



Analyzing Buckeyes
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The PRESS Sports

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Work in progress
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New Detroit coach Kate Achter moving closer to home

University of Detroit Mercy Director of Athletics Robert C. Vowels, Jr. has announced that former collegiate standout and coaching veteran Kate Achter (Clay/Bowling Green State University) will be the 14th women's basketball head coach in school history.

Achter was an All-American student-athlete at Bowling Green and has coached at Loyola Chicago, St. Bonaventure and Xavier.

"Kate Achter quickly rose as our top candidate based on her accomplishments and success as a coach and student-athlete," said Vowels. "She has a great vision for the program, a great work ethic, highly acclaimed communication skills, and is proficient in building a team, both on and off the court."

Achter said, "I'd like to thank Robert Vowels, Teri Kromrei, the search committee and Dr. Garibaldi for entrusting me to be the next leader of the Detroit Women's basketball program. Throughout this process, it was evident how special the campus and community are. There is an immense amount of pride in the Titan family that made me feel welcomed and immediately at home. I cannot wait to get to work!"

Achter spent the last six seasons as head coach of fellow Jesuit institution Loyola Chicago, where she guided a program from 2-28 in her first season to 18-12 last year, the most wins by the Ramblers since the 1988-89 season. In her six seasons, Loyola Chicago improved its overall win and conference victory total in five campaigns, with its 10-8 mark last year good for fifth in the Missouri Valley Conference.

Under her guidance, the Ramblers collected 13 All-Conference accolades, including five All-Freshman Team selections, four All-League picks and one Freshman of the Year recipient. The team GPA also grew from a 2.4 to a 3.5 in her six seasons.

"It is a pleasure to welcome coach Achter to Detroit Mercy. She is a proven winner who not only understands our Jesuit and Mercy mission well but also the high academic expectations we have for our student-athletes," said University of Detroit Mercy President Antoine Garibaldi.

She was one of the youngest coaches in the country when she took over Loyola Chicago. Achter had to deal with a roster turnaround that included just three returning letterwinners and moved the win total to seven wins in her second season, 13 in her third and a winning record of 15-14 in her fourth year, just the third winning season by the program since 1988-89, where the Ramblers also earned their first-ever postseason berth in the Women's Basketball Invitational (WBI).

Prior to her arrival at Loyola Chicago, she was an assistant coach and the team's recruiting coordinator at Xavier during the 2015-16 season. In that one season, she helped the program to a 17-13 overall record and aided in the development of Briana Glover, who was named an All-BIG EAST Conference selection.

Before that, she was an assistant coach and associate head coach at St. Bonaventure, helping the program to three postseason berths, highlighted by a trip to the Sweet 16 in the 2012 NCAA



Then Loyola women's basketball coach Kate Achter (Clay/Bowling Green State University) gives instruction to her players. (File photo courtesy Ryan Haley/Loyola University)

Tournament. St. Bonaventure posted three seasons of 20 or more wins during her tenure, including a school-record 31 wins in 2011-12, and that season, the Bonnies also won their first-ever Atlantic 10 regular-season title.

In her coaching history, she has seen student-athletes receive 21 All-Conference selections, one Freshman of the Year and one Sixth Women of the Year accolades.

"She has experienced a tremendous amount of success as a head coach, assistant coach, and student-athlete and I look forward to seeing her build this program to championship standards," said Vowels. "I would like to thank the search committee for their hard work in identifying some great candidates and ultimately coming together and deciding that coach Achter is the best person to lead our program."

Northwest Ohio success story

A 2008 graduate of Bowling Green and a member of the 2018 Hall-Of-Fame class, Achter was a driving force as the Falcons captured four straight Mid-American Conference (MAC) titles and made three appearances in the NCAA Tournament during her playing career, highlighted by a Sweet 16 berth in 2007, the deepest run a MAC team has ever made.

In her time as a student-athlete, the Falcons were 108-23 during her career, including 57-7 in the MAC. She was a three-time All-MAC selection, a three-time MAC All-Tournament Team member and a MAC

Tournament MVP.

The All-American point guard finished her career ranked fifth on the school's all-time scoring list (1,580) and as the Falcons' all-time leader in both assists (688) and free throws made (551).

"My time at Bowling Green was defined as much by the winning as it was by the teamwork and togetherness of our program," Achter said. "The unwavering support of the BGSU fan base made us one of the toughest teams to compete against in the country; and they gave us the confidence to compete at our highest level every night. This would not be possible without their dedication."

Following graduation, she played professionally for one season with Palaio Faliro in Athens, Greece, before returning to her alma mater as a graduate assistant with its strength and conditioning staff.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education from BGSU in 2009 and her Master of Education in 2010.

A 2004 Clay graduate who played under her father, then-coach Roger Achter, she has talked to The Press on several occasions about how she turned the Loyola program around.

"I was a first-year head coach, with 10 players who had no Division I experience," recalled Achter, 33. "We returned two players, and combined we returned 78 total points from the previous year. I didn't have any freshmen. We got three junior college transfers who didn't come from a high-level junior college, and we honored

the scholarships the previous staff had (offered). We had three junior college players we knew nothing about. We allowed one player to come back to the team that the previous staff had kicked off the team."

Achter said she takes her coaching role beyond the basketball court, too, mentioning the women she coached at Loyola.

"I have a very, very strong group of bright, young women. I have two pre-med students, I have three MBAs, and I just had a junior tell me she is going to take the LSAT (law school admission) this summer. I have surrounded myself with people who are entirely smarter than I am," Achter said with some sarcasm. "Achter said while the keynote speaker at the Clay High Alumni and Friends Association's distinguished alumni and hall of fame banquet.

"One of my challenges when I lead these young women is to try and unite them," Achter continued. "And, when I first approached this job, which was difficult in itself, I really set three kinds of key areas that I wanted to focus on and those areas didn't necessarily have anything to do with basketball, although, we do a lot of basketball. We run ball-screen offense, we run transition, we like middle ball screens, we teach ball screen defense, jam, switch, run, trot, underneath — all those things. That is my job," Achter continued.

(— includes file contributions by Press Sports Editor J. Patrick Eaken and contributing writer Mark Griffin)



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Nathan Huber. (Press photo by Don Thompson/Facebook.com/DNRSport)



Anthony "A.J." Cruz. (Press photo by Don Thompson/Facebook.com/DNRSport)

Northwood underclassmen get valuable experience

By J. Patrick Eaken
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Northwood baseball is currently a work in progress under coach Clay Rolf, a former Eastwood multi-sport standout and NCAA Division I football player at Bowling Green State University.

"Our strengths are our youth, athleticism, and versatility. We have the ability to move a lot of guys around and it has led to some really good competition in practice and will be fun to watch throughout the year," Rolf said.

"Our weaknesses are varsity pitching innings and varsity experience. We are excited to watch out guys continue to grow and develop. They have been working very hard this offseason both on baseball and in the weight room. There has been a lot of good competition and battles throughout spring practices and it will be fun to see how that progresses throughout the year."

The Rangers are 4-12 overall and 3-4 in the Toledo Area Athletic Conference. That does not mean there are not multiple bright spots, like the play of junior Gage Reed, who Rolf says "is pacing us offensively."

Reed is batting .342 with 14 RBIs and on the mound, he is 0-4, taking on the Rangers' high profile opponents, but that is with 21 strikeouts and an ERA of 2.33 in 21 innings.

"Gage has been a bright spot for us both in the batter's box and on the mound," Rolf said.

Sophomore Nathan Huber is batting .342 with five RBIs, and junior pitcher A.J. Cruz is 1-2 with a 2.88 ERA in 17 innings.

In his second year at the helm, Rolf is trying to build on last year's 8-20 season, including a 6-4 record in the TAAC.

Among the four lettermen returning are Reed, Cruz at shortstop, junior first baseman and pitcher Sean Kovacs, and junior catcher and pitcher Mason Smith. Last year, Cruz was an all-league shortstop, batting .357 with 10 RBIs, 26 runs, and 13 stolen bases. Rolf says the quartet continued working on all aspects of their game before the season began.

"A.J. Cruz, Nolan Wagner, Gage Reed and Sean Kovacs have been working hard in the cages and weight room during the offseason," Rolf said. "Nolan Wagner, A.J. Cruz, Sean Kovacs, and Mason Smith have been working hard to be consistent and throw strikes. A.J. Cruz has a lot of experience coming back at the shortstop position."

No matter what happens this year, Rolf will have the bulk of his lineup returning for next year, which makes the future look promising. There are just two seniors — Braden Alore and Zachary Jones.

"We have a lot of juniors who have taken a big step up from their sophomore year last year," Rolf said. "We have a large sophomore class and there are a number of them that could contribute very soon. The competition at practice has been very good."

Can the Rangers get back to competing with the upper division of the TAAC? Rolf says that is a lot to ask from a young team.

"I expect us to compete and be somewhere in the middle," Rolf said. "Ottawa Hills and Toledo Christian have a great track record and a lot of good returners. Cardinal Stritch has some good pitchers coming back and are very well coached and compete. Our league is very competitive and has some very good teams."

The Rangers have already split with Cardinal Stritch, winning 6-5 in Oregon and falling to the Cardinals in Northwood, 11-8. In the win, Wagner struck out 11, walked seven and allowed four hits and five runs, throwing 123 pitches over 6.1 innings. Kovacs got the final two outs for the save, striking out one and allowing one hit.

At the plate, Smith, a junior, tripled, had a stolen base and two RBIs, Kovacs doubled and had two RBIs, and Reed doubled. Wagner, Jones, Huber and Zaegan Byington had base hits. Huber also had a stolen base.

Northwood outthit Stritch in the loss, 10-7, but Northwood pitchers gave up nine walks and the Rangers had six errors. At the plate, Reed was 3-for-5 with two RBIs, Huber was 2-for-4 with two RBIs, and Wagner, Kovacs, sophomore Kaleb Brossia, Cruz and sophomore Kaden Cluckey had base hits.

In a 9-8 non-league eight-inning win against Fostoria, Elias Pecina was the winning pitcher and Smith had the walk off single to score Reed. Pecina pitched the final three innings, allowing one hit and one run while walking three.

At the plate, Kovacs had two doubles with an RBI in three at-bats, Reed went 3-for-5 with three RBIs, and Cruz, Wagner,

Smith, and Huber had base hits. The Rangers stole nine bases, including two apiece by Cruz, Pecina and Kovacs.

Against Bowsher, Reed struck out nine, walked one, and allowed three hits, but the Blue Racers scored an unearned run in the bottom of the third to win, 1-0. Pecina and Cruz had Northwood's only hits.

In two games against league foe Maumee Valley, the Rangers won 10-0 and 25-0. In the 25-run blowout, Kovacs struck out four, walked two and allowed one hit through four innings. Reed, who was 2-for-2 with four RBIs, had two doubles, Pecina and Kovacs had one two-bagger apiece.

Pecina, Wagner, Kovacs, and Brossia had two hits apiece and getting base hits were Smith, Jones, sophomores Ethan Clair and Brian Hollabaugh. The Rangers scored 15 runs in the second inning, batting twice around, and took advantage of eight walks and five errors in a mercy-ruled shortened game.

In the 10-0 win, Cruz pitched a two-hit complete game shutout, striking out five and walking none. Wagner was 2-for-3 with a triple and RBI, and the Rangers belted six doubles, including one each by Pecina, Reed, Kovacs, Wagner, Smith and Cruz. Huber was 3-for-3, Reed and Smith had two hits apiece and Cluckey had a base hit and Smith had two stolen bases.

Other losses this season have been to Oak Harbor (13-0), Rossford (6-0), Springfield (10-5), Swanton (13-10), Ottawa Hills (10-0 and 14-1), Lake (8-1), Eastwood (15-4), Fremont St. Joseph (3-1), Gibsonburg (9-1) and Toledo Christian (4-2).

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Rockets' depth, led by Glaser, gives coach options

By J. Patrick Eaken
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The Oak Harbor boys tennis team's challenge this year was finding someone to fill the place of Sandusky Bay Conference Player of the Year Brenen Ish.

The good news is that Ish and second doubles player Delaney Hayes were the only key losses from last year, and that this year's team has plenty of depth with eight seniors and 19 players.

That gives coach Rick LaFountain, in his 30th year and 54th season, plenty of options.

Huron and Port Clinton are the top two teams in the SBC, as expected, but the Rockets have big matches coming up with Sandusky St. Mary and Willard.

"Things are going pretty much like expected," LaFountain said. "We hope to be in the top half of the league. We have a bunch of great kids."

The seniors are Bryce Chanthavong, Nick Dewitz, Noah Dewitz, Kyle Glaser, Spencer Goldstein, Jack Mikolas, Nathan Noble and Ben Sage. Returning letter winners are Glaser, Mikolas, Goldstein, Chanthavong, juniors Danny Tack, Dom Martinez, and Josh Johnson and sophomore Noah Heintz.

The team, at 6-6 overall, 4-4 in the SBC, appears to be on their way to an improvement from last year, where they finished 8-13 and 6-8 in the conference, good for fourth place. The Rockets are led by Glaser at first singles, who has a winning record. LaFountain says he is "very proud" of Glaser's performance so far.

Glaser opened the season by defeating Fostoria's Zach Ward 6-1, 6-3, and has wins over Parker Campbell (Edison) twice, 6-1, 7-5 and 6-3, 4-6, 10-8, Will Cundiff (St. Mary) 6-1, 6-1, and Jack Dummering (Fremont St. Joseph) 6-0, 6-0.

Glaser has given some of his better competition a battle, but lost to Justin Hire (Rossford) 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, Cam Robinson (Willard) 6-2, 7-5, Ryan Stanbaugh (Bellevue) 2-6, 6-4, 7-5, J.T. Murray (Huron)



Oak Harbor senior Kyle Glaser. (Photo by Laura Bolander)

6-4, 6-1, and Brian Seisel (Tiffin Columbian) 6-4, 6-4.

Tack has held on to second singles most of the season, getting wins over Jair Flores (Willard) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, Jackson Dinsmore (St. Mary's) 6-4, 6-2, and Xander Reid (St. Joseph) 6-0, 6-2.

Tack also has losses to Joah Proctor (Edison) 6-3, 6-2, Trent Manlet (Bellevue)

6-2, 6-4, Joey Lenczyk (Huron) 6-0, 6-0, and Drew Vasko (TC) 6-0, 6-0.

Tack also teamed with classmate Josh Johnson in first doubles, but they fell to Edison's Jeff Snyder and Collen Smith, 6-3, 6-3.

Martinez has taken the second doubles slot, too, defeating Wyatt Cobb (6-2, 6-3), Zach Boggs (Rossford) 6-2, 6-2, but he fell

to Noah Proctor (Edison) 6-4, 6-4. At third singles, Martinez defeated Jaxson Masohari (St. Mary's) 6-2, 6-1, but fell to Otto Berkmuller (Edison) 6-2, 7-5, Brayden Thompson (Willard) 2-6, 6-4, 6-3, Gavin Brugnone (Bellevue) 6-4, 7-5, Isaac Cortez (TC) 6-0, 6-1,

At first doubles, Martinez teamed with Johnson, and they swept St. Mary's Tristan Obergon and Taylor Ohms 6-0, 6-0. He teamed with Mikolas against Huron's Jared Lenczyk and Sam Findley, and the Tigers prevailed 6-3, 6-2.

At third singles, Chanthavong defeated Carlos Carbajal (Fostoria) 6-1, 6-2 and Gavin Linkous (Rossford) 6-0, 6-2, but since has moved mostly to doubles.

At second doubles Chanthavong and Noble went on a tear, defeating Edison's Devin McLaren and Jonah Main, 7-6 (2), 6-1, Willard's Collen Hill and Grace Rothnhaar, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4, Bellevue's Matthew Higgins and Charles Littlejohn 6-3, 6-3, and St. Joseph's Jackson Wright and Michaela Hahn, 4-6, 6-4, 10-3 and St. Mary's Andrew Fullam and Jacob Harrison 7-5, 6-1.

Chanthavong and Noble did lose to Huron's Nick Walls and Dawson Berry 6-0, 6-2, to Columbian's Andrew Shawberry and Bryce Burns, 6-0, 6-3, and to Edison's Kris Maschari and Jonah Main, 6-0, 7-5.

Johnson has gotten his opportunity at third singles, losing to Huron's Mason Schindley 6-0, 6-2. He also teamed with Mikolas at first doubles to defeat Fostoria's Toni Hill-Hernandez and Jake Leboy 6-0, 6-0, Rossford's Luke Reiter and Chloe Madden 6-2, 6-2, Edison's Kris Maschari and Jeff Snyder 7-5, 1-6, 7-6 (1).

Johnson and Mikolas have had their setbacks, too, falling to Willard's Mayson Johnson and Grace Hall 6-3, 2-6, 6-1, Bellevue's Kaden Miller and Blake Hunter 6-4, 6-2, St. Mary's Parker Kasper and Charlie Kaftan 6-0, 6-2, and Columbian's Jacob Weingardt and Trey Shuey 6-0, 6-0.

Goldstein and Noble have teamed at second doubles, defeating Fostoria's Christian Price and Roberto Carbajal 6-0, 6-0 and Rossford's Zach Royal and Allie Misko 6-0, 6-0.

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C.J. Stroud (Press photo by Harold Hamilton/HEHphotos.smugmug.com)



Evan Pryor (21) (Press photo by Harold Hamilton/HEHphotos.smugmug.com)

C.J. Stroud leads a talented cast at the QB position

You cannot win games without scoring points. Do not be worried. Ohio State once again will have one of the best offenses you have ever seen.

No question that 6-foot-3, 218 pound sophomore C.J. Stroud should be the starting quarterback this fall after a year where he had a 72% pass completion with 4,435 yards, 44 touchdowns and only six interceptions. He was clearly far above his two competitors in the spring game and they have some pretty good credentials.

Add a bit more leadership skills and a few scampers to Stroud's resume by next fall and he may well get the Heisman Trophy, which many think he should have received in 2021.

Stroud made the fewest mistakes in the game, completing 14 of 22 passes for 120 yards and a TD. New defensive coach Jim Knowles said Stroud reminds him of retired NFL quarterback Eli Manning, who played at Ole Miss when Knowles coached there. That is quite a compliment.

Kyle McCord, a 6-3, 220-pound sophomore was the second quarterback used, said to have the strongest arm of the three and is the apparent back up QB. He threw for 129 yards, completing 14-of-20 and a TD pass to 6-5, 245-pound sophomore tight end Joe Royer.

McCord enrolled in classes at OSU in January of 2021. At that time, he was the nation's No. 25 ranked high school player regardless of position, the No. 3 quarterback and a five-star prospect according to 247Sports. He set high school league records for career passing yards at 6,887 and touchdown passes at 88 at St. Joseph's Prep in Mount Laurel, New Jersey.

Devin Brown, at 6-3, 205-pounds, is the probable No. 3 quarterback. A new recruited freshman who came in early and is rated as a five star player out of high school, he still has a black stripe on his helmet (every incoming freshman has a black stripe on their helmet that remains until the player makes a strong enough impression for it

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to be removed).
Brown completed 11 of 24 passes for 141 yards and one TD pass to 5-9, 188-pound sophomore wide receiver Reis Stocksedale. While there is a substantial difference in these QBs McCord and Brown have significant talent and will undoubtedly be much improved by next fall but will not replace Stroud.

The running backs with returning 5-10, 215-pound sophomore TreVeyon Henderson, 5-8, 225-pound sophomore Miyan Williams and new recruit, 5-10-, 198-pound redshirt freshman Evan Pryor will be explosive if the spring game is any indication. It will be hard for the coach to decide who will get the most carries.

The receiving corps is as good as the running backs, starting with Smith-Njigba, who had 1,600 yards receiving and 95 catches last year along with a 347-yard Rose Bowl performance. That set a record for any bowl game. Also showing promise is 6-2, 215-pound senior Xavier Johnson, 6-2, 205-pound sophomore Emeka Egbuka, 6-3, 205-pound sophomore Marvin Harrison Jr and Royer.

The offensive line is great and has a massive, experienced group of seniors including, Dawand Jones at 6-8 and 360 pounds. Depth, however, may be a concern.



Jon "Big Nut" Peters (Press photo by Harold Hamilton/HEHphotos.smugmug.com)

The defense should be dangerous with a new strategy and returning talent like with Ronnie Hickman, a 6-1, 205-pound junior safety with 100 tackles last year

In the post-game press conference, Day said the team had a very good spring and was coming along well but still needed a lot of improving. Day also noted that Ohio State is not an NFL team where we can still win the championship if we have losses. He said, at Ohio State, you must win every game.

Every year Ohio State has some of the highest numbers of players drafted into the NFL. Today many football players have a very strong desire to enjoy the fame and fortune that being an NFL player can provide. That is one of the reasons Ohio State is able to recruit so much talent consistently. That is also why many leave college as soon as they are eligible for the NFL draft (must be 3 years out of high school).

After the spring game, the Buckeyes lost five recruits to the transfer portal probably because they felt their chances to get the exposure needed for an NFL draft were limited if they were in a backup position. A few years ago, now Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow was one of those who transferred out of OSU in his senior year for the very same reason. It was a very smart move on his part.

Rest easy Buckeye fans, with the improved and new talent along with new coaching strategy the fall season and particularly the November game in The Shoe this year will be different, even against that improved team up north.

(Harold Hamilton is a freelance photographer from Northwood)

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New coach Jim Knowles knows how to build a defense

It seems like each college football head coach likes to put his own touch on the spring game. This year was no different.

Ohio State coach Ryan Day chose to have his first team offense play against the first team defense. Theoretically, that means the best 22 players go at it head to head. However, the quarterbacks were rotated and obviously, always on offense.

This arrangement made it difficult to fairly award team points appropriately to determine a winner, but no one counts points in the spring game anymore — at least not in the traditional manner.

The offense scored points in the typical fashion, but a hybrid system was created for the defense. Essentially, the defense got seven points for a touchdown, three for a takeaway or three downs and out. A sack was worth two points and a forced punt one point.

The defense never had the opportunity to throw a pass or kick a field goal. The final score? Offense 34, Defense 26, which means the defense had to walk back to their facilities and have hot dogs while the offense rode the bus and had a steak dinner. This has been a long time tradition after the spring game, and that remained the same.

To honor the late Dwayne Haskins, a recent record setting Ohio State quarterback, who died in an accident in Florida, 6-foot-3, 218 pound sophomore quarterback J.T. Stroud wore a jersey with Dwayne Haskins' name and number on it for the first series of downs.

Stroud said it would give Haskins one last chance to take the field in The Shoe. As if helped from above, on the first drive of the game, Stroud threw a 29-yard TD pass to 6-0, 198-pound junior Jaxon Smith-Njigba. The team also had the initials DH on their helmets to honor Haskins.

Last year Ohio State had the best college offense in the nation. The defense was 49th. The change of defensive coaches early last year did not make much of an improvement so in January the Buckeyes hired Oklahoma States assistant coach Jim Knowles, who coached the No. 1 defense in the nation last year.

Knowles will be paid \$1.9 million (plus bonuses) per year, for four years.



TreVeyon Henderson (Press photo by Harold Hamilton/HEHphotos.smugmug.com)

Only three other college assistant coaches make more and two of them are at Clemson. It took Knowles four years to reach the top at Oklahoma State. I doubt if he will be given that much time in Columbus to make some major improvements.

The game was interesting, but it still left many unanswered questions. The defense was never allowed to touch the quarterback and the other players did not seem to be hitting very hard. No point in risking injury to the "best 22 players" on the team, I guess.

As the game progressed, quarterbacks, receivers and running backs were rotated.

Also, Knowles has only been in Columbus since January, and it takes time to make major changes to the defense and no reason to show the world what may be in store next fall.

It was noticeable, however, that the defensive backs were more aggressive and tighter in their coverage. That was one of Knowles' goals. He had commented that the pass rushers seemed to be a bit slow getting to the quarterback in the past and he wanted to use multiple defensive sets to confuse the quarterback so he has less time to plan his moves. With aggressive

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Coach Ryan Day (Press photo by Harold Hamilton/HEHphotos.smugmug.com).

pass rushers, it could lead to more sacks and turnovers.

Some of this could be seen in the spring game. The defensive backs were aggressive confirming Day's comments that they have had a very good spring. Knowles has four first team senior linemen and two junior linebackers all with a ton of experience. Expect a meaner, faster, and more skillful 4-2-5 defense with the new coach's guidance this fall.

(Harold Hamilton is a freelance photographer from Northwood)



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Lake, Genoa players help Valentis win Indy Burn Cup

The Valentis Athletica Boys 05 travel soccer team won the Indy Burn Cup Tournament Championship in Indiana the weekend before Easter.

The boys faced tough competition, including beating the USAI team, ranked sixth in Indiana, and the Missouri Rush, ranked 10th in Missouri. Players from Genoa include Nathan Tipton, Noah Tipson, Tyler Harper, Matthew Lickert, and Wyatt Steinmiller. Players from Lake are Greyson Reed, Jackson Gladieux, Auggie Warton, and Gael Rios.

The Valentis Athletica Soccer Club (VASC) was started by Director Tim Memmer, the Genoa boys head varsity soccer coach, about 20 years ago for off-season training of youth boys and girls soccer players.

Working with Memmer to coach the Valentis Boys 05 team is Lake head varsity coach Brian Reed.

This year there are nine high school age boys' and girls' teams consisting of 30 different schools that travel to various regional soccer tournaments.

Last fall the club players were awarded 31 all-league, 18 all-district and three all-state honors while playing for their high schools.



The Valentis Athletica Boys 05 travel soccer team — first row (left to right) — Carter Broshious (Bowling Green), Dempsey Fox (BG), Nathan Tipton (Genoa), Tyler Harper (Genoa), Greyson Reed (Lake), Grant Sonner (BG), and Noah Tipton (Genoa). Second row — Coach Brian Reed, Alexander Heil (Perrysburg), Ethan Decker (BG), Jackson Gladieux (Lake), Auggie Warton (Lake), Matthew Lickert (Genoa), Nathaniel Herod (Defiance), Wyatt Steinmiller (Genoa), Ashten Searfoss (Miller City), and coach Tim Memmer. Third row — Isaac McClellan (St. Francis). Not Pictured — Gael Rios (Lake).

Faykosh at the helm

Eastwood has hired Jason Faykosh as head boys basketball coach for the 2022-2023 school year. Faykosh replaces Todd Henline who recently retired from his head coaching duties.

Faykosh is a 2009 graduate of Eastwood High School and a 2013 graduate of Ohio Northern University where he earned 4 letters on their mens basketball team and served as captain.

His coaching experiences include coaching basketball, football and track at Eastwood and in the Bowling Green School District where he is currently an elementary and middle school physical education teacher. His most recent coaching experience was as the junior varsity boys basketball coach at Eastwood.

Faykosh was hired as head coach at the April 18 board of education meeting.

"We are excited for coach Faykosh to start his coaching duties with us and excited that we had the opportunity to hire a coach who is an Eastwood graduate and exhibits the character and culture that Eastwood Athletics is known for," said Eastwood Athletic Director Jeff Hill.



Summer camps

Cardinal Stritch is holding summer camps for athletes in the greater Toledo area and the Strich community. Camps are run by the varsity head coaches and involve the varsity athletes.

A baseball camp will be June 10-12 from 10 a.m. to noon each day at the Stritch baseball diamond for incoming grades 5-8 in the fall of 2022. A girls basketball camp

is June 13-14 at the Stritch gymnasium from 5-7 p.m. each day for incoming grades 4-8.

A football camp is June 15-17 from 5-7 p.m. each day at the Stritch football field for incoming grades K-8. A co-ed soccer camp will be June 22-24 from 5-7 p.m. each day at the Stritch soccer field for incoming grades K-8. A boys basketball camp is June 27-28 from 5:30-7 p.m. each day at the Stritch gymnasium for incoming grades 4-8.

A volleyball camp is July 13-15 from 9-11 a.m. each day at the Stritch gymnasium for incoming grades K-8.

All campers receive a free t-shirt and cost is \$30 for each camp. Sign up at cardinalstritch.org/athleticcamps/.

Central Catholic High School offers camps serving students from pre-K through incoming ninth graders. Prices range from \$20 to \$60, and the camps will take place from June 6-July 14. Camps are available for baseball, boys' basketball, cheerleading, dance, football, girls' basketball, girls' lacrosse, girls' soccer and girls' volleyball. Contact Greg Dempsey at gdempsey@centralcatholic.org or call 419-255-2280.

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Competitor plans wedding around national matches

By Ashley Brugnone
CMP Staff Writer
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"My dad likes to say that 'shooters are weird,' and I think he is right about that," said Julie Klusmeier Landis, an air rifle competitor from Cincinnati.

"That makes me think of the Dr. Seuss quote, 'We are all a little weird and life's a little weird, and when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love.' Though most people apply this to romantic love, it can also be applied to friendships."

Julie began in marksmanship when she was 16 years old and has since created a network of experiences and lifelong bonds with her fellow competitors.

"I really enjoy competing and getting to see all my friends and making new friends," she said.

Marksmanship and the relationships she's built through the sport have become so central to her life that nothing can keep her from them – not even her wedding.

After getting engaged to her now husband, Mark, Julie knew right away that timing was essential. Through all the preparation and difficult decisions that come with wedding planning, creating a ceremony around the Civilian Marksmanship Program's (CMP) Monthly Air Gun Matches was, in Julie's mind, an easy choice to make.

"I planned my wedding around the match, in part, because I have shooting friends who I was inviting, and I didn't want them to have to choose between the match and my wedding," she said. "And because I wanted to shoot the match too!"

As the 27-year old began to make arrangements, she soon realized the time of year she was hoping to get married in was right in the middle of the competition season. She quickly got her hands on a CMP match schedule and eliminated the days that wouldn't work, which ultimately narrowed down certain wedding details as well.

"Knowing the match dates actually did help as there were several venues I looked at that only had match days available, so they were easily crossed off the list," she said.

After rejecting venue after venue that conflicted with the Monthly Matches, she admitted that her mom was surprised at just how serious Julie was about getting the date right. Her mom, though understanding, had doubts that Julie was going to stick to her original plan of competing so close to her wedding.

"When Mom realized that I was actually going to go to a match the week before my wedding, she kept telling me I was crazy and that I would end up not wanting to do that match," Julie said. "She was wrong! I did go, and I had fun!"

Though some thought the decision to organize her wedding around air gun competition was peculiar, Mark was always supportive of the idea.

"His concern was that at the end, we were married and happy," she said.

The week prior to Camp Perry

She and Mark settled on a wedding date of Sept. 25, 2021, in Julie's hometown of Cincinnati. The date landed a week be-



Julie Klusmeier Landis and her husband Mark purposely planned their wedding around her air rifle competition schedule.

fore the September Monthly Match at Camp Perry – just a few hours north. She admitted that though she tried to stay focused on the match on competition day, she found her mind wandering to those last-minute wedding details. The distraction ended up serving as a training session in mental focus and competing under pressure.

"Every time I recognized I was distracted, I took a moment to breathe and refocus on the competition and what was happening in that moment," she said. "It was difficult, but it was rewarding."

Her strategy worked, with Julie marking a fourth place finish overall in the 60 Shot Rifle Match.

After competition was over, all that was left to do was marry the love of her life. She didn't incorporate marksmanship into her wedding, wanting to keep the festivities traditional, but her friends joked about coming to the wedding wearing their thick, leather shooting jackets and pants – although none actually went through with the idea.

"To my slight disappointment," Julie joked.

The wedding may have been traditional, but Julie and Mark's relationship blossomed from a modern-day romance that began online. From the start, Mark was fully aware of Julie's interest in shooting sports. She used several pictures of herself shooting within her dating profile page and fashioned her username after the make and model of her air rifle. While Mark hasn't had experience in shooting, he's shown endless support for Julie's passion and has even attended a few CMP Monthly Matches when able.

Mark has kept busy with passions of his own since the two have been together, finishing grad school to become an architect and now working hard to remodel the couple's home. Julie says once they have



Julie Klusmeier Landis said some of the friends she's made through air gun traveled the farthest to attend the wedding. (Photo courtesy Civilian Marksmanship Program)

more free time, she plans to take Mark out to the range and teach him the fundamentals of the sport. She also hopes to raise a family of young rifle competitors, just as she was.

Competing as a youth

Julie has been involved with marksmanship since 2011 when she joined a youth smallbore program at her local club, the Fairfield Sportsmen's Association. Luckily for her, a club member had started a youth air rifle team that same year and offered the new program to some of the smallbore athletes. Thus, began her journey into air competitions.

She continued with the sport as a hobby through her high school and college years. Although she wasn't on any scholastic teams, it didn't stop her from traveling and competing three weekends each month – and sometimes more. She has even competed in the National Junior Olympics and has gone on to fire in other national-level events, including USA Shooting's annual Winter Airgun event.

"After graduation, I continued with as many matches as I could. I still traveled about every other weekend for competitions," she explained. "Once I met Mark, we actually arranged our date nights around the nights I knew I needed to either be out of town or needed to get a good night sleep for a match the following day."

When she aged out of the junior programs, she became an instructor to the younger generation instead. She also used her downtime during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many matches were cancelled, to earn her National Rifle Association instructor certification.

As COVID restrictions began to reduce, Julie resumed competing at as many matches as possible, like the CMP Monthly Matches and the CMP Aces Postals pro-

gram, which is designed to be fired from an athlete's home range. Her involvement in competitions has not only provided her an outlet for her ambition but has also been a great source of notable connections in her life.

"I have found many lifelong friends in the shooting sports," she said. "It speaks volumes that of the guests of my wedding who were not family, my shooting friends came the farthest by far – some from Michigan, one from Maryland, and one from mid-Kentucky."

Though not acknowledged exclusively during her ceremony, Julie's wedding can be celebrated as a testament to the unique relationships that inevitably seem to form within the field of marksmanship athletes.

"I'm not quite sure why the bonds of friendship grow so strong in the shooting community, but I know they do," she admitted. "I always find it a little strange that I have such good friends that I see maybe eight to 10 times a year, if that many, and we can all just pick back up where we last saw one another."

She also remarked how rivalries in other sports can turn bitter, while those within the shooting sports move more toward admiration for their opponents.

"We generally say we are competing 'WITH' not competing 'AGAINST' our fellow shooters," she said. "This fosters a sense of community and respect even outside of one's particular team."

As it turns out, those weird shooters know a thing or two about the value of human ties – whether romantically or not. Like marriage, being a marksman is a lifelong commitment, both on and off the firing line.

"The camaraderie of the shooting sports is truly a unique and indescribable situation," she said. "I can't really describe how much my shooting friends mean to me."

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