes	OL	6-6	285	SR
80	Richard Jackson	WR	6-3	200	FR
81	Darrin Bragg	WR	6-1	192	JR
82	Robby Parris	WR	6-4	185	FR
83	Jeff Samardzija	WR	6-5	216	SR
84	Will Yeatman	TE	6-6	250	FR
86	Mike Talerico	TE	6-5	245	JR
87	Marcus Freeman	TE	6-3	245	SR
88	Konrad Reuland	TE	6-6	239	FR
89	John Carlson	TE	6-5	255	SR
90	John Ryan	DL	6-5	240	FR
91	Travis Leitko	DL	6-7	270	SR
92	Derrell Hand	DL	6-3	301	SO
93	Paddy Mullen	DL	6-5	265	FR
94	Justin Brown	DL	6-3	247	JR
95	Victor Abiamiri	DL	6-4	260	SR
96	Pat Kuntz	DL	6-2	267	SO
97	Kallen Wade	DL	6-5	220	FR
98	Trevor Laws	DL	6-1	293	SR

NOTRE DAME 2006 Schedule

- Sept. 2 at Ga. Tech — W
- Sept. 9 PENN ST. — W
- Sept. 16 MICHIGAN — L
- Sept. 23 at MSU — W
- Sept. 30 PURDUE — W
- Oct. 7 STANFORD — W
- Oct. 21 UCLA — W
- Oct. 28 at Navy — W
- Nov. 4 UNC — W
- Nov. 11 at Air Force — W
- Nov. 18 ARMY
- Nov. 25 at USC



COACHING

QUARTERBACKS

IRISH PASSING

IRISH RUSHING

NOTRE DAME

For the past few weeks, Charlie Weis has been focused on keeping his players focused. They've posted multi-score wins over Air Force, UNC and Navy despite a scare against UCLA. He's ready to send the seniors out in style.

Brady Quinn continues to play like everything is on the line every week — and right now, it is. His 8-for-8, 150 yard and three touchdown stat line in the first quarter of the Air Force game was jaw-dropping and he can put up even better numbers Saturday.

Losing John Carlson will loom large in the future, but Weis seems confident that Marcus Freeman can perform. Rhema McKnight, David Grimes, Darius Walker and Jeff Samardzija have already accumulated 23 touchdowns between them.

Darius Walker had one of his best games against Air Force last week, and his average yards per rush improved to 4.7. James Aldridge also had some meaningful carries against the Falcons. The Irish average 133.7 rush yards per game.

ARMY

Bobby Ross has coached for the Detroit Lions and San Diego Chargers. Army's four wins in 2005 marked the team's highest win total since 1997. Ross also won a National Championship with Georgia Tech in 1990.

The Army offense isn't just the option, and the Black Knights have two quarterbacks, both of whom have started. David Pevoto has played more and is 99-for-180 with 13 picks and five scores. Carson Williams is 39-for-67 with seven picks and three touchdowns.

The Black Knights are giving up 164.3 yards per game in the air but have picked off just three passes from their opponents. The team has a total of nine quarterback sacks for a loss of 57 yards and have broken up 22 passes this season.

Army has given up 190.2 yards per game on the ground, which may be partially due to the team's undersized defensive line. The squad has 152 tackles for a loss of 144 yards, but has given up long runs, including one for 98 yards.

ANALYSIS

Ross' qualifications, background and resume are excellent for a college coach, but the Academies' present unique challenge in football. Weis has made sure his seniors and the rest of the team — know what is at stake.

Brady Quinn continues to make his case for the Heisman, and it's hard to argue with the stats he has compiled. Army's quarterbacks aren't the worst passers, but Quinn is on a different level, and playing his final game at Notre Dame Stadium.

The Notre Dame receiving corps is second to none this season, and Quinn directs them with ease. He hasn't had trouble putting up yards on any of the Academies in 2006, and on Senior Day, Samardzija, McKnight and Freeman will be extra motivated.

This is the kind of game where a smaller running back like Walker can break free of tacklers and put up yards and touchdowns. If the Irish go up early the game might be turned over almost entirely to the running backs.

Irish experts



Mike Gilloon
Editor in Chief

It's the last home game for Brady Quinn. There's no way the toughest Irish quarterback since Joe Montana lets Notre Dame lose this game. Quinn goes up top early to Jeff Samardzija and Rhema McKnight before Darius Walker runs behind an overpowering O-line for an easy win over the Black Knights. The seniors sing the Alma Mater one more time before focusing on the group's first win over Southern Cal next week.

FINAL SCORE: Notre Dame 45 Army 10



Bob Griffin
Asst. Managing Editor

The Irish are too well coached and too focused to have a slip up looking ahead to USC. Though Senior Day will be a factor, the Irish will settle in as the game progresses. Weis said this week he won't leave Brady Quinn in the game to pad stats, but the quarterback will get four touchdowns before it becomes an issue. A nice farewell victory for the most talented class to come through South Bend in a long time.

FINAL SCORE: Notre Dame 42 Army 17

HEAD

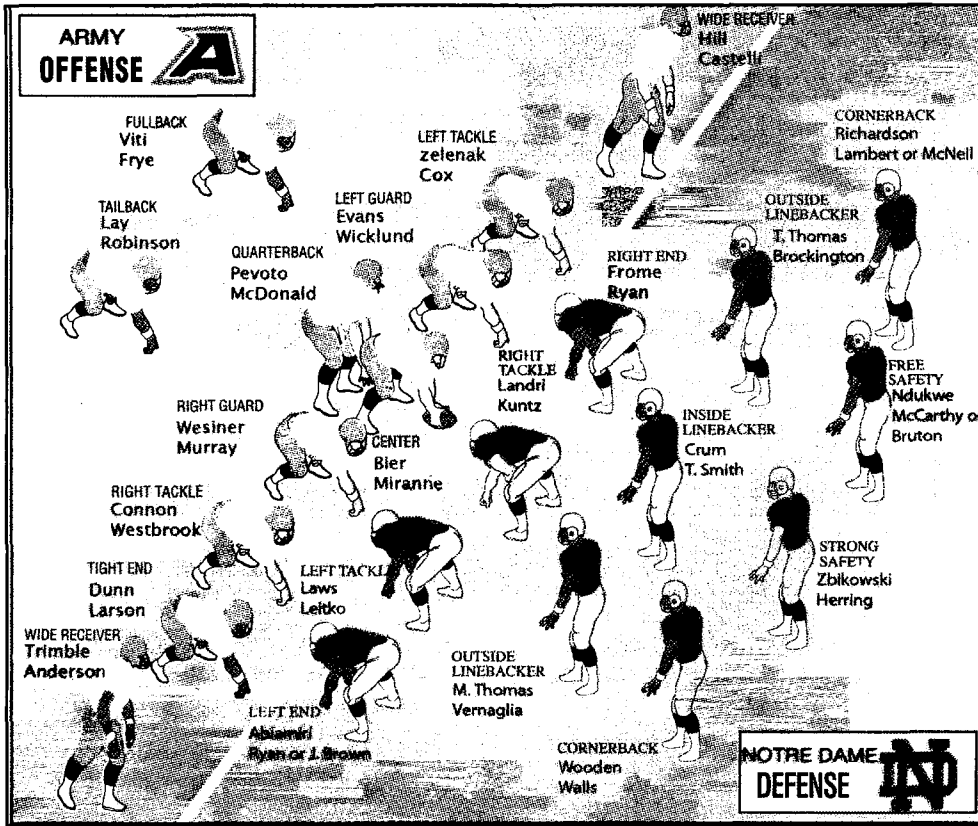
Army Black Knights

Army
Black Knights
 Record: 3-7
 AP: NR
 Coaches: NR

Bobby Ross
 3rd season at
 Army
 career record:
 103-99-2
 at Army:
 9-23-0
 against Notre
 Dame: 0-0



Bobby Ross
head coach



Army 2006 Schedule

- Sept. 2 at Arkansas St. — L
- Sept. 9 KENT STATE — W
- Sept. 16 at Texas A&M — L
- Sept. 23 at Baylor — W
- Sept. 30 RICE — L
- Oct. 7 VMI — W
- Oct. 14 at Connecticut — L
- Oct. 21 TCU — L
- Oct. 28 at Tulane — L
- Nov. 3 AIR FORCE — L
- Nov. 18 at Notre Dame
- Dec. 2 at Navy

Roster

- NOTRE DAME**
- Jonathan Douglas
 - Kevin Quigley
 - Owen Tolson
 - Carl Walters
 - Mario Hill
 - Walter Hill
 - Nick Mavricos
 - Kevin Dunn
 - Randy Chasten
 - Jeremy Trimble
 - Corey Anderson
 - Darren Newson
 - Chris Ogden
 - Laron Preece
 - Joe LeFort
 - Carlo Santiago
 - Carson Williams
 - Dennis Cooper
 - Caleb Campbell
 - Mike Wright
 - David DeVeto
 - Judd Olson
 - Patrick McDonald
 - Lee Crain
 - Sunny Rackers
 - Elliott Grant
 - Jonathan Harmeling
 - Jacob Murphy
 - Andrew Polse
 - Jim Horan
 - Ricky Lay
 - Jordan Murray
 - Chris Lattner
 - Jamal Robinson
 - Anton McDuffie
 - Gatt McDaniel
 - Gerren Alexander
 - Colin Mooney
 - Mike Pyle
 - Wesley McMahan
 - Joe Riley
 - Kevin Copoki
 - Jamison Maehler
 - Sean Grevious
 - Mike Murphy
 - Mike Castelli
 - Josh Dobbe
 - Michael Herndon
 - Evan Leitch
 - Ray Smith
 - Eric Creighton
 - erry Jones
 - Lowell Garthwaite
 - Ryan Brenc
 - Kevin Beavers
 - Mike Viti
 - Dave Bobillot
 - Jim Frye
 - John Laird
 - Frank Brown
 - Jony Moore
 - Paul Ernst
 - Brandon White
 - Mike Mazza
 - Max Palmatier
 - Adam Kenkiewicz
 - Marqu Hillen
 - Jacob Miraldi
 - Police Terrigno
 - Brian Cummins
 - Scott Simpson
 - Charlie Rockwood
 - Quack Blake
 - Robert Baker
 - Jony Dace
 - Tom Dyrnforth
 - Luke Holsinger
 - Austin Miller
 - Thomas Harris
 - Justin Koenig
 - Bo Olsen
 - Jason Quink
 - Julius Myers
 - annon Woods
 - Drew Coyle
 - David Clamon
 - ason Shrode
 - Barrett Scruggs
 - Andy Lujan
 - Errik Anderson
 - David Galbreath
 - Kevin Johnson
 - Mike Schumacher
 - Dan Evans
 - Seth Rubin
 - Kurt Wasilewski
 - Greg Arrowsmith
 - Nathan Collier
 - Frank Kormannshaus
 - Viles Murray
 - Elliott Antoine
 - Sean Whaley
 - Jay Miranne
 - John Jarvis
 - Jony Jusco
 - Sean Gilligan
 - Chris Vesce
 - Rite Bier
 - Nick Lopez
 - Cody St. Onge
 - Matt Ridgeway
 - Matt Hefland
 - Matt Weisner
 - Jonathan Connon
 - Bob Landry
 - Mark Jaldowski
 - Zac Maodus
 - Conner Wicklund
 - Ray Zelenak
 - Josh Pearson
 - Shane Zinszer
 - Mike Jimming
 - John Keller
 - Wyatt Batchelor
 - Scott Harris
 - Jed Kimmyey
 - Steven Westbrook
 - Mike Marano
 - Brandon Cox
 - Alex Clamon
 - Justin Larson
 - Dominick Cinotto
 - Quentin Willard
 - Tom Scappaticci
 - Elliot Eberich
 - Jim Dunn
 - Nimon Youngblut
 - Chase McCoy
 - Clay Woody
 - Phil Elans
 - Philip Edmondson
 - Grant Carraker
 - Doug Meyer
 - Evan Williams
 - Kyle Ross
 - Jed Chamberlain
 - Tommy Ryan
 - Peter Harrington
 - Cameron Craig
 - Brandon Thompson
 - Bob Maszarose
 - Wes Stewart
 - John Wright
 - Travis Frickly
- ARMY**
- ANALYSIS**

BLACK KNIGHTS PASSING

The Irish secondary has a disturbing habit of giving up big plays to mediocre passing attacks. Opponents gain 195.5 yards per game against Notre Dame and have scored 18 touchdowns through the air so far this season.

BLACK KNIGHTS RUSHING

Notre Dame matches up closely to the Army rushing attack, giving up 133.7 yards per game on the ground. At this point in the season, they have even more experience defending the option and making adjustments to the rushing defense.

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Irish average 21.6 yards per kick return and 8.3 yards per punt return. They give up about 18.9 yards per kick return and 11.1 yards per punt return. They did, however, give up a kickoff return for a touchdown to UNC.

INTANGIBLES

Senior Days aren't always happy. This class remembers a loss to Pitt in 2004 that closed out that home season on the wrong side of an upset. With so much at stake, the team can't afford to look past Army to USC on the horizon.

The Black Knights pass for an average of 135.8 yards per game, led by Jeremy Trimble, Walter Hill and Tim Dunn. Trimble and Dunn are tied for the lead in touchdowns with two apiece, but the rest of the team has combined for just four.

Army runs the option sometimes, and has a fairly strong rushing attack, coming in at 137.1 yards per game. Quarterback Wesley McMahan leads all rushers with 643 yards on 133 attempts and Tony Moore has five scores.

The Black Knights have accumulated 18.2 yards per kick return and 18.5 per punt return. They've given up just 16.1 yards per kick return and 8.5 yards per punt, which should match up well with the Irish.

Army has already said it has nothing to lose. Ross is a good coach with a disciplined team and good athletes. Although they've had their share and more of struggles, a win over Notre Dame would make the season.

The Irish defense gives up a lot of yards but not that many points. Even if the Black Knights have an above-average day passing, they are unlikely to rack up enough points to pull out a win over the Irish in South Bend.

The Irish managed to hold Air Force and Navy to a combined 31 points in two games this season. Army has more of an air attack than the Midshipmen but a weaker running game. The Irish should dominate the line of scrimmage.

Notre Dame's special teams play has been up and down through the season. Army seems to have done a good job keeping returns to a minimum, but the Irish will be the best team that the Black Knights face this season on all sides of the ball.

Both teams know that there's a lot of history on the field when they line up against each other. But it's a new era of college football, and Weis and his seniors are determined to create their legacy as this season closes.



Ken Fowler
Sports Editor

Notre Dame has lost five games to service academies in the last 50 years. The last time the Irish lost to the Americans? 1996. Notre Dame is due for a patriotic drubbing. And this is the same Army team that hung tough with Texas A&M earlier this year. Wait. I almost forgot how explosive, dangerous, efficient and exciting the Irish offense is. And Army is No. 1 in the nation in charitable giving — a -1.6 turnover ratio. Nice.

FINAL SCORE: Notre Dame 48 Army 3



Kate Gales
Associate Sports Editor

Notre Dame does not hate America. It does, however, like to post one-sided wins over the service academies. This isn't meant as a disrespect to those serving our country. The teams have a long and storied history that has shaped the face and look of American athletics. But it's Quinn & Company's last hurrah in the House that Rock Built. The score won't even be close.

FINAL SCORE: Notre Dame 49 Army 17

Irish experts

CRAIG CARDILLO

Anchor's aweigh for wide out at season's end

Cardillo will report to USS Rushmore to begin career in Navy

By **KEN FOWLER**
Sports Editor

Craig Cardillo's fifth year at Notre Dame has probably been his easiest.

The kicker-turned-receiver spent four years balancing schoolwork, football and one other major time commitment — Navy ROTC commitments.

But thanks to a rare Naval exception, he has spent this semester with "only" graduate and graduate classes on his plate. Cardillo's just happy to have that opportunity.

"I didn't know I was going to be able to come back," Cardillo said.

But the Navy filled its incoming officer need from ROTC graduates across the country and afforded Cardillo a half-year reprieve from starting his four-year active service. He will have another four years of commitment to the military after his active duty ends.

Cardillo joined the Irish in the spring of his freshman year, walking onto the team as

a place-kicker. He didn't see action as a sophomore or junior and then switched to scout team wide receiver.

There, he made a mark. He won the unit's offensive player of the week award three times in 2005 — while preparing the Irish defense for Michigan State, Southern California and BYU.

Cardillo said he is used to people wondering how he managed all his time commitments while still dedicating himself fully to the team.

"Some of the things for ROTC are optional," he said. "So it is manageable."

Cardillo didn't participate in most voluntary activities, including the guard, which saved him time. And he said team workout sessions

sometimes overlapped with ROTC physical training exercises, which lessened the load. But other days, he said, he couldn't escape multiple running sessions and weight room work.

Workouts at Notre Dame were nothing new for him.

Cardillo attended Hauppauge High School in Suffolk County on Long Island. He played quarterback, receiver and kicker there and was an all-county selection in football as a senior. He also won all-

league honors in basketball his junior and senior seasons.

After considering the naval Academy as a college destination, Cardillo jumped at the chance to go to Notre Dame. He majored in history and earned a 3.276 grade point average as an undergraduate.

In January, just a few days after the national title game, Cardillo will make his way to San Diego where he will begin his full-time Naval career on the USS Rushmore LSD-47, nicknamed "America's Gator."

He's not sure precisely what position he will fill as a commissioned officer there because, he said, that boils down to one thing — what the ship needs.

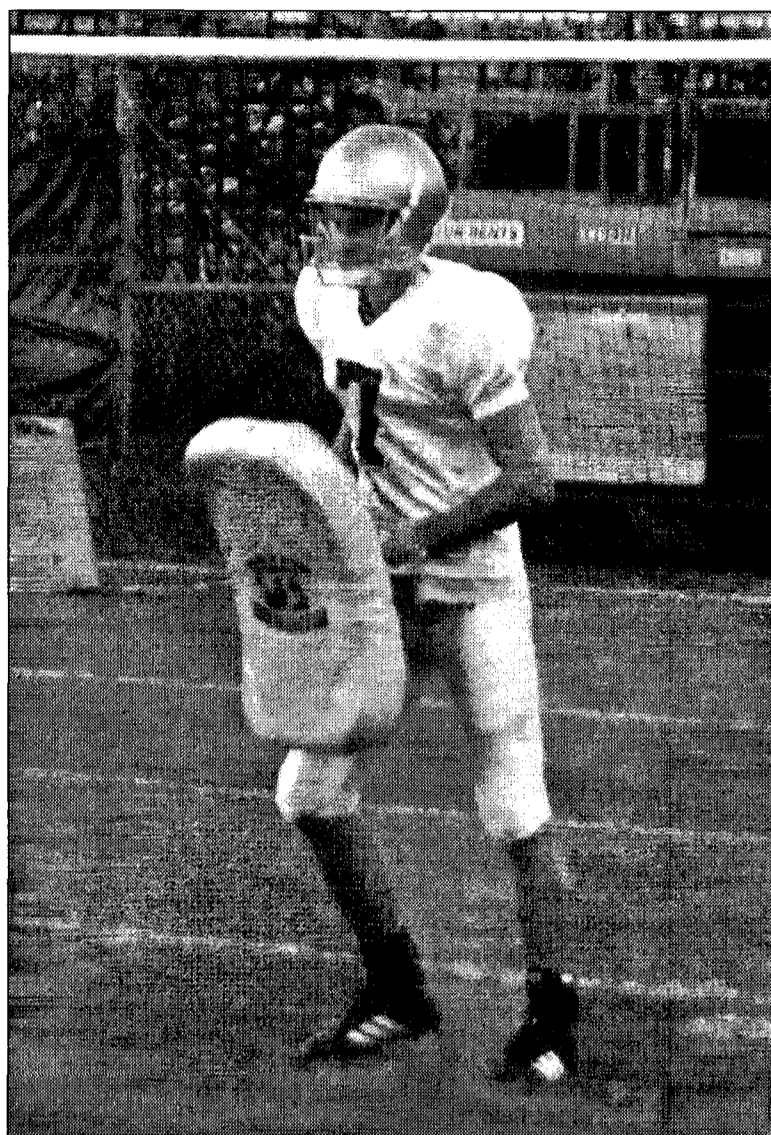
"It's pretty much on-the-job training," Cardillo said.

And while official work duties will be substantial, Cardillo may get the chance to jump back over the basketball on the Rushmore. The Gators are 2-1 this season in the San Diego Naval Base basketball league, forfeiting in their only loss due to "an unforeseen incident," according to the ship's official Web site.

Football won't be out of the picture, either. The ship has its own flag football team in a similar league.

But right now, Cardillo said, he's worried about his next game.

Contact Ken Fowler at kfowler1@nd.edu



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish receiver Craig Cardillo has been an important offensive scout team member since transitioning from kicker.

CHASE ANASTASIO

Receiver makes biggest impact on special teams

By **KEN FOWLER**
Sports Editor

Somewhere deep in the Notre Dame archives, the record for most blocked punts sits in bold capital letters.

Whatever name holds that spot has some competition from a wide out sometimes mistaken for Jeff Samardzija but much more lethal than No. 83 when Notre Dame drops back to field a punt.

Over the past four years, Irish wide receiver Chase Anastasio has blocked three punts. In fact, all three came last year — one against Washington, and a pair of deflections at Stanford.

"Someone told me that if I get one or two more, I'll have the school record," Anastasio said.

But that he would have two blocks by this point of his career is no fluke. Anastasio, usually the man attacking the right side of the offensive line when opponents are punting, always seems to get close.

"It can get a little frustrating," he said. "But you go out there each time [with the same motivation]."

And, he said, the record has no place in his mind.

"I'm just trying to help the team on every single play," he said.

Anastasio has just three receptions in his career, but that makes him the leading pass-catcher at wide out with another year of eligibility left. After sitting out as a freshman,

he saw most of his action on kickoff. Anastasio returned a team-high 19 kicks for an average of 18.6 yards per attempt. He also had one catch for 15 yards.

As a junior, Anastasio touched the ball only three times — his three big plays on special teams.

He said he is used to being a role player and works just as hard every day because helping himself improve helps the team improve overall.

Anastasio grew up in Burke, Va., and graduated from Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, Va. Like many of the role players on the Irish, he was a star before coming to college. Anastasio was a member of USA Today's top-100 team. As a senior, he rushed for 681 yards and seven touchdowns on 112 carries to go along with his 20 catches for 433 yards and six receiving scores.

At Notre Dame, the receiver is a sociology and computer applications double major with a 3.17 GPA, including a 3.5 in the spring of 2006. He said he is on track to graduate in May.

Anastasio said he wasn't sure if he would return for a fifth year yet — he wouldn't dedicate time to think about that until December, when Irish coach Charlie Weis said he would meet with all seniors with a fifth year of eligibility remaining.

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ALLISON AMBROSE/The Observer

Irish wide out Chase Anastasio leaps for a pass over sophomore receiver Kris Patterson during practice Aug. 31. Anastasio has three career punt plocks and three career receptions.

JOHN CARLSON

A long time coming

Irish senior tight end John Carlson's first love was basketball, and his early days as a football player had him anywhere but his current spot

Editor's note: This story first ran Nov. 3, 2006.

By KATE GALES
Associate Sports Editor

For John Carlson, life is all about balance.

He balances student life with the pressures on a Notre Dame athlete.

He balances the dual nature of a tight end — blocking and receiving.

He balances a love of both basketball and football.

He's been doing it since high school, and now, it's who he is.

"Being a student athlete, you don't have as much time or have as many opportunities to participate in dorm events but it's a trade off," he said. "I have an opportunity to do things not many people get to do so I understand that tradeoff is there and I just feel fortunate to be in this place."

Getting involved with football

Carlson still remembers putting on pads for the first time.

"When I was younger, real young — probably 5 or 6 years old — my dad was an assistant coach for a high school football team, so we had some old pads lying around the house," he said.

He and his older brother tried them on and were hooked.

"He and I used to play one-on-one tackle football in our backyard," Carlson said. "It seems a little absurd because there's only one guy on each side but we used to do it."

By seventh grade, Carlson was playing organized football. But he didn't settle in at the tight end position immediately.

"I played running back and

linebacker as a seventh grader, and a little bit of tight end," he said. "Everyone plays running back in middle school I think."

He settled into the tight end position at Litchfield (Minn.) High School. In four years, he recorded 95 catches for 1,331 yards and 23 touchdowns.

Carlson also notched 493 rushing yards with seven touchdowns on the ground.

But in high school, football wasn't Carlson's only priority. He was a standout in basketball and tennis and spent most of his time either in practice or doing homework.

Being busy prepared him for the life of a college student athlete, though.

"It's a year round thing where you have both academics and athletics and you have to make a priority to excel in both," he said. "I didn't really do anything else. After school I went to practice then I did homework then I went to bed. It might seem boring but it's what I like to do."

As a basketball player, he started at center and won the state 2-A title three times, as

well as being conference MVP as a junior and senior.

But as he moved toward college, Carlson was faced with a choice.

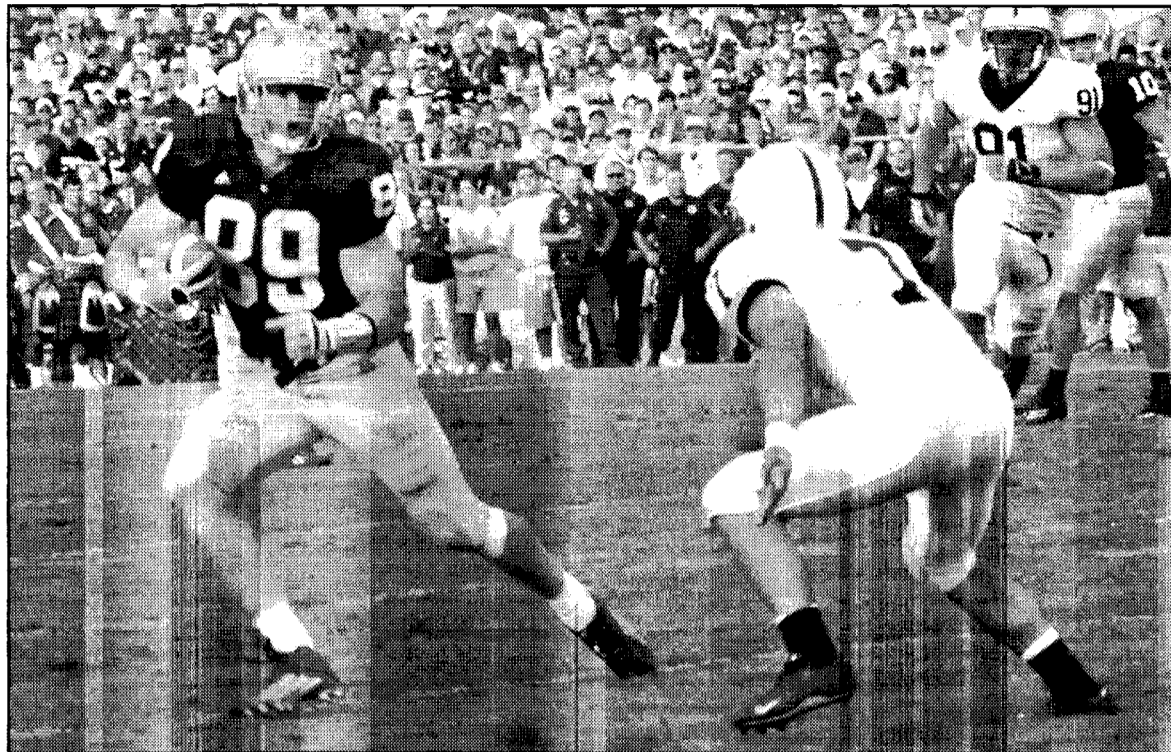
"What's not to like?"

Carlson's parents and three siblings all attended St. Cloud State

University in Minnesota (his youngest sister is still a student there). But when he visited Notre Dame, his search was over.

The decision to attend the University wasn't an easy one, though. In addition to leaving his family, he had to face the decision to prioritize football over basketball.

"Basketball was really my first love," he said. "But I knew I had a greater opportu-



KELLY HIGGINS/The Observer

Irish tight end John Carlson dashes around Penn State safety Anthony Sciroto in Notre Dame's 41-17 win Sept. 9. Carlson had four touchdowns before being sidelined with an injury.

nity to play at a higher level in football and I took a visit here and I couldn't pass the place up — what's not to like?"

He walked onto the basketball team as a freshman for a last hurrah with the sport he loved.

"It was [hard to give up]," he said. "It was a great experience. I met a lot of great people ... it was mostly practice but it was still competing and I really enjoyed it."

Not that basketball is completely out of his life. Carlson reached the semifinals of last year's Bookstore Basketball tournament, but lost to Irish quarterback Brady Quinn's team.

In addition to Bookstore Basketball, the former St. Edward's Hall resident loved dorm life.

"Dorm life is great from an athlete's perspective because you get away from your sport," he said. "We spend so many hours meeting and practicing with the same people that sometimes it gets monotonous and sometimes you have a bad day — a bad practice or something, just to go and get away from that and kind of have that as a release, I really enjoyed that experience."

Life on the end

Carlson has 529 receiving yards this season, with two touchdown catches. Irish coach Charlie Weis, a former tight ends coach with the New England Patriots under Bill Parcells in 1993-94, said that Carlson's experience on the hardwood has helped him develop into a major receiving threat for the Irish.

"I think the basketball background he had [helped]," Weis said. "I think that really helps at the tight end position. We always said in the NFL that a lot of the best tight ends are those power forwards you see playing in the NBA, a lot that have those hands. He already had potential to be a receiving tight end, it's just that he hadn't been put in that position yet and he's making the most of this opportunity."

Carlson said he felt the tight

end position was a natural fit for him.

"We have a dual role, we're blockers, we're receivers," he said.

"Every play I try to execute my assignment to the best of my ability. ... When I get beat on a blocker or drop a ball I take that pretty seriously and try to not make the same mistakes over again."

A defenses often use a

"cover-2" scheme against the Irish or are forced to cover Jeff Samardzija, Rhema McKnight and David Grimes, Quinn often finds Carlson on seam routes over the middle.

"I think a big part of [getting passes] is the guys we have on the outside," Carlson said. "You have to pay attention to Jeff and Rhema and David Grimes, and the other guys we put in there because they're dynamic athletes. They'll beat you deep if you don't cover them."

The duality of the tight end position is a constant challenge for Carlson.

"It's fun because it's kind of a mix between a wide receiver and an offensive lineman," he said.

"You take pride in blocking and providing holes for the running backs but you still get to run downfield and try to make plays."

Carlson challenges himself to be a "complete player," not just a blocking tight end or a receiving tight end.

"I'm trying to be a complete player," he said. "I'm not

there yet and I feel like I really need to improve my blocking especially. But as far as receiving goes, there's still a

"We spend so many hours meeting and practicing with the same people that sometimes it gets monotonous and sometimes you have a bad day — a bad practice or something, just to go and get away from that and kind of have that as a release, I really enjoyed that experience."

John Carlson
Irish tight end

lot of things to sharpen up on, route running, precision in route running is important."

Anthony Fasano, who graduated last year and was taken in the second round of the NFL Draft by the Dallas Cowboys, was an example of a complete

player to Carlson.

"I learned a lot from him as a player, not really by what he told me but just what he showed me on the field," Carlson said. "The intensity he played with, his physicality in blocking, the way he ran routes — I learned a lot from him as a player."

What next?

A history major, Carlson is on track to graduate in May. He has another year of eligibility left, but could join Fasano in the NFL. He's also considering graduate school, law school or teaching.

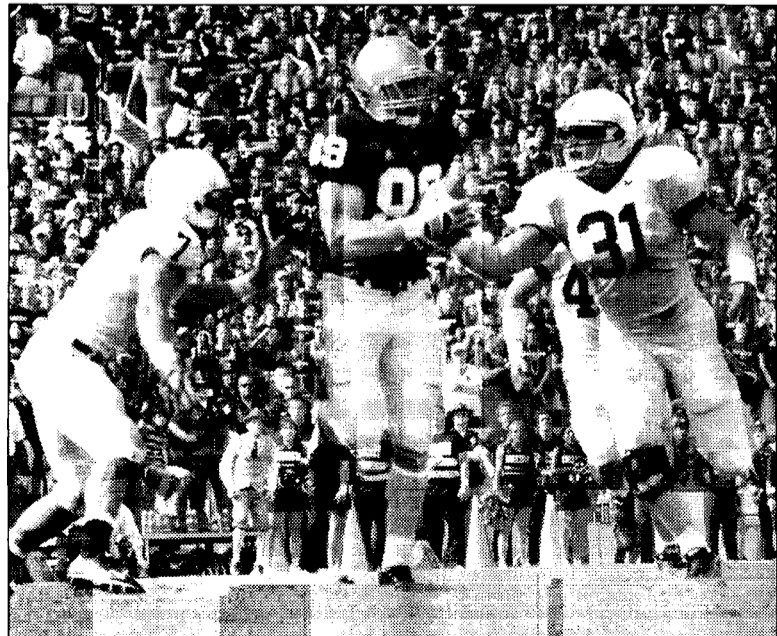
And at this moment? He's not thinking much past Saturday's matchup with

North Carolina.

"Right now I'm just focused on the season and trying to do everything I can to help this team win," he said.

That always tips the balance.

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CLEMENT SUHENDRA/The Observer

Irish senior John Carlson splits Penn State defenders Anthony Sciroto, left, and Paul Posluszny in Notre Dame's 41-17 win Sept. 9.

TRAVIS LEITKO

Leitko appreciates ND more during time away

After taking a year off, defensive lineman returns to the University with renewed vigor for athletics, academics

By BRIAN DOXTADER
Sports Writer

Travis Leitko didn't fully understand Notre Dame until he was away from it.

The 6-foot-7, 270-pound defensive tackle missed the 2005 season during a year-long hiatus, but found himself back under the dome in 2006, looking to complete his degree and finish his college football career.

"You miss things you don't realize," Leitko said. "The time off definitely allowed me to sit back, regroup and rethink about what I want and where I am."

As a dedicated student-athlete, Leitko explained how difficult it can be to balance academics with athletics, especially at a rigorous institution like Notre Dame.

"I was constantly in over-drive just trying to survive," Leitko said. "With that year off, I was able to finally take a breath and look at where I was at what I was doing and really ask myself, 'Is this what I want?'"

The answer for Leitko was yes. Upon his return, the Woodlands, Texas native hit both the field and the books harder than ever, taking on

both academic and athletic challenges with a newfound energy.

Leitko arrived at Notre Dame as a defensive end, but has since shifted to defensive tackle.

"It's been challenging, but I've enjoyed it," said Leitko. "I've been able to adjust pretty well. I'm just trying to do my best."

As a history major, Leitko has found plenty of challenges and opportunities off the field as well.

"I've always been interested in history," he said. "I love the motivations behind what has happened, what moves our society and world, and I think it's a great concentration for your life because it gives you a great base in analytical thinking and human behavior."

"I've been working hard, studying a lot, trying to finish my degree."

Yet the year off has clearly given Leitko better perspective, as he recognizes the pressure that many college students put on themselves.

"As a society in general, we're so pushed to go to college, graduate, get a real job, work, and I think a lot of people are pushed by that timetable," said Leitko. "I think it narrows your scope

of how you think, and what you do."

Leitko has tried not to be limited by such a narrow focus, working for Davidson Instruments as an engineering intern during his time at home. While he spent much of the first semester taking care of his mother and father, who were both ill, he was able to work during the spring when they both took a turn for the better. While at Davidson, he and a team of engineers received a provisional patent on a fiber-optic differential sensor, which measures flow in a variety of engineering capacities.

Leitko is also a familiar presence in Keenan Hall, where he has lived all four years.

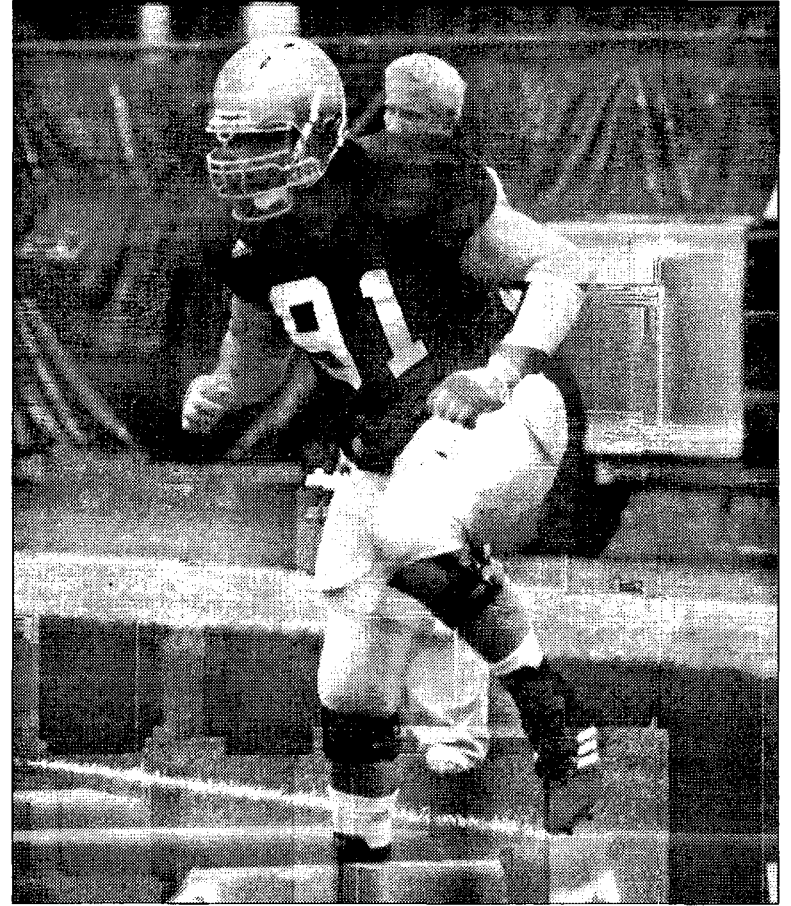
"I didn't plan it that way, but it just worked out," he said. "It's been a positive experience for me."

Leitko also stressed that he wanted to fully integrate himself into the Notre Dame student body.

"I always try to be around when I can, be a part of it," he said. "I don't just want to be a guy who sleeps there. I want to be part of the community."

Most importantly, the time away allowed Leitko to put Notre Dame in perspective and understand what makes it so special.

"I didn't really come here for the tradition," he said. "I think for me, Notre Dame was the best fit, both aca-



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Travis Leitko, who has battled personal and academic issues to return to the football team, works on a practice drill.

demically and athletically. I always challenge myself in the classroom and on the field and of the schools I was looking at, I think it best embodied that."

Yet upon his return, Leitko found a lot of what he was missing.

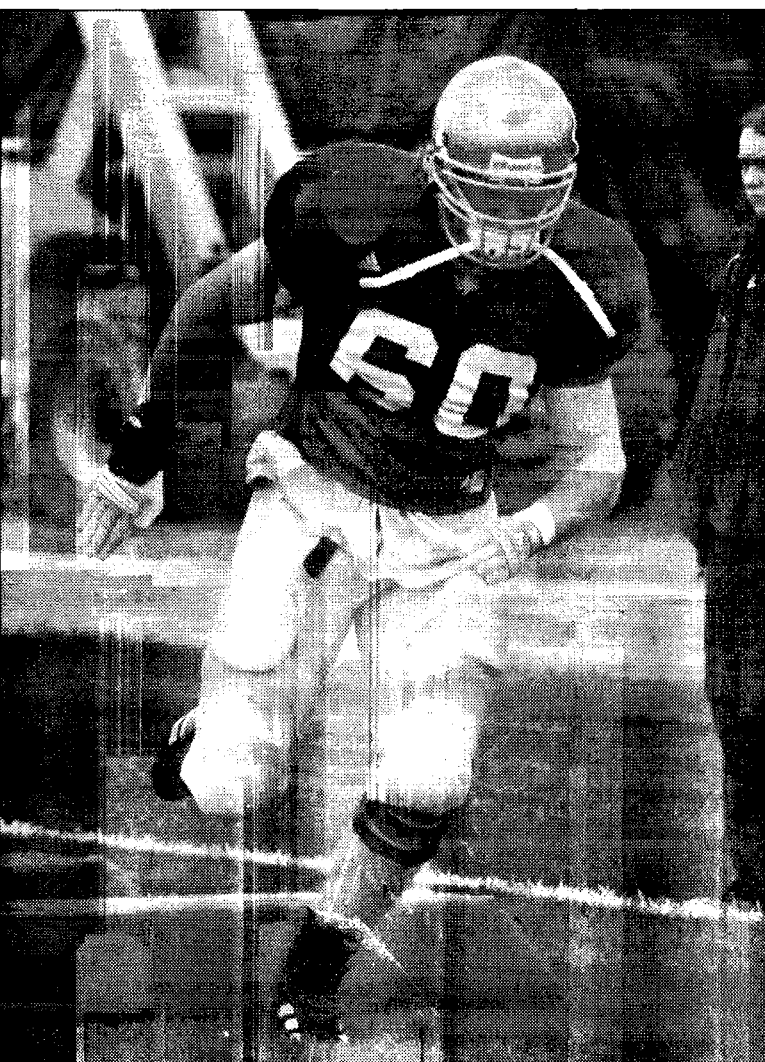
"The people are what make

Notre Dame special," he said. "I'm really glad to be back. I just want to get in there and be the best I can be, both academically and athletically."

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CASEY CULLEN

Cullen makes dream journey from Interhall to scholarship



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Casey Cullen worked his way from Interhall star to varsity scholarship player.

Hard works pays off for son of '77 grads, now off to law school

By CHRIS HINE
Sports Writer

It seems too improbable to be true.

A young football player comes to Notre Dame with dreams of suiting up in blue and gold. He spends his first semester playing Interhall football, but unlike many others, he does not abandon his dream of making the varsity squad. He keeps working, and eventually earns a spot as a walk-on.

That still does not satisfy him. He hustles everyday in practice to make himself better, earn the respect of his teammates and make the coaches take notice of him. Eventually, they do spot him, and reward the young man with an opportunity to play in every game — and a scholarship to boot.

It sounds like something out of a movie, but that is exactly what happened to senior special teams player/defensive end Casey Cullen.

"I was never really expecting the scholarship. Coach Weis told the senior walk-ons during the spring when he first got here, when I was a junior, that he was

going to offer walk-ons a scholarship," Cullen said. "I didn't know if it was going to be a senior type of deal, but I told myself, 'All right, I'm going to work as hard as I can to just show him I can play.' As I did that he gave more time to play."

Cullen comes from a family with a strong Notre Dame tradition. Both of his parents are 1977 graduates of Notre Dame and his great-grandfather, Christie Flanagan, was a two-time All-American halfback at Notre Dame in the late 1920s. He attended Saint Joseph High School in Victoria, Texas where he was named to the all-state team as a linebacker his senior year. Cullen's primary responsibility on the team is on special teams, both as a blocker on kick returns and a tackler on kickoffs.

"On special teams, there's a definite rush and there's not nearly as much responsibility. It's just use your athleticism and make a play," Cullen said. "It is a lot of fun because you get to hit a lot of people. It's my way of contributing to the team so I like it."

His first taste of action — and the highlight of his career — came against Pittsburgh in the opening game of the 2005 season, when Cullen dressed for the first time, and forced a fumble.

"Coming out of the tunnel and knowing I was going to be on the field at the very beginning whether it was kickoff or kick

return, I was going to be the first guy on the field, Cullen said. "Coming out of that tunnel their students were right on top of us, and coming out there for that opening kickoff was great."

His performance against Pittsburgh earned Cullen the title of special teams captain for the next game at Michigan. The two opening games of the 2005 season were the culmination of years of hard work and dedication that led to the realization of Cullen's dream of playing Notre Dame football.

"It was intimidating making the team at first because these guys didn't know who I was or if I could play football. It was just you had to prove yourself everyday, earn a little respect everyday. It wasn't until Coach Weis got here that I really got to make a contribution," Cullen said. "My grandfather, Dick Cullen, and my parents have been a big inspiration for me ever since I was little. They've always been there for me, always there to talk to me and be real with me."

After school, Cullen plans on following in his father and grandfather's footsteps and going on to law school.

"They've led me in the right direction so far," he said. "So I look to them and do what they do."

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DEREK LANDRI

Making his presence felt

Irish senior Derek Landri has key role in Notre Dame's defense, strong love for his community

Editor's note: This story first ran on Nov. 10, 2006.

By BOB GRIFFIN
Sports Writer

Derek Landri's journey through Notre Dame — athletically and socially — hasn't exactly followed the classic pattern for a highly touted recruit out of California high school powerhouse De La Salle.

On the outside, he's a fierce defensive lineman who blocked two extra points in Notre Dame's 45-26 win against North Carolina. He is third on the team with 44 tackles this season (8.5 for a loss) and second in sacks with four.

He teams with senior defensive tackle Trevor Laws (39 sacks, 3.5 to anchor an interior line that has been a leading force on the Irish defense all season.

If one looks deeper into Landri, they encounter an individual who has dealt with more on the football field than most college players. He's seen four coaches in five years, and while it's a reality that Landri shrugs off — he acknowledges the "roller-coaster" type atmosphere it created.

Landri was recruited by Bob Davie before coming in as a freshman in 2002. While he was a senior in high school, Davie was fired and George O'Leary was brought in. Landri remembers what it was like when O'Leary was hired to right the ship.

"[There was] a big uncertainty pretty much every year I was here," Landri said. "Starting with Davie, you commit to him and then half way through that year he gets canned. Then O'Leary comes in and everyone hypes him up that he's supposed to be the best thing, then he gets canned."

Of course, after O'Leary was fired, Notre Dame brought in Tyrone Willingham — who Landri knew little about other than that he had a few "up and down" seasons at Stanford.

Willingham's first season — the infamous Return to Glory campaign — was Landri's freshman year, even though he didn't see the field. And after Willingham went 11-13 in the following two seasons, Landri again found himself in a familiar position adjusting to a new coach.

But, as Landri would attest, everything works out for the best.

"I'm happy as anything that they got coach Weis and he's in here now," Landri said. "I feel that I'm here at Notre Dame at the perfect time."

But there's a lot about Landri that one wouldn't

know by watching him on the field, or considering the coaching changes he's seen during his time at Notre Dame.

And that's the Derek Landri who has weaved his way through the University in a manner unlike his peers, classmates and teammates, creating for himself a unique college experience that, while focused on football, extends much deeper.

The doctor and the landscaper

Coming east from the West Coast beaches he used to surf with his father in Huntington, Calif., the senior defensive tackle was immediately thrust into a 10-by-12 foot Dillon Hall dorm room.

While Landri credits the dorm life for allowing him to

meet some close friends, it wasn't the type of atmosphere he preferred. He and close friend Anthony Salvador, who graduated in 2006, explored the relatively secluded campus.

The two played at De La Salle together, and came to

Notre Dame as freshmen — Landri the big-time recruit and Salvador the little-known walk on.

But once Landri grew tired of the Notre Dame bubble, he looked elsewhere. And in the process, he met two friends.

South Bend residents Arnold Delpilar and Mike Oliva are not Notre Dame students. In fact, they aren't doctors at all — one's a doctor and one's a landscaper.

Landri met Oliva — the landscaper — at Armando's, an Italian barbershop located on 1639 Edison Road in South Bend.

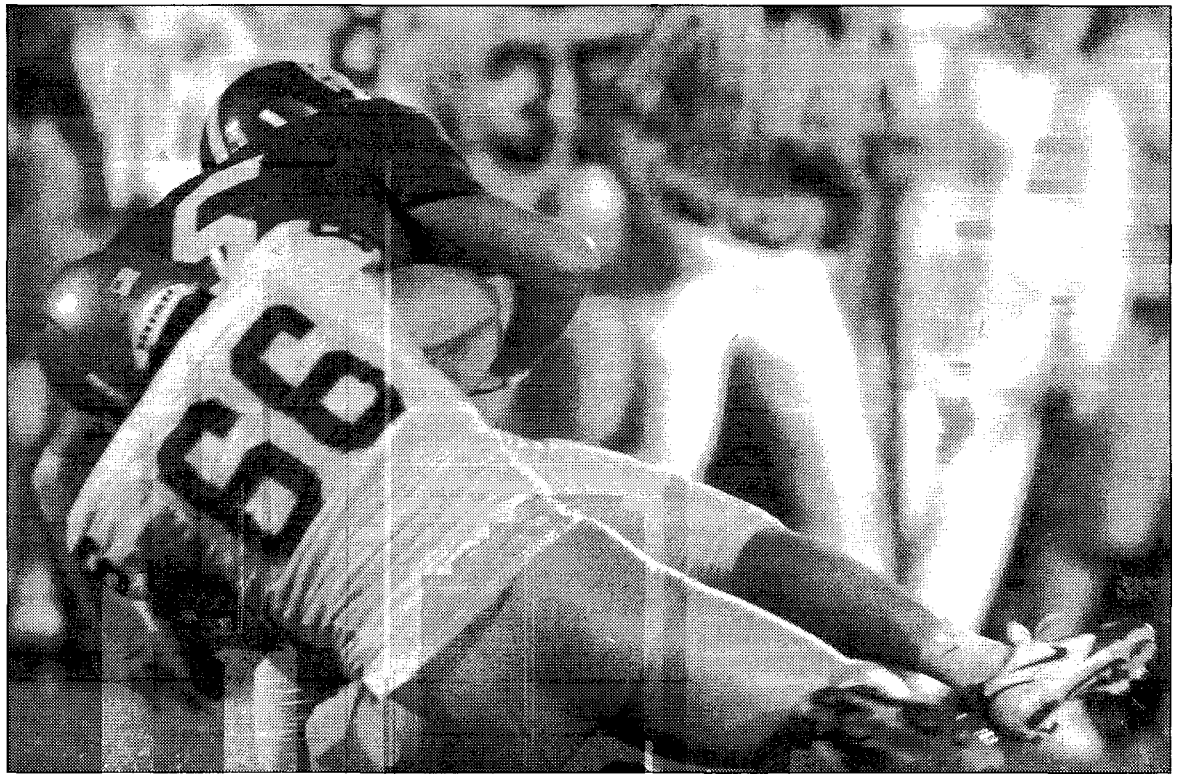
"I formed a good relationship with different people — the Delpilar family, the Oliva family — a couple families that are just in the community that aren't necessarily affiliated with Notre Dame," Landri said. "They kind of made it a home away from home type of thing."

Oliva believes the initial meeting occurred during Landri's junior season. He's not exactly positive when it happened, but knows it was several years ago. The two shared a barber, Dominic, and began talking.

"When he came into the area he was a little bit lonely ... he came to find the Italians so he went to the local barber shop," Oliva said. "We hit it off pretty good and became friends."

Oliva's sister Mary is married to Delpilar — a local doctor who has an office on Ironwood Road and is opening a new center in Mishawaka.

The families welcomed Landri — they all share an Italian descent — and have maintained a relationship



FRANCESCA SETA/The Observer

Defensive tackle Derek Landri sacks Michigan State quarterback Drew Stanton in Notre Dame's 40-37 win in East Lansing on Sept. 23.

ever since. Oliva said he waits outside Notre Dame Stadium for Landri after games to offer congratulations.

"On the outside he's a normal guy, when he's on the field he's an animal," Oliva said. "He's an outstanding individual."

So what do his teammates think of his friends outside the Notre Dame community? Fellow defensive tackle Trevor Laws couldn't help but laugh when discussing Landri's buddies in the South Bend area.

"He definitely has that Italian connection," Laws said with a smile. "He knows a lot of people I don't know. He's an interesting guy for sure."

California upbringing

But while Landri spent time during college embracing his Italian roots with doctors, landscapers and barbers, he's much better known for being the kid from California who is usually mentioned alongside Laws.

Landri isn't sure exactly how he developed that reputation, seeing that he doesn't subscribe to the traditional laid-back California mentality.

But he is an avid surfer.

"You definitely have to have balance [if you're a big guy surfing]," Landri said with a slight smile. "I mostly did long boarding and stuff, but I don't talk like most [of] the people out there with the 'yo cool dude.'"

"I don't skateboard, I don't rollerblade — I don't do that stuff."

In that sense, he didn't fit the "surfer boy" image. Especially given the company he had in his incoming freshman class.

"I never really got the West Coast thing until I came out here and people started putting me in the category with

[Chris] Frome and [Anthony] Vernaglia, the surfer type wearing shades," Landri said. "But I don't think I fit in the category with those two."

While Landri debates his reputation as a surfer-dude from California, there's no question he excelled on the football field at one of the top programs in the country — De La Salle.

The high school has produced numerous NFL players including New York Giants receiver Amani Toomer and, more recently, Jacksonville Jaguars running back Maurice Jones-Drew — a good friend of Landri's from their high school playing days (Jones-Drew was a year behind Landri).

While at De La Salle, Landri established himself as one of the top players in the school's history. As a senior, he won California Player of the Year — joining Toomer and D.J. Williams as the only players in school history to receive that acknowledgement.

He was also a first-team USA Today prep All-American that year, and the No. 5 overall high school prospect according to Cnnsi.com. But despite his high school reputation and his personal accomplishments, Landri felt little pressure coming into college.

"Pressure's what you put on yourself," Landri said. "The majority of kids that come in here are real hyped up, All League, All State, All American, that type of thing. I think you just come here to play ball the best of your abil-

ity and whatever happens, happens."

And there's nothing more that Landri would want than to join his old high school teammate playing professional football next year.

"Hopefully playing for a while, that's a dream, I'm sure it's a dream for a lot of people but hopefully I'm playing for a while," he said. "Where, it doesn't really matter — I just enjoy playing football."

Finding his place

Landri has three regular season games left in his Notre Dame career, and if the Irish win all three, they will most likely be headed to the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans provided a near-miracle doesn't propel them into the BCS Championship game.

But Landri isn't the type who's concerned with where the team ranks in certain polls or how the group is perceived by TV commentators. In fact, Landri — a sports fan growing up — doesn't watch much ESPN anymore at all.

"I don't think too fondly of people that comment on that we're overrated and we don't have a defense and that type of thing," Landri said. "Growing up a sports kid, ESPN's one of your favorite shows. But you almost grow to dislike it. But I think that's just the way life is, the way the world is."

"I don't watch it nearly as much as I used to because I don't want to listen to someone who doesn't know too much about the in and outs."

But Landri doesn't need the support of those on television who criticize his team.

The lonely kid walking into the barbershop a few short years ago now has his own company: a few nice local Italians, those friendly waves back home in California and the overmatched offensive linemen he encounters every Saturday.

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AMBROSE WOODEN

Versatile cornerback sees football as 'ticket'

Defensive back describes friendships with teammates but remains 'haunted' by big play against USC last season

By KATE GALES
Associate Sports Editor

In his career as a football player, Ambrose Wooden has played center, offensive lineman, running back, tight end, receiver, cornerback and safety.

During his freshman year, he redshirted as a wide receiver. By his junior season, Wooden started at cornerback.

He said it's the hardest position he's every played.

"It's exciting, you can never take a play off," he said. "You make one play, one wrong step and you can give up a touchdown. It helps you grow as a person because you deal with so much adversity, you get beat everyone sees it, where as a lineman, if you get beat no one sees it."

Wooden came into the 2006 season with 79 career tackles, after being third on the team in 2005 with 74. He also has had two interceptions and one fumble recovery.

But after a knee injury earlier this season the former starter has played as a nickelback and third corner behind Terrail Lambert.

He's remained positive and plans to come back for a fifth year. Wooden is a self-described "happy guy," but

takes what happens on the field seriously.

"I gave up a big play last year and that still haunts me," he said, referring to a fourth-and-nine play against then-No. 1 USC on Oct. 15, 2005. "You've just got to grow."

Wooden has played football since he was five, when he joined a Pop Warner team.

"I just enjoyed watching it, my brother was a football player, and I just started loving it," he said. "It's been my ticket throughout my life to get me here. I've used that to get the best education possible."

The combination of education and athletics drew him to Notre Dame. He vividly recalls his visit, with current teammates Victor Abiamiri, Tom Zbikowski and Chinedum Ndukwe.

"We just had an awesome time," he said. "It was a great experience ... the whole family atmosphere I felt when I came here, my mom loves it. My parents are all about the education and the football and you get them both here."

Ndukwe and Zbikowski, his companions on the secondary, would eventually become some of his closest friends.

"Sometimes I get playful, I like to mess around," he said. "[Ndukwe is] the comic of the group, he can say one thing

and everyone's laughing. It's funny, but as a whole, we know each other really well, we hang out, no one's really vocal, I look at the other three guys and Terrail and the rest of the guys and you know exactly what they're thinking. You can look in each other's eyes and you spend so much time together. ... You build relationships."

Wooden, a former resident of Stanford and Dillon Halls, is looking forward to finishing the requirements of his finance major, which he said has helped him grow as a person.

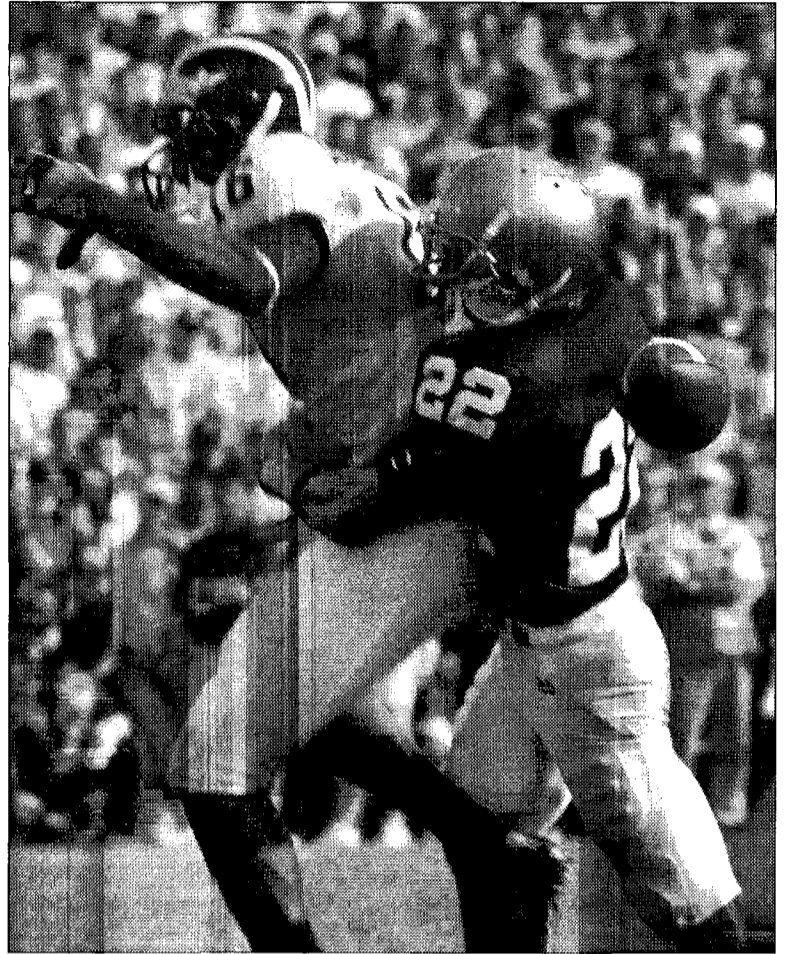
He knows who he is, and the notoriety of the Notre Dame football program hasn't fazed him.

"It's exciting to be within the whole thing right now, it's always been," he said. "But you've just got to go out and be yourself. Day in and day out, I like to smile a lot, I'm a happy kid. You see me on Saturday, I'm a happy kid."

Wooden said he will likely return for a fifth year, giving him a shot to earn back a starting position and another season's worth of games at Notre Dame Stadium.

He looks forward to winning more games — his favorite part of football.

"Every game day, win or lose — the wins are definitely the best part," he said.



LAURIE HUNT/The Observer

Ambrose Wooden, right, tackles Michigan's Adrian Arrington Sept. 16 in a 47-21 loss at Notre Dame Stadium.

"Being in the locker room after and singing the fight song with your teammates, just that atmosphere in the locker room after a game.

You can't trade that for anything."

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ASHLEY MCCONNELL

Fullback's college experience was difficult transition

Small-town native has learned to balance both football and academics

By MICHAEL BRYAN
Sports Writer

It's been quite a journey for Ashley McConnell, from a high school athletic star in tiny Adairsville, Ga. — with a favorite sport of basketball — to starting in the national spotlight as a fullback at Notre Dame.

At Adairsville High, McConnell was a three-sport letterman in football, basketball, and track and field. Team captain of the football squad as a junior and senior, he rushed for 485 yards and seven touchdowns his senior season, helping his team to an 8-2-1 record. He earned all-area and all-league honors at fullback, and also recorded 65 tackles and two interceptions playing inside linebacker.

Despite his success on the football field, McConnell's first love was basketball, and when the recruiting letters started flooding in for football, he was shocked.

"Some guys, I guess, complain about the hassle of getting recruited, and people always calling you," McConnell said. "I guess it was never that way for me. I

loved every minute of it."

After former Irish coach Tyrone Willingham called, however, there was little decision to be made.

"Ever since I got that first letter, there was only one college for me," McConnell said. "When I got my offer [from Notre Dame] it was a dream come true, I was smiling from ear to ear."

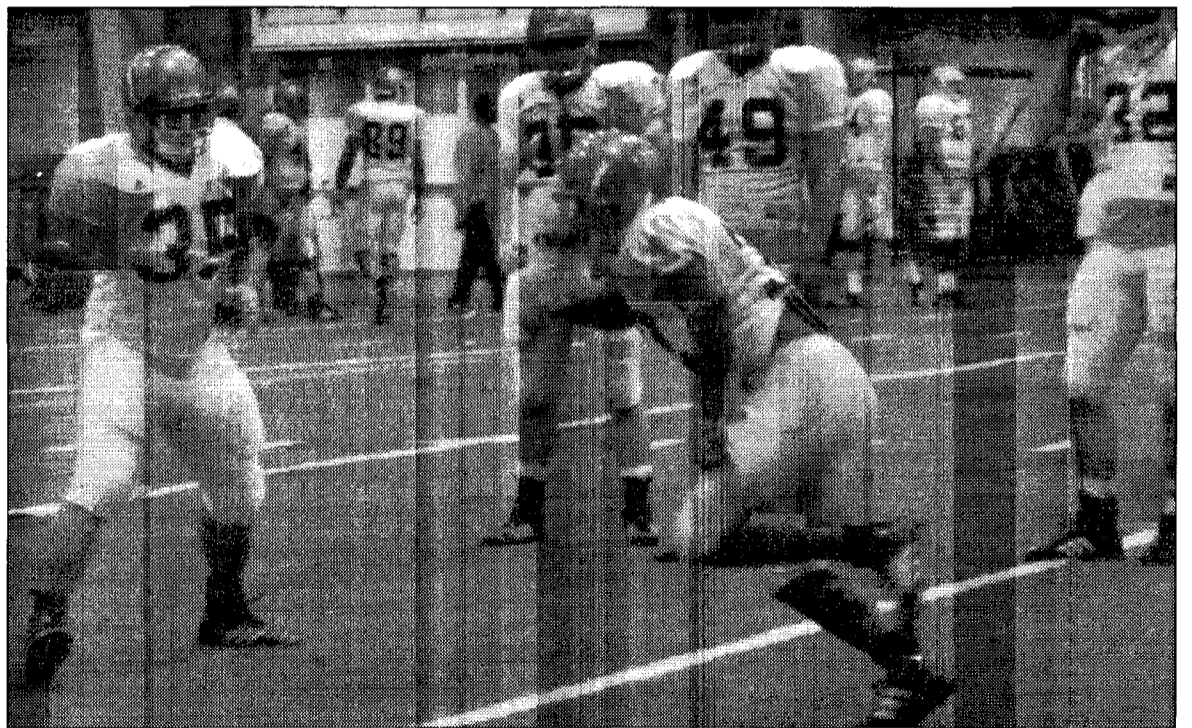
One of McConnell's biggest challenges of his Notre Dame career wasn't blocking towering linebackers, but adjusting to college life.

"I came from a one-stop-light town where you knew everyone to a pretty big college, and it was a big change," McConnell said. "I had to learn how to juggle school and football and take advantage of my free time, and it was definitely a challenge."

His freshman year, McConnell did not see any action at fullback. He worked mostly on the practice squad at fullback and with special teams. His sophomore season was lost to suspension for an undisclosed violation.

McConnell received a second chance, and rejoined the team after the suspension for his junior year. The player who returned, however, was different than the one who left.

"While I was gone I realized everything I had taken for granted, and how good I



KATE FENLON/The Observer

Ashley McConnell, left, practices with teammates. The fullback recorded his first touchdown this season in a 47-21 loss to Michigan Sept. 16.

had it here," McConnell said. "I felt blessed to be back—you're not guaranteed a second chance. I felt privileged to get to play again, and privileged just to be able to go to class."

He saw his first offensive action on the field his junior year, entering three games at fullback.

"Everyone just wants to do their part, and I'd be happy just to play on special teams," McConnell said. "But

to get in the first game against Purdue, that was a special moment."

McConnell has emerged as a solid starter this season after starter had knee surgery earlier this season.

One of the most rewarding moments of McConnell's career, he said, was the 8-yard touchdown catch he caught in Notre Dame's 47-21 loss.

"It was unfortunate that it came in a loss, but it was a

blessing and a special moment for my family and hometown," McConnell said.

A graphic design and computer applications major, McConnell looks forward to graduation and finding a steady job.

He is also looking into internship opportunities in the graphic design field.

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JEFF SAMARDZIJA

Two-sport star

Jeff Samardzija excels in the end zone and on the pitcher's mound for Notre Dame

Editor's note: This story first ran on Sept. 23, 2005.

By HEATHER VAN HOEGARDEN
Sports Writer

Jeff Samardzija was just waiting for an opportunity.

The opportunity to catch a pass in the end zone.

The opportunity to play two sports in college.

And now that he's finally caught not just one, but five touchdown passes, after not finding the end zone for two years, and now that he is a key member of the Notre Dame baseball team as well, he's just looking for more opportunities.

"If they were going to throw the ball my way five times in the end zone [I would have expected to have five touchdown receptions]," the junior wide receiver said. "You've got to think you're going to make those five catches. It's just a matter of personnel and being in the right place at the right time, and then just taking advantage of the opportunity."

A slow start in the fall

Samardzija came into Notre Dame as a highly touted recruit from nearby Valparaiso High School after excelling in football, basketball and baseball. Samardzija never missed a start in his four years.

He was an all-state center-fielder in baseball, he finished second in the voting for Mr. Football in Indiana and he was named the top receiver in the state of Indiana.

However, his freshman year at Notre Dame, he was hidden behind then-sophomores

Rhema McKnight and Maurice Stovall as well as then-senior Omar Jenkins. Samardzija played in all 12 games but caught just seven passes for 53 yards.

Last year, although he emerged as quarterback Brady Quinn's go-to receiver on many third down conversions, he was still a quiet player for the Irish, catching 17 passes for 274 yards on the season, but still no touchdowns.

"If you're a receiver, just throwing the ball your way [is what helps you succeed]," the 6-foot-5, 216-pounder said. "I guess that's all it comes down to is getting the opportunity to make plays, and when you do get those opportunities, just to come through and make the plays to keep the confidence going within the team."

But he didn't have that opportunity — that is, until this season.

This year Samardzija has caught 13 passes in just three games, including five touchdowns, three against Michigan State, and at least one in every game, tying a school record.

Irish coach Charlie Weis attributes these numbers to not only throwing the ball more, but Samardzija's skills as well.

"You would expect receivers to have big numbers when you throw it 60 times," Weis said. "I think that Jeff's a very dependable, reliable receiver with great hands and good ball skills. He's been the recipient of being open. We don't ever design plays just to go to a guy. We try to throw it to the guy that's open based off of coverage and progression. He's been the recipient of being in the right place at

the right time."

Stovall wasn't surprised to see his counterpart put up big numbers thus far this season.

"It doesn't surprise me at all," Stovall said. "I know the ability that Jeff has. The things that you see in the game are the things he does in practice, so it wasn't a surprise to us at all."

Samardzija says he's just getting more opportunities to have the ball than he was in the past — there's nothing more to it.

"I don't think there's too much of a difference," Samardzija said of this year and previous years. "It's just getting the opportunity to [make a play]. If you're in the right area and the ball's coming your way — I think last year there were a couple chances I may have let slip away and I didn't make the plays, and I think this year maybe I made a play or two early that gave the coaches confidence to put me out there in different situations."

The 'other' sport

When Irish baseball coach Paul Mainieri read an article that said new Notre Dame football recruit Jeff Samardzija wanted to play college baseball if he could, he immediately talked to then-coach Tyrone Willingham, and he said it was alright to look into the possibility of him playing baseball as well.

"So I started asking some professional scouts about him, and they said they'd seen him play, and he's not bad," Mainieri said.

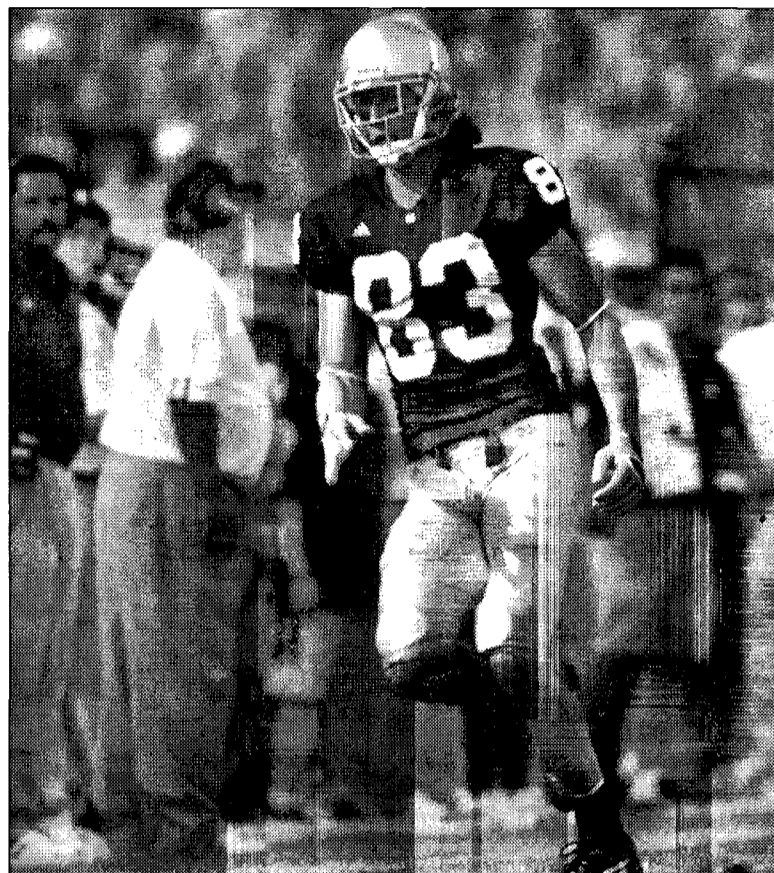
So Mainieri sent his pitching coach at the time to watch Samardzija. And after scouting him, Mainieri called him to ask him if he wanted to play baseball for the Irish.

And with Willingham's blessing, Samardzija became a two-sport athlete. Mainieri said now he and Weis have also come to an agreement to let the pitcher/wide receiver play both sports.

"Charlie's been great as far as supporting Jeff," Mainieri said of Weis, who he said attended one or two of the games in which Samardzija played.

As far as Samardzija, he is just glad he got the opportunity to play both college baseball and football.

"It kind of just worked out for me," Samardzija said. "There were some places who said I could do both, and there were other places that said I couldn't, so that had a little bit to do with [what school I went to], but it's kind of nice that it just worked



CLAIRE KELLEY/The Observer

In 2005, Samardzija earned All-America honors and signed a professional baseball contract with the Chicago Cubs.

out."

And so Samardzija has become a force on the diamond as well. As a freshman, he earned freshman All-American honors after posting a 2.95 ERA, the second-best among Big East pitchers. Last spring, Samardzija posted a 3.89 ERA with a record of 8-1 in 15 appearances and ten starts.

"One of Jeff's most successful traits is that he's a competitor," said Irish assistant Terry Rooney, who works with pitchers. "He's a competitor both on and off the field. I think that's what makes him so successful in both baseball and football. He knows how to

compete, he loves to compete, and he plays both sports with a tremendous amount of confidence."

But it goes beyond just baseball and football. Both Mainieri and Rooney emphasized Samardzija's importance as a person to Notre Dame.

"Jeff Samardzija is one of those guys you don't see very often," Mainieri said. "He has such a competitive side to him, I don't care what sport he's playing or what he's involved in, he wants to win so badly."

Rooney echoed Mainieri's comments.

"He's an extremely likable, coachable young man," Rooney said. "He's someone that all of us here in the baseball program have grown extremely fond of."

And both coaches said they think Samardzija could play

baseball at the next level.

"I think he's got potential," Mainieri said. "There's no question in my mind when he's out on the mound that he looks like a Major League pitcher."

Balancing act

Although these two sports keep Samardzija plenty busy, he has not had to miss a spring football practice due to his baseball commitment. His days, however, are scheduled to the fullest, balancing sports as well as a marketing major.

"I think balancing, it just comes down to time management," he said. "I think my schedule's pretty much down to the half hour. A lot of it comes down to just before it happens, be ready to go to whatever that day's calling for."

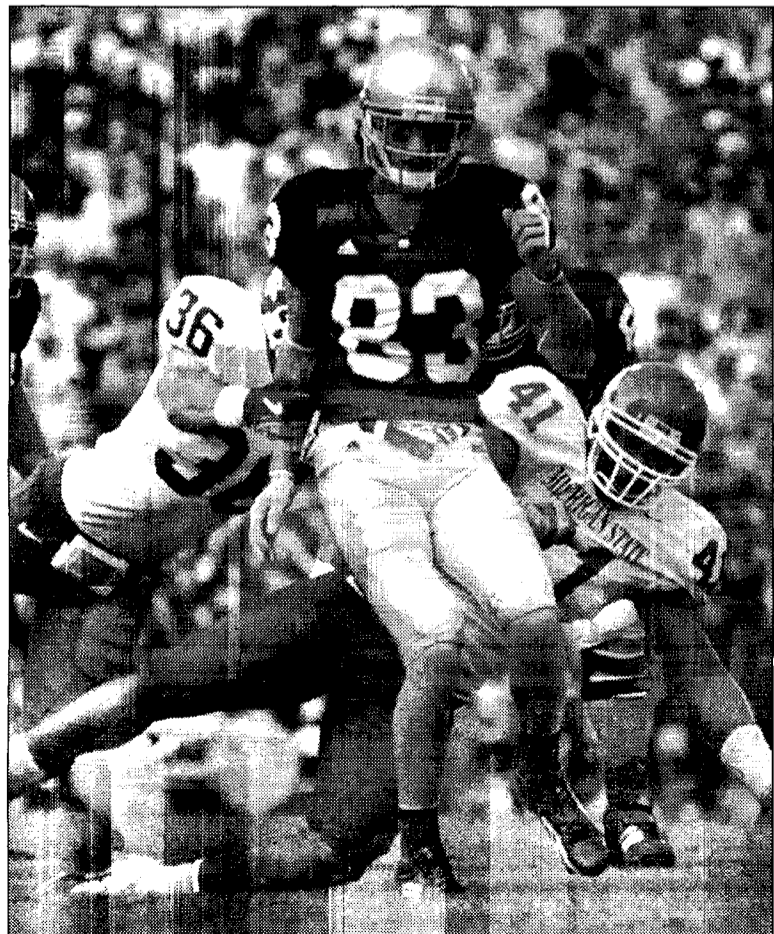
Rooney said he is impressed with the way Samardzija is able to balance all of his commitments.

"It's a real credit to Jeff for the self discipline and the time management skills that he has," Rooney said. "Obviously he has a challenging schedule for both sports, but it's a credit to Jeff and the way he goes about his business. He's a very determined guy. He has a very structured routine that he does every day."

But even with all the scheduling, Samardzija sometimes finds that 24 hours is not enough to fit everything in a day.

"Sometimes there's not enough time in the day to do everything you want," he said. "Just getting it all in is pretty tough sometimes."

And what's his best sport? "Whatever he's playing," Mainieri said.



CLAIRE KELLEY/The Observer

Notre Dame receiver Jeff Samardzija, center, is grabbed by Michigan State safety Eric Smith, left, and linebacker David Herron Jr. in the Spartans' upset victory in 2005.

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TRAVIS THOMAS

A tale of two talents

Special teams captain adjusts to position change in his senior year and becomes a vocal leader in the process

By KEN FOWLER
Sports Editor

For three years, Travis Thomas usually was on the bench when the Irish offense had the ball. As a senior, that's still the case. But almost everything else is different.

As special teams captain in 2006, Thomas is the least glorified and least scrutinized of Notre Dame's three official leaders — Brady Quinn represents the offense and Tom Zbikowski heads the defense. But even though he's not the one usually projected onto television sets, Thomas is the most vocal of the three, a role he had to get used to.

"I find myself being more vocal, especially being on the defensive side," Thomas said. "There's a lot of help from Zibby obviously, but I just feel real comfortable with that."

Thomas has had to work hard to become a good linebacker and a vocal leader, but he said that's something with which he's accustomed.

After earning two-time conference MVP honors in high school and totaling 18 rushing touchdowns as a senior, Thomas didn't see the field as a freshman. He finally played — and started — in the first game of his sophomore season, but it was a tough one. He had six carries and as many fumbles — two — as yards. He carried only 19 more times that season as Darius Walker and Ryan Grant picked up the bulk of the attempts.

A gifted athlete with good size, he more than doubled his carries in 2005, but Irish

coach Charlie Weis felt 63 rushes was not good enough for "one of the 22 best players on the team."

So the 6-foot, 215-pound product of Washington, Pa., about 20 miles southwest of Pittsburgh, went from a spot-carry, change-of-pace running back to a speedy linebacker in one off-season.

"Whenever I got my opportunity I tried to shine," Thomas said. "I think it was noticed, and I think it was a good decision for everyone to come together and make the choice and move me to the other side. I think it was a good thought on Coach Weis' part. I just think it was a good decision overall."

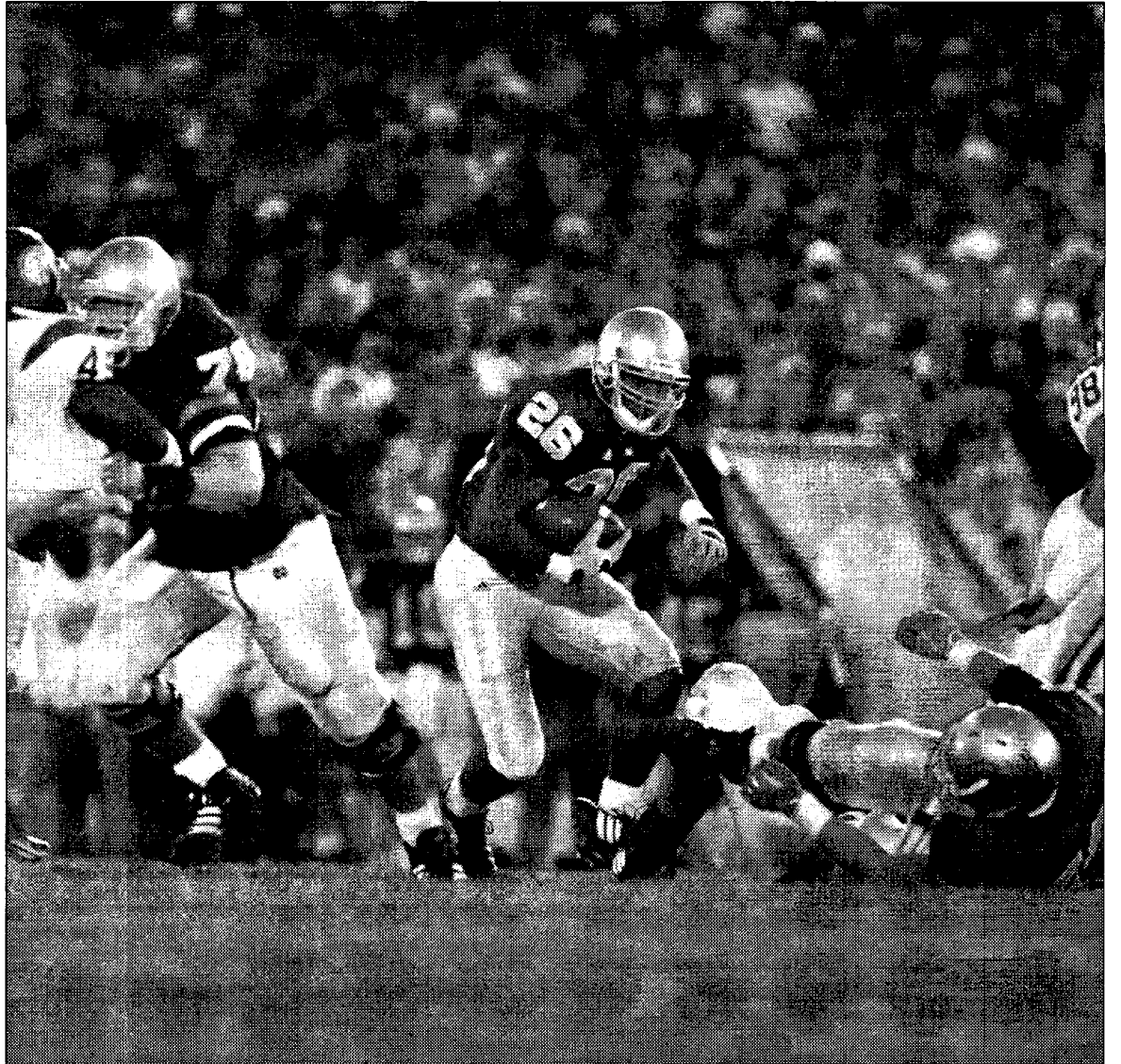
As a senior, Thomas has started eight of Notre Dame's 10 games, sitting two out after injuring his ribs on the final play of the 40-37 Irish win over Michigan State

Sept. 23.

When Notre Dame recruits ask Thomas about his emergence, he has a simple message for them.

"I just try to let them know that you're going to have to work for everything you earn here," he said. "You're going to have to earn everything. Nothing is going to be given to you. Every game is a championship game for the people you play against, and academics are tough, so if this is what you're really looking for, then you're going to get it."

One of the things Thomas has gotten out of his time at Notre Dame has been his relationship with his newfound mates in the linebacker corps. Thomas said he and fellow senior Joe Brockington, an outside line-



Observer File Photo

Irish running back Travis Thomas finds a hole against USC at Notre Dame Stadium Oct. 15, 2005. Thomas had 18 rushes for 58 yards and a touchdown during the 34-31 loss to the Trojans.

backer from Palmyra, Pa., developed a good relationship when they first arrived at Notre Dame "just because we're from Pennsylvania."

Off the field, Thomas is a consulting major in the Mendoza College of Business. He said most of his work deals with problem-solving in discussion groups.

"Things are going real well in the classroom," he said.

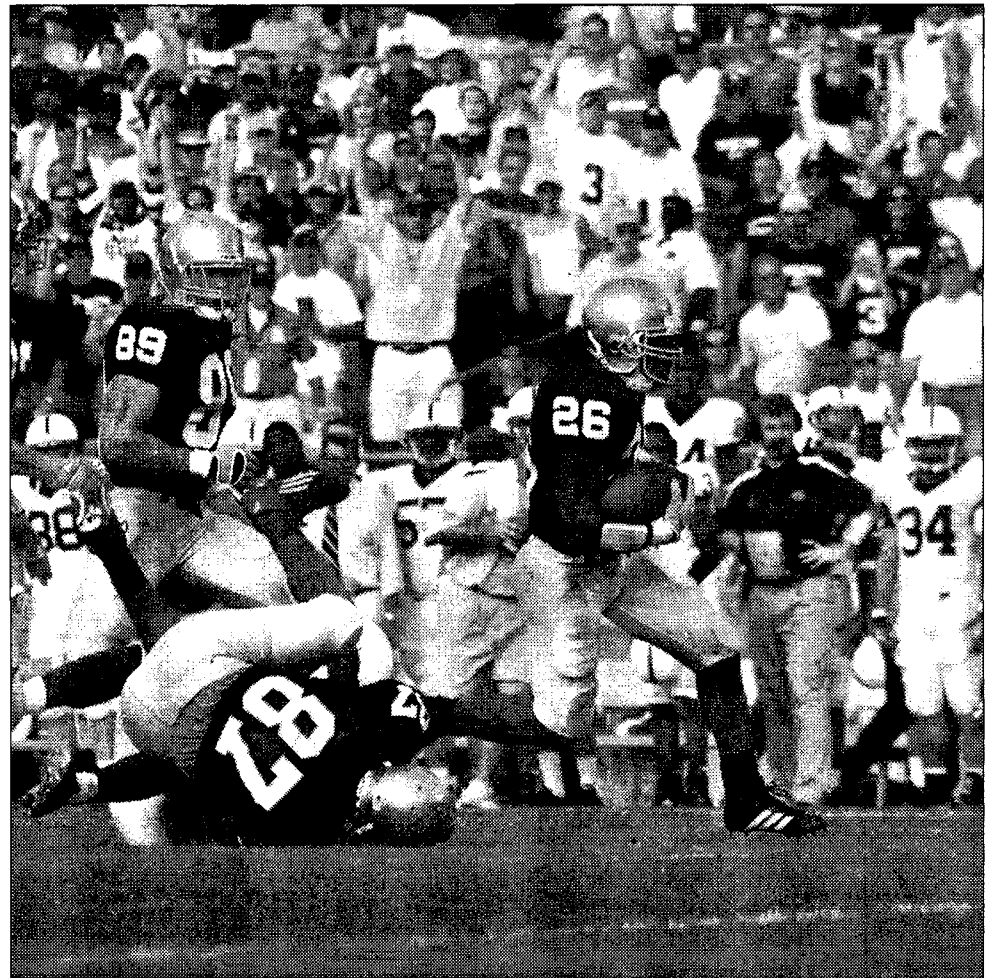
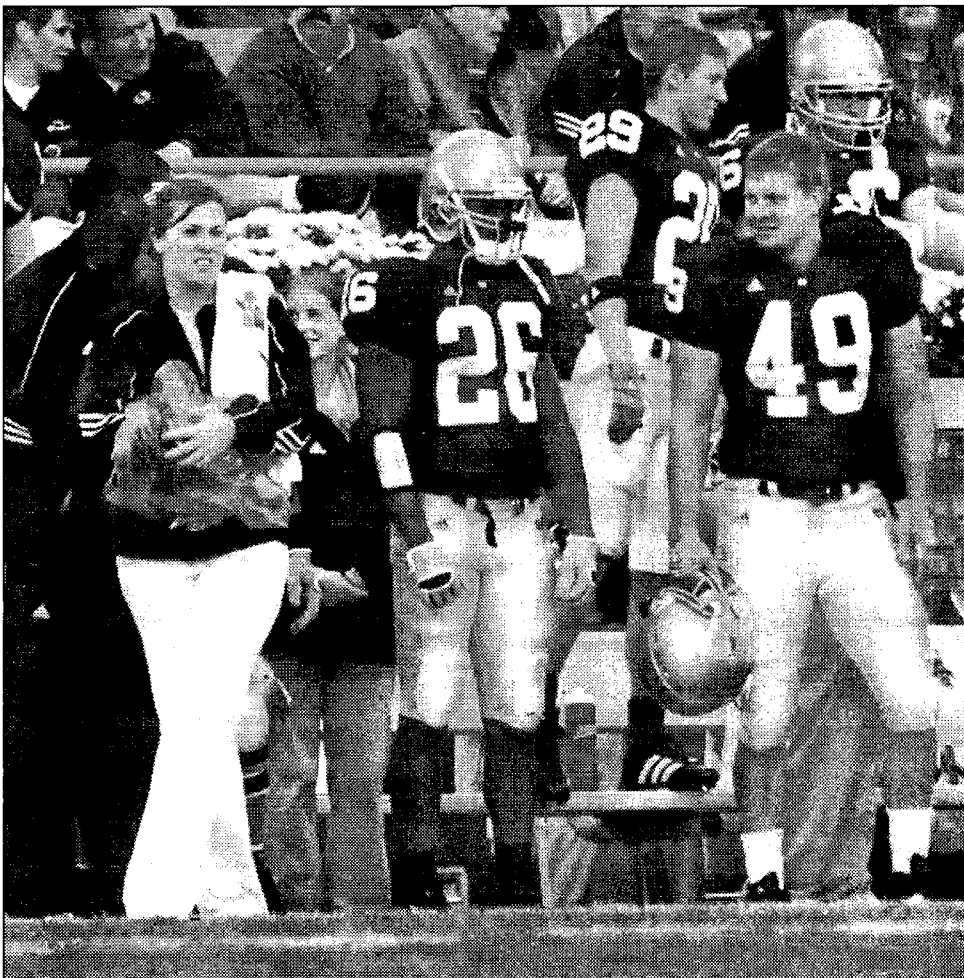
"Senior year is probably the easiest semester I've had so far."

But Thomas has dreams of playing on Sundays before he goes pro in something other than sports. Having played offense, defense and special teams, Thomas just wants to get to the NFL, no matter the role.

"Special teams has been a niche of mine, so maybe at

the next level I'm obviously going to have a role there," Thomas said. "You know, the object is just to get there. So the fifth year, like I said, that's going to take care of itself once the season ends. Coach [Weis] and I will meet, but it's not a concern of mine right now."

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KELLY HIGGINS/The Observer

Left, senior linebacker and running back Travis Thomas waits on the sideline with his helmet on to get in the game. Right, Thomas breaks open a 43-yard run Sept. 9 against Penn State at Notre Dame Stadium. Thomas had 44 yards on three rushes with a one-yard touchdown run against the Nittany Lions.

MIKE RICHARDSON

Cornerback has two different personalities

Richardson says his favorite moment was crowd noise vs. USC

By KATE GALES
Associate Sports Editor

On the field, he's a hard-hitting cornerback.

Off the field, he's a self-described "nice guy" with an inexplicable fear of large spiders.

Cornerback Mike Richardson has seen a lot in his five years at Notre Dame, and he's wiser for it.

Richardson was recruited at Stanford by former coach Tyrone Willingham. When Willingham accepted the coaching job at Notre Dame, Richardson took a visit to Notre Dame.

"I ended up liking it, deciding that that's where I needed to be," Richardson said.

He had been playing organized football since he was nine.

"I used to play backyard football with my friends from school," he said. "They were all playing organized football and they were like, 'You should come out and play.' So I went out and joined the team and I actually turned out to be pretty good."

He started playing at running back and safety. With the Irish, he sat out his freshman year as a rookie cornerback, and played primarily on special teams as a sophomore.

As a junior, Richardson started

five games. That season, he had 33 tackles, one interception, forced three fumbles and was credited with three broken passes.

Then there was a coaching change, as current Irish coach Charlie Weis replaced Willingham.

"It was tough losing some of the people that brought me in," Richardson said. "But I knew of Coach Weis, I knew of his reputation, and he came with a great staff. He was very positive about it."

Last season, as a senior, Richardson was sixth on the team with 55 tackles and started all 12 games. He also had a crucial interception in Notre Dame's loss to USC on Oct. 15, 2005, ending a potential Trojans scoring drive in the third quarter. That game remains one of Richardson's most vivid memories.

"The USC game last year was crazy," he said. "Just being on the field it seemed like it was the loudest the stadium's ever been. Towards the end, my heart was beating out of my chest, it was crazy. That was the best feeling I ever had, even though we lost."

So far in 2006, Richardson has 40 tackles, five for a loss, and

has been credited with five pass break ups and one quarterback hurry. He said he's developed by becoming more vocal.

"It helps with communication in the defensive backfield," he said. "Being a more confident person when I'm playing and not being afraid to make mistakes — that was a big thing that limited me when I was younger. I was scared to make mistakes and I was playing tentative. That's when you do make mistakes."

Aside from football, Richardson enjoyed the dorm life of Notre Dame.

"It was always fun living in the dorms, I had the regular roommates and everything," he said. "[But] I didn't really get to see my roommates that much because of football."

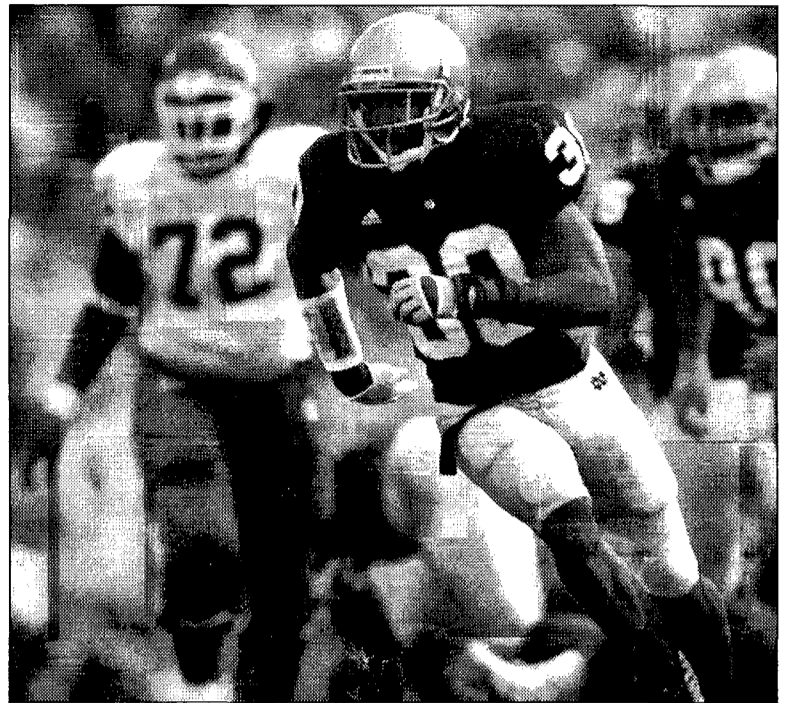
He also enjoyed the campus dining halls.

"It was cool being on campus, I kind of miss the dining halls now living off campus, he said. "I hate cooking."

He also doesn't like water, claiming he needs floaties or a life jacket to go swimming. Fellow cornerback Ambrose Wooden also teases him about his fear of spiders, once putting fake ones all over Richardson's

"The USC game last year was crazy. Just being on the field it seemed like it was the loudest the stadium's ever been. Towards the end, my heart was beating out of my chest."

Mike Richardson
Irish cornerback



Observer File Photo

Irish cornerback Mike Richardson sprints toward the ball during Notre Dame's 44-41 loss to Michigan State Sept. 17, 2006.

off-campus house.

Although Richardson didn't really like the joke, he describes himself as a friendly guy.

"I'm a real friendly guy," he said. "A lot of people see me, like, oh yeah, Mike Richardson, he hits people; he tries to take people's heads off all the time. He's probably pretty mean. But I'm really easy to talk to, I'm easy to initiate conversations with."

After this season concludes, Richardson hopes to play in the

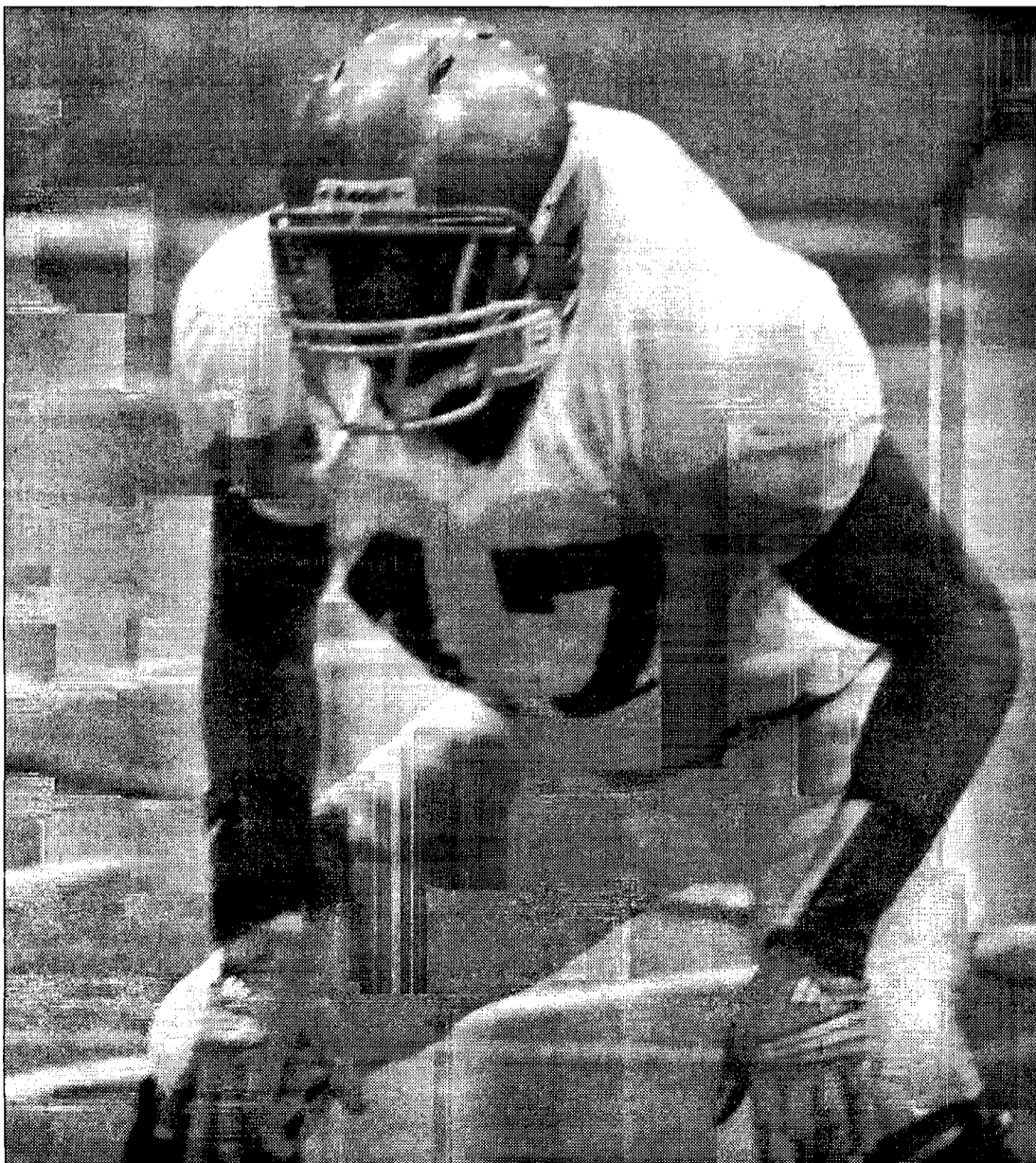
NFL. Weis likes his chances there.

"When I got here, everyone told me how crummy [Richardson] was," Weis said. "Since I've been here, he's gotten solid, he's gotten better, and better, and better. And I'm the only one noticing. He's going to be playing for somebody else next year. He's not done playing."

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MITCHELL THOMAS

Linebacker came to Irish as coveted prospect



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish linebacker Mitchell Thomas grew up with sports dominating his life. At Notre Dame, the senior has balanced football with his studies toward a management consulting degree.

By JAY FITZPATRICK
Sports Writer

For Mitchell Thomas, sports are life.

Thomas excelled in every sport he tried in high school. He was a two-time letter winner in basketball and track to go with football, as well as being named captain to all three of those teams in Smiths Station High School in Smiths, Ala.

"I grew up in the country, went to a city school," Thomas said. "That was my life — sports. I did that year round."

In order to do be that involved, Thomas relied heavily on his parents for support. He credits them for developing Thomas as an athlete if for no other reason than they helped him make the games.

"[My parents] had to drop me off, pick me up," he said. "My sister was in the band — she's a year younger than me — so they'd have to drop her off, come back and get me, back and forth."

One of the most important games Thomas played in was not even on the football field, but on the track.

"My junior year we had a [4X400] team that was fourth in the state that was going against supposedly the number one [4X400] team in our state. And we went against them and beat them," Thomas said. "That was the best sports moment I had."

But the sport Thomas truly excelled in was football, where he made 70 tackles and rushed for over 500 yards in five game his senior year before sidelined

with an injury. Despite not playing most of his senior year, Thomas was still named to the all-state team and was a sought-after recruit coming out of Smiths Station.

During his senior season, Thomas' top three schools were Alabama, Florida and Notre Dame.

"After the coaches left Alabama, [Notre Dame] was my best choice," he said of his decision in choosing Notre Dame. "I think it was just a good balance of academics and athletics."

After joining the Irish, Thomas began to expand his interests beyond sports into the classroom, where he began pursuing a management consulting degree.

"[After football] I plan to try going to [into the] consulting field, see how that turns out, see if I like it. If not, I'll try [to] find something I like," he said.

Even with the classroom load, Thomas still had a passion for football. He had to wait to play, however, and got the chance to start at the beginning of this season against Georgia Tech.

Because he redshirted his freshman year at Notre Dame, Thomas still has the option to return for a fifth year, although he does not yet know whether or not he will. Even if Thomas does come back, he is unsure of his future — and whether it will include football.

"If I do come back, it'll depend on what kind of year I have. I might try the NFL, but I might just get a job and get on with my life."

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BRIAN MATTES

Finance, fraternal spirit draw Mattes to ND

By FRAN TOLAN
Sports Writer

Brian Mattes came to Notre Dame as an Associated Press Pennsylvania Big School all-state selection at defensive end as a junior and at tight end as a senior. Little did he know, offensive linemen would soon become his closest friends on the Irish team.

Now a fifth-year senior who graduated last May with a degree in finance, Mattes says he will always remember the fraternal nature of the Irish linemen.

"Every day, the O-Line section of the locker room is a lot of fun," Mattes said. "Someone's always ragging on someone else. It's just very entertaining."

After not seeing any action as a freshman defensive end in 2002, Mattes was moved to the offensive line before the 2003 season. He cited

that transition period as one of his greatest challenges since arriving at Notre Dame.

"Just changing my body make-up was kind of difficult," said the 6-foot-6, 287-pound Mattes. "I had some trouble putting on the weight [necessary to become an offensive lineman]."

Another change for Mattes, who hails from Larksville, Pennsylvania, was the process of evaluating his own play. As a defensive end, his success could be measured in numbers like sacks and tackles. But he said it is impossible for an offensive lineman to analyze his production statistically.

"I've learned that the best way to evaluate my performance as a lineman is to go back to the [game] film," Mattes said. "You have to check your fundamentals. With good fundamentals, you'll be successful nine times out of ten."

Mattes, who had 10 sacks

as a junior at Wyoming Valley West High School in Plymouth, Penn., quickly learned the ins and outs of playing on the opposite line.

And, consequently, he has become very close with the other Irish linemen.

Mattes has lived with fifth-year senior offensive guard Dan Santucci for almost four years. Mattes, who lived in Fisher Hall his freshman year, was "pulled into" Knott Hall by Santucci before their sophomore year. The two were roommates in Knott for their sophomore and junior years, then moved off-campus as seniors.

Mattes said he has never doubted his decision to come to Notre Dame, citing "great people, a great education and a great degree" as the most important aspects of his experience here. The decision to return this season was, therefore, not very difficult for him.

"When Coach Weis approached me and asked

me to play again, I saw it as an opportunity to just be a college student for another year," Mattes said. "So I thought about it a little then decided to [come back]."

This season, Mattes saw significant playing time in Notre Dame's 14-10 win over Georgia Tech Sept. 2, an experience he said he will always remember.

"It was one of my first games really being in there," said Mattes, who appeared in 28 games for the Irish before this season, most of them as a special teams player. "The atmosphere [at Georgia Tech] was great, even being a member of the visiting team."

As the Irish prepare for their final home game against Army this Saturday, Mattes said that he hopes "to walk off the field happy and with a feeling of fulfillment."

Mattes said many of his relatives — including his parents — will attend the game.

"At least one, if not both [parents], make it to every game," said Mattes, whose brother Kurt is a redshirt freshman offensive lineman at Northwestern. "They try to make it to my brother's games too. They do their very best and I'm very grateful to them for it."

After the season ends, Mattes hopes to move to Chicago and find employment in the finance industry. The finance major finished his undergraduate career with a 3.486 GPA as a Dean's List honoree and knows

that his Notre Dame degree will be very valuable to him in his search for a desirable job.

"Graduating from here is obviously a huge advantage," Mattes said. "The outstanding alumni base can really help you get your foot in the door with some big companies."

"The atmosphere [at Georgia Tech] was great, even being a member of the visiting team."

Brian Mattes
Irish offensive lineman

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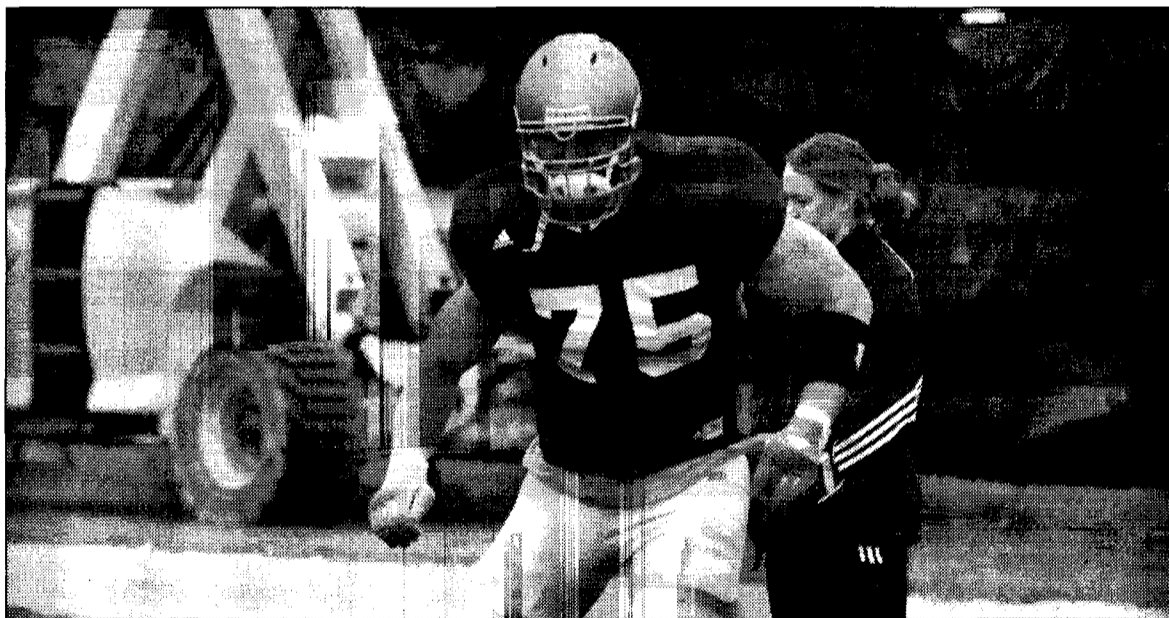
Mattes

"I've learned that the best way to evaluate my performance as a lineman is to go back to the [game] film."

Brian Mattes
Irish offensive lineman

CHRIS FROME

From USC injury to senior season, Frome thrives on D-line



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

Irish defensive end Chris Frome has 17 tackles and three quarterback hurries this season. He is still remembered for a dramatic moment during the 2005 USC game.

By GREG ARBOGAST
Sports Writer

It's one of the enduring images from last year's game versus USC.

Notre Dame defensive end Chris Frome, only minutes removed from an injury that would end his season, passionately waved his arms while being carted off the field in an effort to reenergize the suddenly silent Irish faithful.

"There was so much energy in the stadium, and everybody was so quiet when I was down that when I did pop back up, I wanted to get everybody fired back up again," Frome said. "Some of the guys still give me a hard time about it, but it's something to look

back on."

With Notre Dame up 21-14 late in the second quarter and the Irish crowd still reveling in Tom Zbikowski's 60 yard punt return for a touchdown, USC quarterback Matt Leinart rolled out towards Notre Dame defensive end Victor Abiamiri. Abiamiri would tally his only sack of the day on that play, but Frome, in an effort to avoid an unnecessary roughness penalty, jumped over Leinart proceeding to come down awkwardly on his knee tearing his ACL.

"Right after it happened, I knew," Frome said. "My knee just didn't feel right. I couldn't bear any weight on it at all, and I knew my season was over."

While many know the events that unfolded in the hours imme-

diately following Frome's injury, few know what Frome endured over the following months.

Rehab. Lots and lots of rehab. After having surgery only three days after the USC game, Frome immediately started strengthening his knee through activities like weightlifting and underwater jogging. Six months later, Frome started running again, but he was held out of spring practice due to his inability to cut.

"You don't realize how much you miss football until you see someone else playing it, or you see that you can't be a part of it with your teammates," Frome said. "I missed it a lot. I'm really lucky to have this last season."

While ACL injuries are often synonymous with ruined careers and losing a step, Irish defensive

line coach Jappy Oliver had nothing but positive things to say regarding the rehab process of his senior defensive end.

"I think he's quicker and moves better," Oliver said. "Before the injury, I thought he played strong, but he seems like he's playing stronger. He's a more confident individual."

Judging by his performance so far this season, Frome isn't feeling any lingering effects of his knee injury. Through nine games this season, Frome has seventeen tackles (seven solo), .5 tackles for a loss, .5 sacks, and three quarterback hurries. Compare those numbers with Frome's career numbers entering the 2006 season of fourteen tackles (seven solo) and one quarterback sack.

While Frome's numbers may not match those of fellow defensive linemen Abiamiri or Trevor Laws, Oliver knows the difference Frome makes on the defensive line.

"He might not have the luxury to get a lot of stats, but he does his job well enough to let others be the recipients of plays," Oliver said.

The others referred to by Oliver usually take the form of senior defensive linemen Abiamiri, Laws, and Derek Landri who have formed a formidable defensive front along with Frome over their four years together at Notre Dame. Combined, the four have totaled 140 tackles, eighteen sacks, twenty-one quarterback hurries, and two forced fumbles this season.

"We feed off each other as far as energy," Frome said. "We know where we're going to be during a play, and it's kind of like a race to the ball or the quarter-

back. As you can see, Vick (Abiamiri) is beating me there a bunch of times."

If Frome's football career had gone according to his plan from a young age, he never would have lined up in an Irish uniform, much less alongside Abiamiri, Laws, and Landri. Growing up with two parents from the Midwest, Frome pictured himself playing at a different school from America's heartland.

"Honestly, I grew up a Michigan fan, and I always kind of envisioned myself playing for Michigan," Frome said. "I didn't like Notre Dame too much. It wasn't until I got here that I realized it's such an amazing place."

After arriving in South Bend during the fall of 2002, Frome has spent his time both rushing the quarterback and tackling his coursework. A business major who graduated with a degree in finance from the Mendoza College of Business last spring, Frome finished his undergraduate career with a GPA of 3.30. As for deciding between a football career and following his degree, Frome is leaving his options open.

"I see myself working out, trying to make it (in the NFL), and talking to the coaches to see where I fit," Frome said. "I could definitely see myself going to graduate school or law school. I have a lot of options."

With two regular season games and a bowl game left on the schedule, the future will have to wait for Frome, who's all business on the field for the Irish right now.

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BOB MORTON

Irish pull together for guard after father's death

By DEIRDRE KRASULA
Sports Writer

For offensive lineman Bob Morton, the 2006 football season was not just a chance to play one final season with his "brothers," but also an opportunity to honor the memory of his father.

Robert Morton, who played football for Rutgers, died Aug. 22 from stomach cancer at the age of 54. Bob Morton returned home to McKinney, Texas to be with his family in their time of need, but he quickly returned to his teammates. Within days, the son was back at practice and preparing for the season opener against Georgia Tech which was less than two weeks away.

When the team traveled to Atlanta to take on the Yellow Jackets, Morton said that he had never felt such love and support from his teammates.

"I don't think I've ever felt that camaraderie," Morton said. "When those guys came to me before the game and let me know they were playing it

for my pops, I never felt like I was alone. I didn't need to lean on anybody, they were all holding me up together."

The squad is more than just a team to Morton — it is a family, a contingency of brothers. Morton feels these brothers will be there for one another no matter what the circumstances.

"When those guys came to me before the game and let me know they were playing for my pops, I never felt like I was alone."

Bob Morton
Irish guard

"When key points in a person's life come up, whether good or bad, the team can come together, and it feels like the most close knit family you'll ever see," the veteran said.

But for Morton, his Notre Dame family does not just exist on the field, it is everywhere on his sacred campus. He said some of his most memorable moments are not the games when the offensive line does not allow a sack, but the times after the game when he celebrates with the entire Notre Dame student body — and not just his teammates.

"I'm going to miss the family that is the Notre Dame student body," Morton said.

Morton does not plan to leave the South Bend area anytime soon, though. After

graduating from the Mendoza College of Business with a degree in accounting, the fifth year veteran has been taking graduate courses and volunteering his free time with teenagers at Grace Baptist Church.

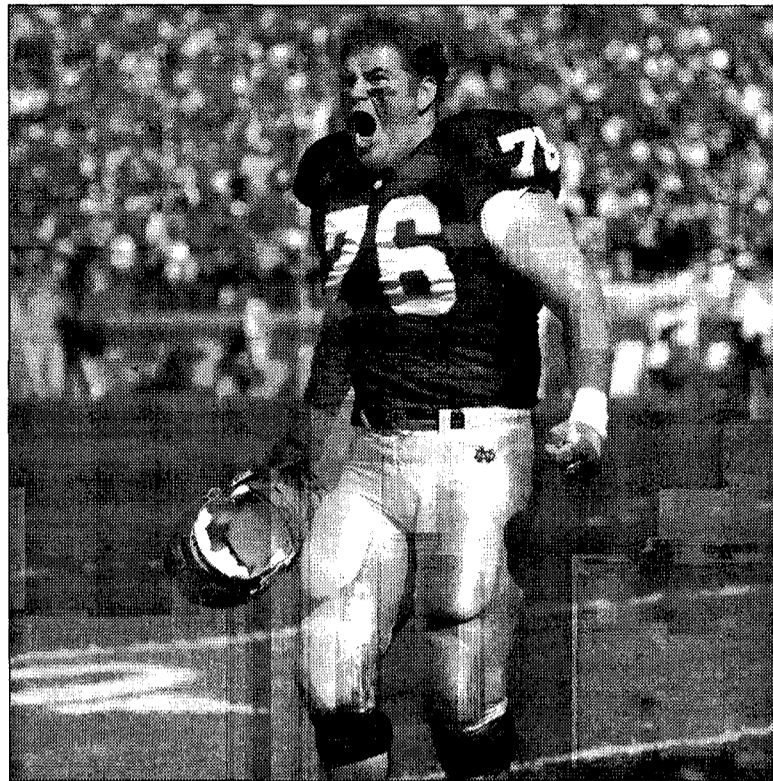
After winter break, Morton plans to return to Grace Baptist Church and take on a larger role as a youth-intern for the spring semester.

Despite being a Baptist at one of the nation's top Roman Catholic institutions, Morton has never felt out of place. The opportunity to take theology classes alongside not only students of different faiths, but professors of different faiths has allowed Morton to deepen his faith.

"It is such a spiritually focused school that I have not been put out because of my faith," Morton said.

Morton said he never felt a duty to serve his faith early on in life like most people; apparently he missed that call.

Discovering his calling later on in life has not slowed him down; rather it has increased his speed of life. After finishing his internship with Grace Baptist Church, Morton is not sure where his life will take him, maybe back to Texas to attend Seminarian school, or perhaps more service work,



TIM SULLIVAN/The Observer

Irish senior guard Bob Morton gets pumped up against Stanford at Notre Dame Stadium Oct. 7.

either way, his future does not hold a place for accounting.

"We've got one life to live and I feel we are suppose to glorify the one who made us," Morton said.

A life lived based on faith and honoring the memory of

his father. Maybe not the role Morton thought he would lead when he first stepped on campus in 2002, but still one spent in the Notre Dame spirit nonetheless.

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MARCUS FREEMAN

Backup tight end steps into starting role with success

By KATE GALES
Associate Sports Editor

The outcome of the game wasn't really in doubt, but that didn't make Marcus Freeman's touchdown catch last Saturday against Air Force any less impressive.

Freeman had logged just three starts in 10 games this season, all when the Irish were in multiple tight-end sets.

But when first-team tight end John Carlson went down with a knee injury early against the Falcons, Irish coach Charlie Weis had no doubts about the backup's ability to step into a starting role.

"He's been solid all year," Weis said. "It's just that a lot of balls haven't come in his direction. So a lot of times when a guy doesn't have a whole bunch of catches, people correlate that with not having a good year."

Freeman came into the Air Force game with three catches in 2006. He had a 10-yard grab against Georgia Tech, a 2-yarder against Penn State and a 25-yard catch against Stanford. The 23-yard catch from quarterback Brady Quinn in the end zone of Falcon Stadium last Saturday was his first career touchdown.

The touchdown wasn't the only part of his play that stood out to Weis, though.

"He has the catch for the touchdown as his one catch for the day," Weis said. "[But] the fact that John went down — when you have a guy that's been playing really well like John has been, and he goes

down, a lot of times, it's a little disheartening and sometimes a team gets rattled a little bit."

In the previous three years, Freeman had five catches for 50 yards. He redshirted in 2002, his freshman year. His career high in receptions came at BYU in 2004, when he caught three balls.

The St. Paul, Minn. native started playing football at an early age, as well as soccer, basketball and T-ball. His uncle coached a team for third and fourth graders and convinced Marcus' mother to let him come out for the team.

"Mothers don't want their kids getting hurt," he said. "She does [still worry about me], especially in camp and when it's hot outside. She always worries."

As his career continued, though, the support of his parents was important. They come to many of his games, including away.

His parents have seen Freeman's many position changes. He started out playing running back, and moved to offensive line.

By his freshman year at Cretin-Durham Hall in St. Paul, Freeman settled in at tight end.

"I tried out for wide receiver and my freshman coach actually moved me to tight end," he said. "It's really versatile. You become an offensive lineman at times and at other times you can be a receiver down the field making plays."

Freeman has experienced both of those roles with the Irish, although he has been primarily used as a blocking

tight end.

"I really like [both aspects of being a tight end]," he said. "My career, I've been pretty much just blocking, I've grown to like and love blocking, but I also love receiving the ball and getting downfield and making plays."

He came to Notre Dame because of the combination of athletics and academics, citing the high graduation rate of Irish players as a selling point. Current Irish offensive lineman Ryan Harris and former Irish fullback Rashon Powers-Neal both attended Cretin-Durham with Freeman.

As the season winds down, Freeman has found himself in more of a spotlight role. But he is also focused on the future. He said he "aspires to the NFL" and thinks that his time at Notre Dame — including the emotional and difficult coaching change in 2004 — may help him in that goal.

"You get to experience two totally different guys, two different personalities, two different coaching styles," he said. "I think everybody here aspires to go to the NFL, when you have experience with different head coaches, you're that much more prepared to go to the next level and deal with coaches at the next level."

Off the field, Freeman is known to play NCAA football video games, though never playing with Notre Dame. He also played in Notre Dame's Bookstore Basketball tournament, making it to the Sweet 16.

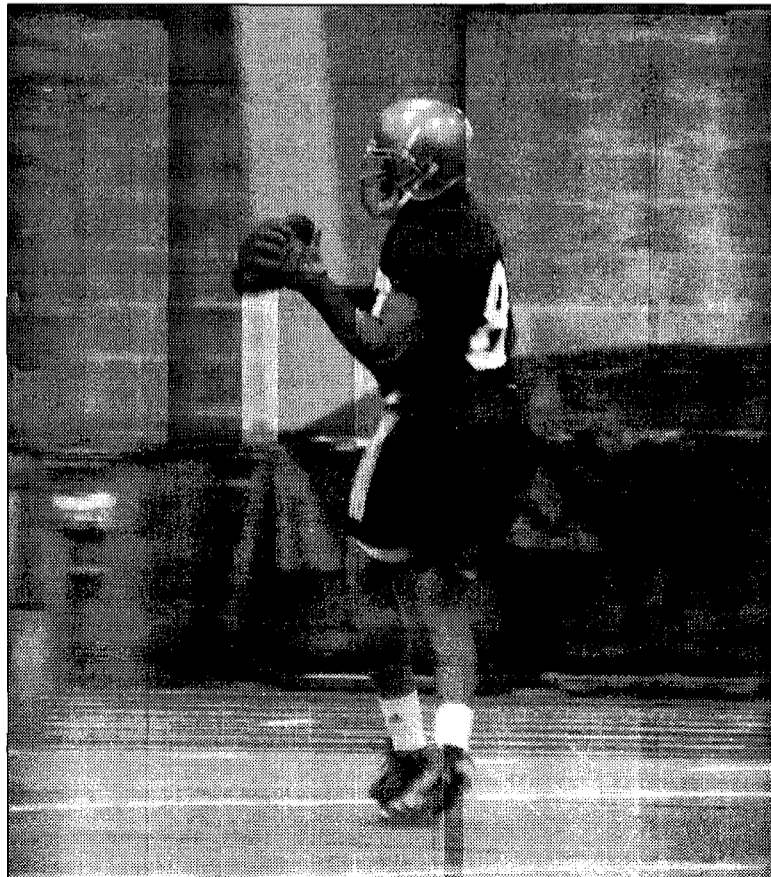
"I like to have fun," he said. "Guys who know me know I

like to joke around, but people that don't know me or meet me for the first time or just cross paths ... maybe see me as a shy guy or a quiet guy, but I like to have fun, I like to joke around with Rhema [McKnight], Ryan Harris."

As Freeman steps into the role of starting tight end this weekend against Army and next week against USC, Weis expressed confidence in his ability.

"If you have a senior who has been playing a whole bunch the last couple of years, even though he's been anonymous because the front line guy has been getting the notoriety, a guy like Marcus stepping in, I think that everyone on the team has total confidence that Marcus can perform," he said.

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LAURIE HUNT/The Observer

Irish tight end Marcus Freeman runs through a drill in practice Sept. 7 at the Loftus Sports Center

Sizing up the Irish and the Black Knights

	Notre Dame	Army
Points Scored	32.0	20.9
Points Allowed	21.6	26.8
Total Yards Gained	393.3	272.9
Total Yards Allowed	329.2	354.5
Rushing Yards Gained	114.0	137.1
Rushing Yards Allowed	133.7	190.2
Passing Yards Gained	279.3	135.8
Passing Yards Allowed	195.5	164.3
Turnovers Margin	0.33	-1.60

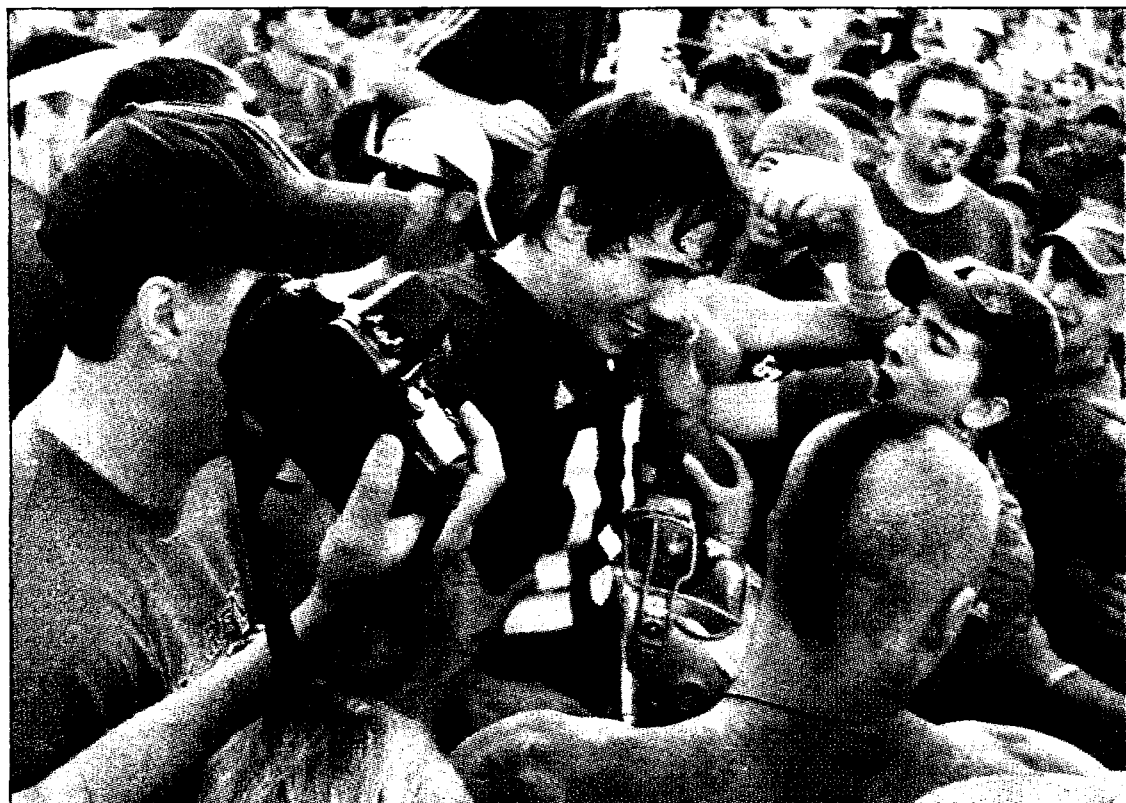
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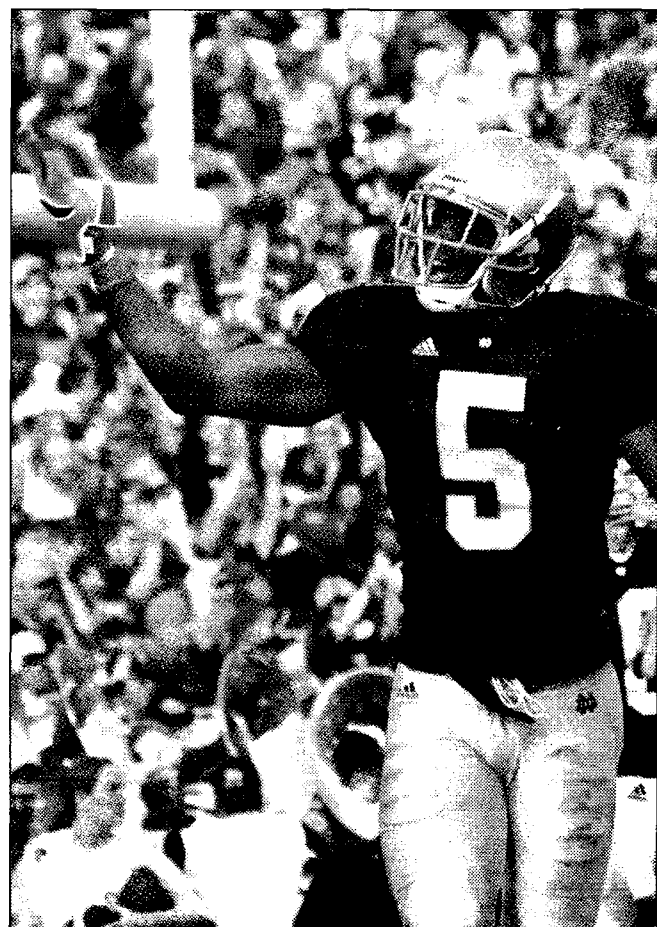
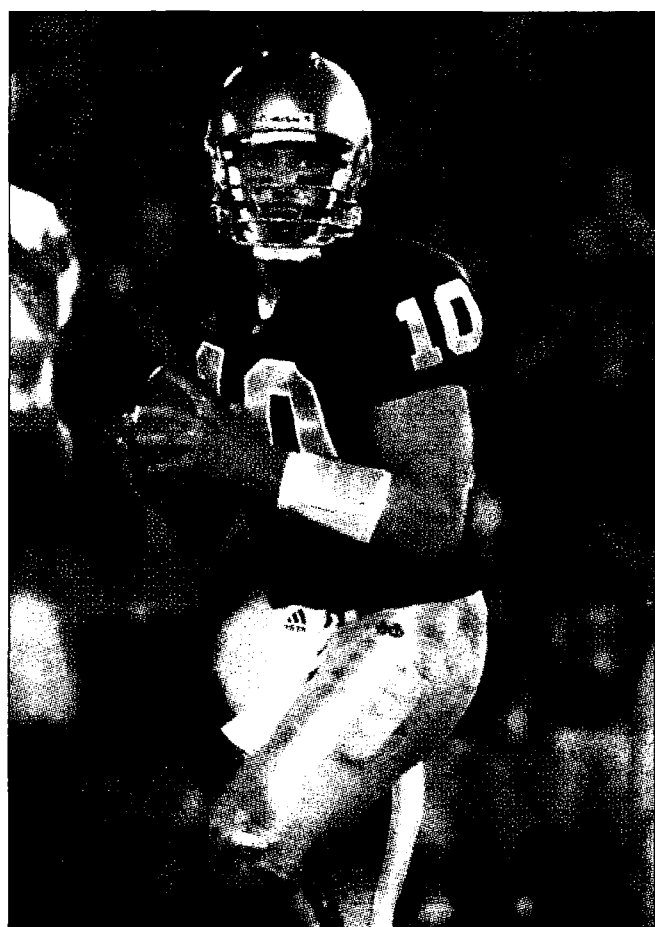
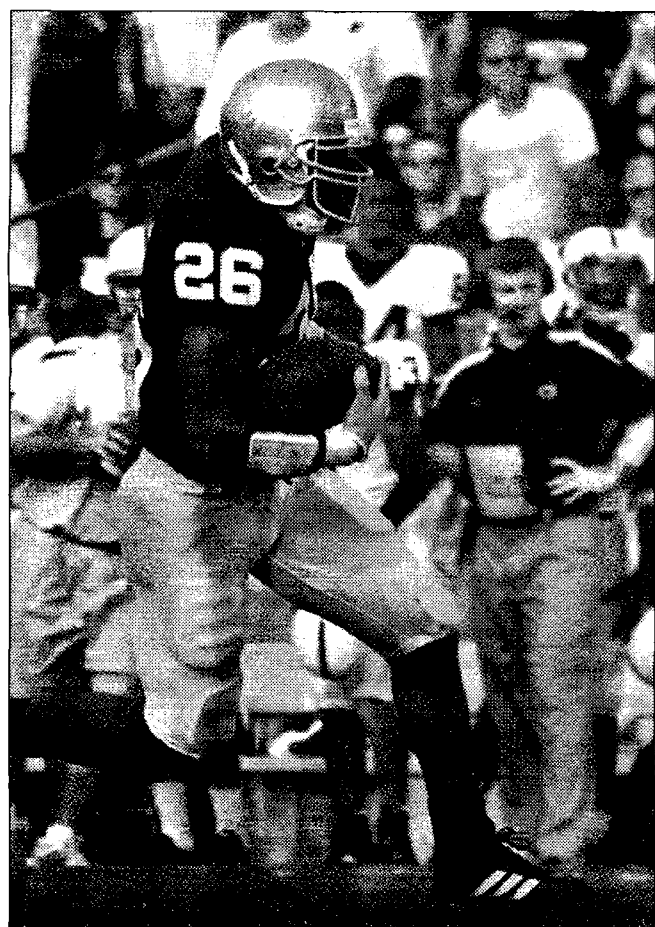
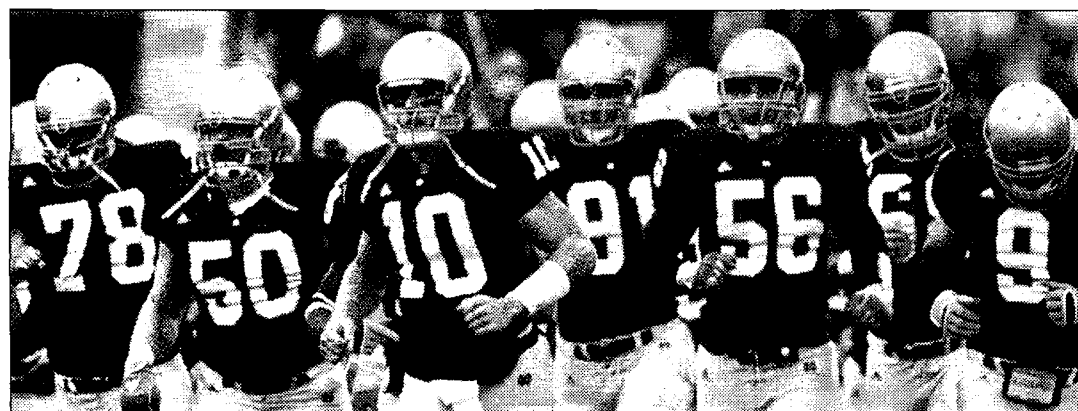
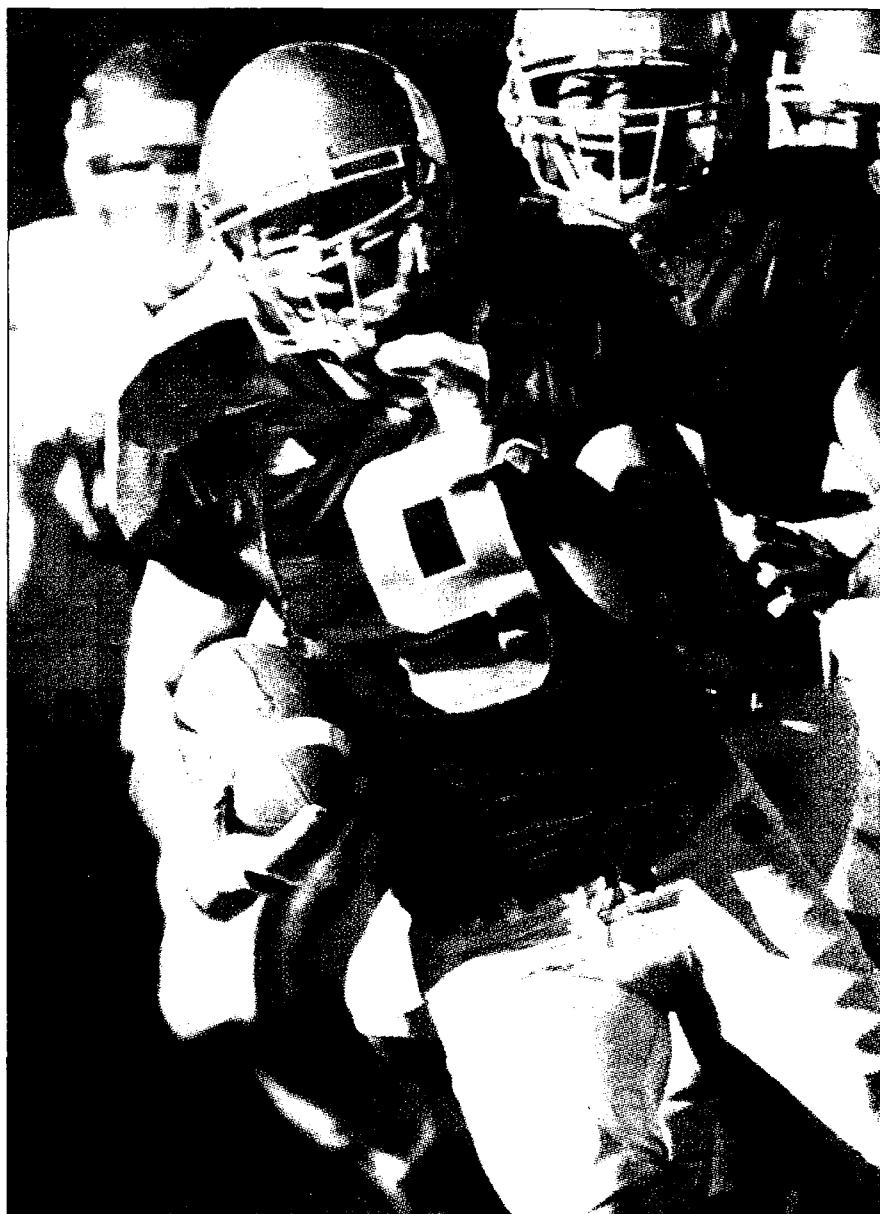
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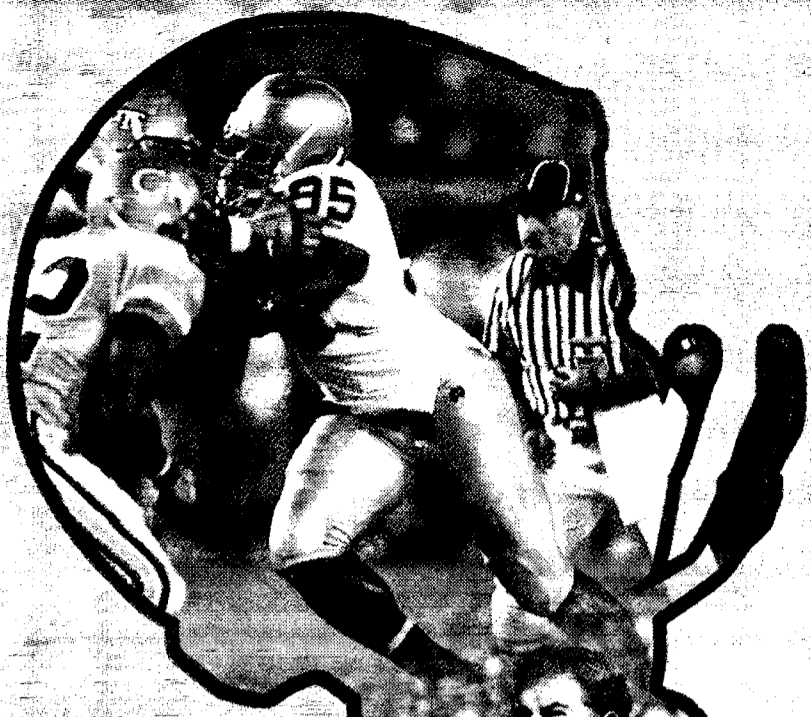
One and only

With personality, talent and drive, this year's seniors led Notre Dame out of one of the worst stretches in school history. From a field-storming win over Michigan in 2004 to a near-toppling of No. 1 Southern California in 2005, Brady Quinn, Tom Zbikowski and the Irish have lifted Notre Dame to the top of college football once again.



NOTRE DAME FOOTBALL

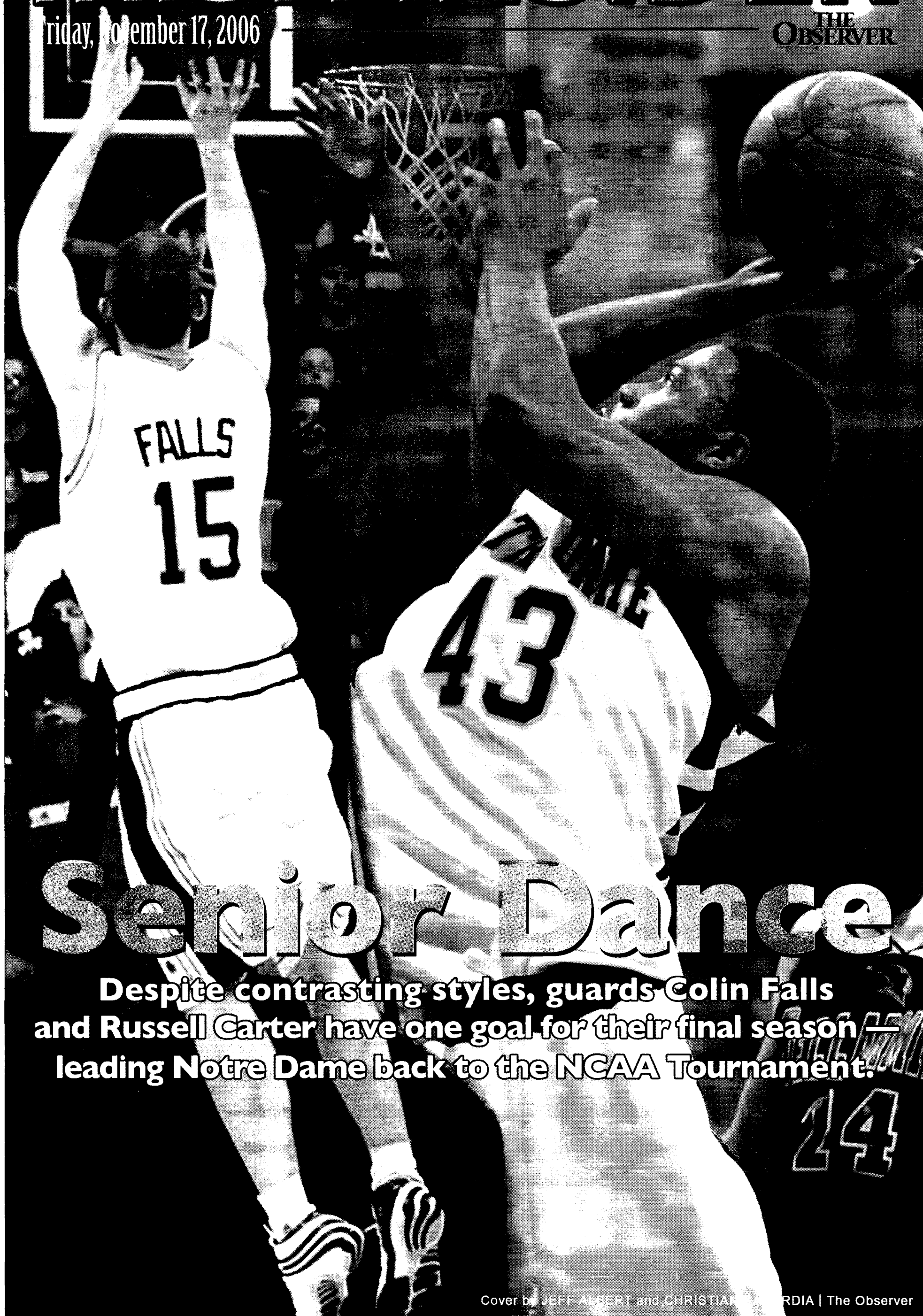
FOOTBALL



IRISH INSIDER

Friday, November 17, 2006

THE OBSERVER



Senior Dance

Despite contrasting styles, guards Colin Falls and Russell Carter have one goal for their final season — leading Notre Dame back to the NCAA Tournament.

New year brings new chances for fresh group

Midway through October, Notre Dame held its annual media day. Coach Mike Brey answered questions and reporters had their first opportunity to speak with the team about the upcoming year.

The mood was strikingly different from last season. After a 2005-06 campaign defined by close losses, the Irish players were loose and optimistic, speaking openly about their NCAA



Bob Griffin

Sports Writer

Tournament dreams. It was an attitude that can only result from feeling no outside pressure or expectations. Because let's call a spade a spade. With three upperclassmen on the Irish roster in a league (the Big East) where battle-tested seniors rise to the top — see Gerry McNamara's 2006 Big East tournament — nobody's expecting much out of Notre Dame.

But that doesn't mean the Irish lack the ability to turn some heads.

On paper, they lost their two biggest names, forward Torin Francis and guard Chris Quinn. As strange as it sounds, the team is better off without them. Francis peaked his freshman season, as nagging injuries slowly transformed him from an NBA draft pick into a European pro.

And for all of Quinn's brilliance — he was a warrior and the team's undisputed leader — he was perhaps carrying more weight than his slender 200-pound body could handle.

What that did to last season's group was clear. Game-by-game it was either establish Francis inside, when his back never allowed him to dominate Big East forwards, or more often, let Quinn take over while teammates stood around watching.

But that era of Notre Dame basketball is over. This year's group is fresh — reflected by the nine-man rotation that features four sophomores and two freshmen.

For the first time since the program's 2003 Sweet 16 run, there's a definite energy and excitement on the court. The Irish are playing off each other, making the extra pass and applying pressure on the defensive end.

And given the scoring balance seen in the team's first four games — Notre Dame's got chemistry. Nobody is standing around waiting for one player to take over the game.

That's only one reason why this year's

group is in better shape than the last few seasons. Let's look at four others:

◆ Colin Falls could be the best captain Notre Dame has had since its Sweet 16 run. Brey's touted him as having great command of the Irish system, and his teammates look to him as a second coach — especially the younger guys who will be instrumental if Notre Dame does well this season.

But what's more impressive is Falls' early season willingness to contribute in other ways besides scoring. The senior guard has shown an interest in fitting into offensive sets and contributing off the ball, instead of camping out at the 3-point line or running baseline screens to get his 15 shots a game.

He also looks more athletic and quicker on defense than he's appeared in his previous three seasons, which could be the result of the team's focus on improved conditioning in the off-season.

◆ For all of Falls' early willingness to play a secondary role in the offense, Russell Carter seems poised to emerge as the primary scoring threat. But he doesn't appear to want the ball at the expense of keeping others involved in the offense.

There's no debating Carter's questionable body language at times. He admits he's an animated player who grows frustrated when his shots aren't falling — but all scorers have that attitude. And that's exactly what Carter is — a scorer.

Notre Dame is going to go as far as Carter wants to take it this season. As the most athletic player on the floor for the Irish, and one of the top athletes in the Big East, Carter is a glaring mismatch. He's too physical for most guards and too fast for most forwards. And if defenses start rotating his way, Falls will be waiting on the other side of the floor with open looks.

The key for Carter will be staying involved on the nights he shoots 30 percent.

◆ For the first time since the arrival of Chris Thomas, the point guard is not the focal point of Brey's offense. But that's no knock on sophomore Kyle McAlarney who has the athletic explosiveness Notre Dame has been missing at the point since Thomas' knee injury.

But more important than his ability to get to the basket — which he has shown in the early part of this season — is his maturity and intuitive on-court aware-

ness. In the team's second exhibition game against Bellarmine, McAlarney found himself on a fast break after stealing the ball near the 3-point line. Instead of taking it himself, he threw a casual bounce pass up to Carter — who up until that point had been having a slow night.

McAlarney understood he needed to get Carter involved, and doing that was more important than adding to his own point total in the lopsided game. Mature decisions like that from the Staten Island native will pay huge dividends on the young, developing team.

◆ Notre Dame has its most athletic forwards in Brey's tenure at Notre Dame in junior Rob Kurz, freshman Luke Harangody and sophomores Luke Zeller and Zach Hillesland.

Kurz is becoming a legitimate inside threat for the Irish. His quickness, strength and agility separates him from the less complete forwards on Notre Dame's roster, and it wouldn't be a surprise to see him emerge in the Big East as a dominant big man.

Harangody is young, and will likely go through growing pains at some point this year, but his aggressiveness and attitude is something Notre Dame has been missing at the forward position.

Zeller spent the summer playing abroad, and it left him with improved post moves and more confidence. But he's still more comfortable stepping outside and has been in foul trouble often early this season.

Hillesland could play every position on the court if he was asked given his ability to pass, rebound and lead fast breaks. He has the height to play down low, but is more effective when he can use his athleticism to spread out defenses.



ALLISON AMBROSE/The Observer

Irish guard Kyle McAlarney's youth, offensive abilities and ball control could lead to improved results for Notre Dame.

successful season. Notre Dame came out flat against Butler, losing despite being more athletic and talented. But if it can use the loss as motivation for No. 10/11 Alabama and Maryland — the loss will hurt them less than the wins will help them.

Because Notre Dame has to prove it can handle the Big East grind and Falls, Carter and Kurz are the only truly battle tested players on the Irish roster.

Zeller was rarely used down the stretch last season, McAlarney was playing second fiddle to Quinn and Hillesland was hanging out with walk-on Chris Murphy at the end of the bench.

But if the Irish can get on a run early and build confidence among the young group, Notre Dame's got a shot to win 10 Big East games in a schedule that doesn't include Pitt or Connecticut.

And if not, at least it will be because of youth and inexperience — not injuries and excuses. The Notre Dame basketball hangover is over after three down seasons marred with injuries and disappointment.

It's time for a breath of fresh air.

The views expressed in this column are those of the author and not necessarily those of The Observer.

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Of course, none of this guarantees a

LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

Graphic illustration courtesy of Jeff Albert

BIG EAST PLAYERS IN '06 NBA DRAFT

7. Minnesota*	Randy Foye, SF
8. Memphis**	Vladimir Jovanovic, PF
12. NO/Oklahoma City	Rudy Gay, SF
19. Sacramento	Hilton Armstrong, C
22. New Jersey	Quincy Douby, SG
23. New Jersey	Marcus Williams, PG
24. Memphis	Josh Boone, C
31. Indiana***	Kyle Lowry, PG
32. Houston	James White, SG
33. Atlanta	Steve Novak, SF
40. Seattle	Soloman Jones, C
52. LA Clippers	Benham Brown, SG
	Guillermo Diaz, SG
	Warrick Lymberry, SF

* drafted by Boston | ** drafted by Houston | *** drafted by Portland

Jackson provides Irish spark

By CHRIS KHOREY
Associate Sports Editor

In Notre Dame's second exhibition game against Bellarmine, Tory Jackson got to the free throw line 10 times.

The slashing freshman point guard attacked the basket with regularity, getting to the line and embodying coach Mike Brey's new up-tempo, aggressive style for the Irish.

"When we push the ball, they're even going to have to foul us or let us get an easy basket," Jackson said.

Coming off a 3-of-5, six point performance off the bench against IPFW Nov. 10, Jackson's energy ignited the Irish each time he entered the game. Brey said Jackson and starting point guard Kyle McAlarney may both play at the same time to give the Irish more quickness and more options for the fast break.

Jackson said he's happy with that role, especially because he looks up to McAlarney as a team leader.

"Kyle's a leader on the floor," Jackson said. "He knows the offense, he knows the defense and he knows what the coaches expect."

Before the season, Brey called Jackson an "energy guy," a spark-plug that can push the ball and dis-

tribute on the break, but like all young players Jackson has to learn to harness that energy. In his first collegiate experience, an exhibition game against Rockhurst Nov. 1, Jackson committed two personal fouls in 12 minutes and took several off balance shots.

"He was excited," Brey said after that game. "A little too excited."

But while McAlarney and the other upperclassmen having been showing the newcomers the ropes, Jackson and fellow freshmen forward Luke Harangody, guard Joe Harden, guard Jonathan Peoples and guard Tim Andree have taught the veterans a thing or two as well.

"All of the freshmen pushed the starters," Jackson said. "Big [forward] Luke Harangody made [sophomore] Luke Zeller a better defender. I think I pushed Kyle and I know that I want to be as good as him."

Plus, Jackson says, the freshmen have brought a new attitude to an Irish program that has missed the NCAA Tournament each of the last three years.

"The freshmen came in here trying to change things, and the older guys bought into it," Jackson said. "We have the mentality where we're pissed. We're pissed at everybody. We want to make a statement this year."

Jackson knows how to win. He led his high school — Saginaw,

Mich.'s Buena Vista — to a state championship his senior year while averaging 30.5 points, 10.0 assists and eight rebounds while running up and down the floor in the Knight's high paced offense. He won three Michigan Player of the Year awards and is the state's third all-time leading scorer.

Of course, in order to run the floor Jackson will have to see the floor, which is why he got his eyes tested before the season started. For the first time in his life, Jackson will wear contacts.

"I noticed a big change," he said. "Everything was all of a sudden so clear. I felt like a little kid. I was really excited."

Jackson realizes he and his fellow freshmen represent a new era in Irish basketball. Starting with this year's very young team, which features only two scholarship seniors — guards Colin Falls and Russell Carter — and one junior — forward Rob Kurz — the new freshmen and McAlarney's sophomore class will be the core of the team for seasons to come.

"I'm excited for the next few years where we get to hang with each other and keep getting better. It's going to be scary for other teams," Jackson said.

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The odd couple

Senior guards Colin Falls and Russell Carter have different games but similar goals for 2006-07

By CHRIS KHOREY
Associate Sports Editor

One is a spot up shooter and a quiet teacher. The other is a slasher and an emotional fire-brand. Together they have one goal — leading Notre Dame to its first NCAA Tournament berth in four years.

Sharpshooter Colin Falls and all-around athlete Russell Carter have opposite styles on the court, but as the only two scholarship seniors on the Irish roster, their leadership will be key for a Notre Dame squad bent on returning to the NCAAs.

"Whenever we go out on the floor, whoever we're playing, we're playing for the NCAA Tournament," Falls says.

When Falls and Carter arrived on campus, NCAA appearances were a regular occurrence. The Irish had made the Tournament three straight years and advanced to the Sweet 16 in 2003, the spring before the two seniors arrived on campus.

"When I got here expectations were higher," Falls says. "We've played below expectations a little bit for whatever reason, but it'll be good if we can leave on a high note."

Now, as seniors, Carter and Falls are looked up to by their underclassmen teammates and have worked together to instill a new attitude.

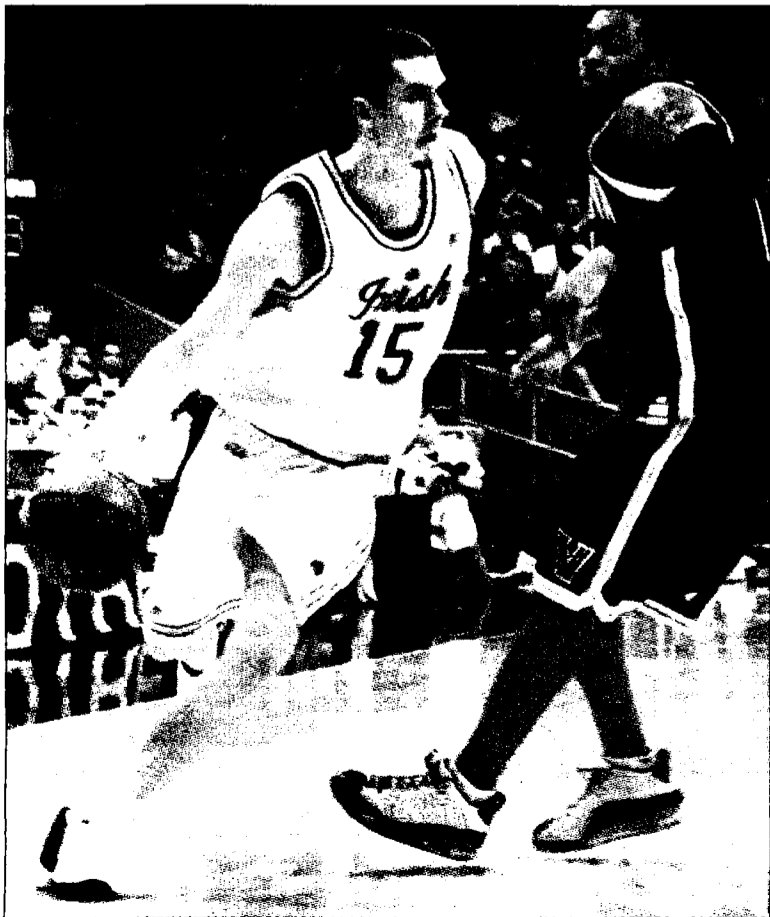
"If we've got something to say, we'll say it to the group," Carter says.

And what they're saying has worked so far, as an Irish team that features five freshmen and four sophomores is talking seriously about being a contender this year.

"We need to make the NCAA Tournament," Falls says. "That's the only thing on our minds."

The quiet marksman

Falls was born in Chicago, Ill. and grew up in the northwest-



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer
Irish senior Colin Falls drives baseline past Villanova guard Allan Ray in the Wildcats' 72-70 win over the Irish Jan. 28.

ern suburb of Park Ridge. From a young age, he had clear basketball abilities.

But he wasn't always just a jumpshooter. In high school he led his Loyola Academy team with 25 points, seven rebounds and four assists per game, graduating as the school's all-time leading scorer. He was Mr. Everything for the Ramblers, one time scoring 51 points in a game.

When he got to Notre Dame, however, he found himself behind guards Chris Thomas and Chris Quinn. Falls knew he had to find niche if he wanted to get on the court, so he worked tirelessly on perfecting his jump shot.

"When I got here, my role the first few years was to spot up and take passes from Chris Quinn and Chris Thomas, so I've really worked on my shot a lot," Falls says.

His freshmen year, Falls averaged almost 16 minutes a game and drained 37 threes, a huge total given that he only made 47 shots. It was during this season that he gained his reputation among Irish fans as a three-point specialist.

The next year, Falls played a much larger role, starting 22 games alongside Thomas and Quinn and averaging 12.6 points per game. He hit a Notre Dame-sophomore record 93 threes that year, including eight in one game against Pittsburgh.

Having solidified his spot in the starting lineup, Falls found himself called upon to be one of Notre Dame's top scoring threats last year in his junior season. With Thomas having graduated, Falls was the second leading scorer for the Irish with 13.8 points per game. He also set the school record for three-pointers in a season (102).

Of course, last year wasn't all rosy for Falls, who saw the Irish fall in numerous close games. On Jan. 24, with the Irish trailing by four and less

than 10 seconds to play, Falls launched a desperation shot while colliding with Hoyas guard Brandon Bowman.

The shot hit nothing but net, and Falls drained the clutch free throw as the Joyce Center crowd went wild.

Unfortunately for the would-be hero, the Irish couldn't capitalize and ended up losing in double overtime.

It was a game that summed up last season for Falls. Something would go well, only to be countered by another numbingly close loss. He had his personal ups and downs as well, as any shooter does, getting hot one game and finding nothing but iron in the next.

Falls credits coach Mike Brey with keeping him going through the rough stretches.

"Every year you're going to have a couple games where you go 1-of-6, 2-of-7 from the three-point line," Falls says. "That's why Coach Brey's the best. He sticks with his guys and lets you work your way back into a rhythm. Shooters go through slumps and you have to shoot your way out of it."

That calm wisdom translates into Falls' leadership style on and off the court. He's not very vocal while playing — in one of Notre Dame's exhibition games he greeted an official's bad judgment on an out of bounds call with a simple "that was off him" before turning to play defense.

But young players credit him with patiently teaching them when they were confused about Brey's system or the college game in general.

"A lot of upperclassmen have helped me, especially Colin Falls," freshman point guard Tory Jackson says. "He's really helped me understand what's going on out there."

The high flying screamer

Carter is as loud on the court as Falls is quiet. He routinely screams and whoops after a made basket and is always trying to fire up the crowd.

It's not that Carter wants to draw excess attention to himself — it's just the way that he learned to play growing up in Paulsboro, N.J., across the river from Philadelphia.

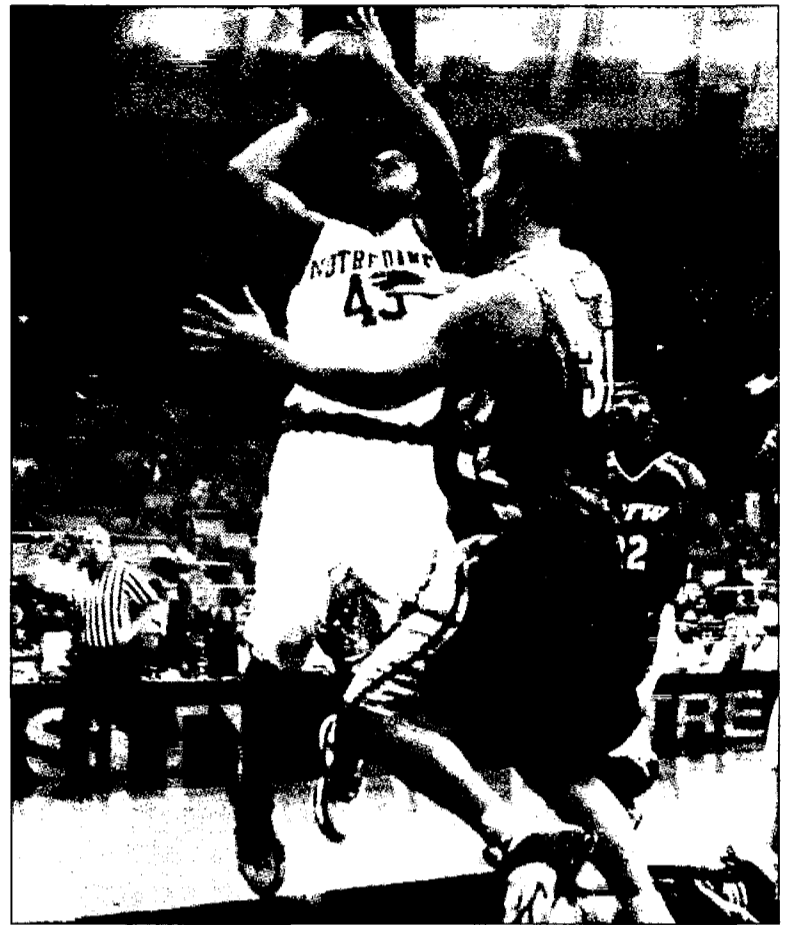
"I love playing basketball," Carter says. "It's fun being out there. Playing back at home, when you play basketball you always got to talk a little something to show you're the best."

Carter has had plenty of fun through his basketball career. He averaged 30 points per game in leading Paulsboro high school to a 24-4 record his senior year.

His first year at Notre Dame, Carter made a splash despite only appearing in just 11 games and scoring nine total points.

Carter's roommate and friends made T-shirts and led cheers for him to come into the game. The T-shirts, which can still be seen on occasion at the Joyce Center, quoted Carter saying he would make people remember his jersey number — No. 43.

"My roommate made T-shirts and he said 'say something for the shirt' and I said that,"



PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer
Irish guard Russell Carter explodes to the basket in Notre Dame's opening night 92-49 victory over IPFW Nov. 10.

Graphic illustrations by Jeff Albert

Notre Dame will need Colin Falls and Russell Carter to make major contributions on offense this season if the Irish are going to contend in the Big East.

Falls	2005-2006 Stats	Carter
13.8	POINTS	11.6

Carter says.

He also says he chose the number to be distinctive.

"There aren't very many people with then number 43 and those that have it aren't very much known," Carter says.

Brey continued to ignore Carter's cheering section during the guard's sophomore year. He got in more games than in his freshman year (24) and he got his first career start against Holy Cross in the NIT, but he averaged only 3.5 points per game.

The next year, Carter moved into the starting lineup and became a major contributor, averaging 11.6 points per game, good enough for third on the team. He also increased the size of his cheering section with his dramatic athletic plays and soaring dunks.

"When a play breaks down, you have to improvise and that's when creativity will show," Carter says. "Who doesn't like to show their creativity? That's basketball."

Sometimes, however, Brey's definition of "when a play breaks down" is different than Carter's. The coach has made it no secret to the guard that he wants to see him work within the offense more.

"We pretty much stick to our motion offense," Carter says of Brey's game plans. "We can't be robots but we generally stick to the script."

Carter is ready to become a star for the Irish in his senior season. He led the team with 20 points in the opening win against IPFW Nov. 10 and added 20 more against Lafayette Tuesday.

But through it all, Carter just wants to have a good time.

"We need to continue to have fun," he says. "If we have fun, then everything will follow course. If we treat it like a job and people don't want to be here we won't have success."

The future

If either Falls or Carter is going to have a career in the NBA, a lot is riding on their performance — both individually and collectively — this season. But neither has given up the dream of playing professionally yet.

"If you don't want to get to the next level, why play basketball?" Carter said.

Falls has even gone so far as to pursue Irish citizenship, which he can get through his grandfather, in order to make it easier for him to play overseas next year — if he doesn't find a spot on an NBA roster.

"I want to play basketball for as long as I can," he said.

But before that, Carter and Falls have one more goal for their time at Notre Dame — make good on their last chance to reach the NCAAs. This year is the odd couple's chance to shine, with Falls' quiet leadership and clutch jumpers and Carter's emotion and crowd-electrifying plays leading the Irish in the Big East.

Because for as much as Carter and Falls are opposites — they want the exact same thing this season.

Maybe they're not so different after all.

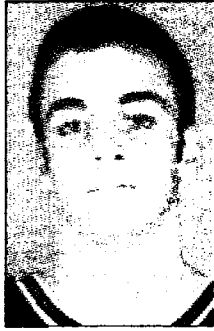
Contact Chris Khorey at ckhorey@nd.edu

2006-07 OUTLOOK

Headshots courtesy of und.com

Photos by PHIL HUDELSON/The Observer

TIM ANDREE




FORWARD
6'8", 238 lbs.
No. 41 — FR

Senior H.S. stats
Minutes 14.0
Points 8.0

2006-07 expectations
Andree joins the team as a freshman walk-on and is a valuable addition to the Irish practice squad. One of five freshmen on this season's roster.

RYAN AYERS




GUARD/FORWARD
6'8", 210 lbs.
No. 42 — SO

2005-06 stats
Minutes 6.8
Points 1.1
Rebounds 0.7

2006-07 expectations
Ayers was rarely used as a freshman but played 34 minutes in an NIT loss to Michigan. He should be a solid role player in this year's nine-man rotation.

RUSSELL CARTER




GUARD
6'4", 220 lbs.
No. 43 — SR

2005-06 stats
Points 11.5
Rebounds 5.1
3-point % 41.0

2006-07 expectations
Carter exploded in the second half of last season and should continue to be one of the top offensive options this year. Productive rebounder for his size.

COLIN FALLS




GUARD (Capt.)
6'5", 200 lbs.
No. 15 — SR

2005-06 stats
Points 14.8
Rebounds 2.2
3-point % 39.7

2006-07 expectations
Falls assumes a leadership role as one of two captains. The deadly shooter has shown an ability to contribute off the ball and looks more athletic early on.

LUKE HARANGODY




FORWARD
6'8", 250 lbs.
No. 44 — FR

Senior H.S. stats
Points 23.6
Rebounds 12.8

2006-07 expectations
Harangody looks strong early in the post and should be a key factor in Big East play. He's a "blue collar" player who understands the power forward position.

JOE HARDEN




GUARD
6'7", 212 lbs.
No. 11 — FR

Senior H.S. stats
Points 17.0
Rebounds 10.0

2006-07 expectations
Harden comes from a strong I.S. team, and is one of the bigger guards on the Irish roster. He's shown athleticism and promise during preseason play.

ZACH HILLESLAND




FORWARD
6'9", 227 lbs.
No. 33 — SO

2005-06 stats
Points 0.6
Rebounds 0.2
Assists 2.2

2006-07 expectations
Hillesland is an exciting player who has all the tools. His minutes will fluctuate on a game-by-game basis, but the forward will be a factor in the Big East.

TORY JACKSON



GUARD
5'10", 185 lbs.
No. 2 — SO

2005-06 stats
Points 30.5
Rebounds 8.0
Assists 10.0

2006-07 expectations
Jackson's initial role will be spelling McAlarney and giving a boost off the bench. But the quick freshman could see more time as the season progresses.

ROB KURZ




FORWARD (Capt.)
6'9", 235 lbs.
No. 31 — JR

2005-06 stats
Points 6.4
Rebounds 5.1
FG % 46.6

2006-07 expectations
Kurz is quickly becoming a top Big East forward with his positioning and strength in the post. The junior captain can rebound, pass and finish down low.

KYLE McALARNEY




GUARD
6'1", 194 lbs.
No. 23 — SO

2005-06 stats
Points 6.6
Assists 2.5
3-point % 43.0

2006-07 expectations
McAlarney is an explosive scorer and creative playmaker who will have an increased role this season. He could become one of the league's best points.

JONATHAN PEOPLES




GUARD
6'3", 214 lbs.
No. 20 — FR

Senior H.S. stats
Points 15.2
Rebounds 4.0
Assists 4.0

2006-07 expectations
Peoples offers Notre Dame an athletic option off the bench, but will likely be used sparingly. He's already shown an ability to get to the basket in preseason.

KIERAN PILLAR




GUARD
6'2", 198 lbs.
No. 35 — SR

Senior H.S. stats
Points 16.5
Rebounds 7.0
Assists 3.0

2006-07 expectations
Pillar is a second-year walk on from Endicott, N.Y. who is a solid practice player at point guard behind McAlarney and Jackson.

LUKE ZELLER



FORWARD/CENTER
6'11", 245 lbs.
No. 40 — SO

2005-06 stats
Points 3.4
Rebounds 3.1
Minutes 13.7

2006-07 expectations
Zeller looks stronger after a summer playing abroad, but still needs to prove he can handle post duties. He's an excellent outside shooter for his size.

MIKE BREY



HEAD COACH
7th season
118-70 overall

2005-06 record
Season 16-14
Big East 6-10

2006-07 expectations
Brey has not taken the Irish to the NCAAs since the 2002-03 season. After focusing on the Big East tourney last year, he has bigger hopes for this group.

2006-2007 SCHEDULE

- 11/10/06 vs. IPFW - W
- 11/13/06 vs. Butler - L
- 11/14/06 vs. Lafayette - W
- 11/19/06 vs. The Citadel
- 11/27/06 vs. Lehigh
- 11/29/06 vs. Winston-Salem State
- 12/03/06 vs. Maryland
- 12/07/06 vs. Alabama
- 12/16/06 vs. Elon
- 12/19/06 vs. Portland
- 12/21/06 vs. Army
- 12/28/06 vs. Rider
- 12/30/06 vs. Stony Brook
- 01/03/07 vs. Louisville
- 01/06/07 at Georgetown
- 01/09/07 vs. West Virginia
- 01/14/07 vs. Seton Hall
- 01/21/07 vs. USF
- 01/23/07 at St. John's
- 01/30/07 at Syracuse
- 02/03/07 at USF
- 02/08/07 at DePaul
- 02/15/07 vs. Providence
- 02/18/07 at Cincinnati
- 02/20/07 vs. DePaul
- 02/24/07 vs. Marquette
- 03/03/07 at Rutgers

Graphic illustrations by Jeff Albert

Notre Dame's pre-Big East schedule includes two tough games that will be a measuring stick for the Irish.

The Irish and Cardinals played a hard-fought OT game last year, and Louisville returns guard Taquan Dean.

Georgetown is a veteran group that's highly ranked pre-season, led by center Roy Hibbert.

Syracuse has a new identity now that four-year guard Gerry McNamara graduated.

Marquette comes into the Joyce Center led by point guard Dominic James.

2006-2007 PRESEASON POLLS

COACHES' POLL

- Florida
- North Carolina
- Kansas
- Pittsburgh
- Ohio State
- UCLA
- Duke
- Arizona
- Michigan State
- Arizona State
- Illinois
- Georgia Tech
- Wake Forest
- Georgia
- North Carolina State
- Virginia Tech
- Mississippi State
- Washington State
- Connecticut
- Vanderbilt
- Creighton
- Marquette
- Seton Hall
- DePaul
- St. John's
- Georgetown
- Notre Dame
- West Virginia
- Cincinnati
- Rutgers
- Seton Hall
- USF

EAST CONFERENCE

SCHEDULE

- Pittsburgh (10) 219
- Georgetown (4) 212
- Syracuse (1) 182
- Marquette (1) 181
- Connecticut 173
- Louisville 149
- Villanova 146
- DePaul 134
- St. John's 105
- Providence 102
- Notre Dame 80
- West Virginia 72
- Cincinnati 52
- Rutgers 49
- Seton Hall 42
- USF 22