

NATIONAL SIGNING DAY 2017

SAINT IGNATIUS
WILDCATS



Connor Adams

University of Louisville



When you look at elite baseball players in the state of Ohio, Connor Adams just has to be in the discussion. Here is a player on head coach Brad Ganor's squad who has gone above and beyond the expectations of pitching in high school baseball and has excelled enough to get the attention of one of the most powerful collegiate baseball programs in the country – Louisville.

In 2016, Adams pitched the lowest ERA's of the starting pitchers for the Wildcats, with a 1.08 ERA along with a 6-3 record in 11 starts. In the past two seasons, he has been called to pitch in the State Semifinal, both as a sophomore and a junior, which shows you how much confidence Coach Ganor has in him and how progressed he is as a pitcher. As Mr. Eddie Dwyer would say, Adams is "mature beyond his years."

An interesting fact about Adams is that he is tied for first with most no-hitters pitched in program history with two. He gets 6/7 credit for his first no-hitter, as it was a combined no-hitter in 2015 with closer Murphy O'Brien vs. Willoughby South. But then he pitched a complete no-hitter in the District Championship that season vs. Berea-Midpark. You have to understand that he was just a sophomore at that point and would finish the season with the best record as a starter with a 7-1 record, finishing with a 1.05 ERA. In his first ever start on the varsity level, Adams pitched six complete innings, giving up just one run on two hits and throwing six strikeouts on 40 pitches. After that performance, fans knew they had seen the future of Saint Ignace baseball.

The Shaker Heights native will further his academic and baseball career at the University of Louisville after he finishes his senior campaign.

"[It's a] good baseball program to go along side with the feel of actually being on a campus but still being in a big city," Adams said. "I wanted to go somewhere that was considered a big school, but also far enough away from home that I would feel like I'm going away for college in a new environment with new people around me."

'Good' might be an understatement when describing Louisville Cardinal baseball. Louisville is currently ranked 8th in the Pre-season USA Today Coaches' Poll for Division 1 and 10th in the Preseason D1Baseball.com Top 25 Poll. The Cardinals went 50-14 in 2016 before bowing out in the Super Regionals. Louisville has made it to the College World Series three times and is a five-time Regional Champ.

Adams hopes to get even better at the University of Louisville in the hopes of getting drafted. However, his eyes are currently on winning States this upcoming spring for the Wildcats.

Brian Almady

Mercyhurst University

Brian Almady joins John Spellacy as a Saint Ignatius offensive linemen who will play college ball. Almady will be furthering his football and academic career at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Almady slowly moved his way up as a starting right tackle. Almady was vital in helping create one of the toughest ground attacks in the state of Ohio in the 2016 football season, paving running lanes for Mark Bobinski, Jimmy Andrews, and Dean Stowers. At 6'4", 310, Almady was one of the biggest offensive linemen the school has ever seen, and showed that size matters out on the field.

"The strength of the offensive line was us being one, and if it's us not being one group it's not going to work well," Almady said in a Time Warner Cable High School Sports interview this year.

Almady aided the Wildcats in their journey back to the state title game in 2016. Almady blocked for an offensive line in 2016 that allowed the Wildcats to rush for 3,304 yards and 47 touchdowns. Almady played a large role in helping the Cats defeat state powers such as Mentor, Archbishop Moeller, St. Xavier, St. Edward, and Olentangy Liberty this past season en route to the program's 13th State Championship appearance.

Almady will now be going to play for Lakers at Mercyhurst University in Erie, a Division II program out of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.

"I ended up choosing Mercyhurst University as my college. After visiting many schools, I thought my mind was made up," Almady said. "However, visiting Mercyhurst made it clear to me that my heart wasn't in my previous decision. Mercyhurst felt like home to me just like how Saint Ignatius feels like home. It had the perfect balance of academics, athletics, and more importantly, it is another Catholic school."

Like many past Wildcats, Almady is sure to thrive there.

The Lakers went 3-8 this past season and will be returning many of their offensive linemen next season. He will also be joining former Wildcat defensive back Quinn Lawless, who is currently playing for Mercyhurst.

"Athletically, I want to show my new teammates that I am passionate about being apart of a winning program," said Almady. "I want to lead by example with the fundamentals and a hard work ethic that was installed in me by our coaches here at Saint Ignatius. As I continue my football career and get stronger and faster, I pray that I may one day have an opportunity to reach the next level."



CJ Ambrosio

Duke University



Runner. Leader. Champion.

CJ Ambrosio is all of those things, and much more.

The senior cross country and track and field star has left his imprint on Saint Ignatius with his talent and accomplishments, but moreso with his hard work.

Ambrosio helped to guide the Wildcats to state championships in cross country in 2015 and track and field in 2016. Ambrosio notched a fourth place finish individually at states this season, earning All-American honors for the second time.

The Avon native set a number of records along the way. Ambrosio now holds the school record times for the 5K, 3200m, and 4x1600m races, showing his speed on both the cross country course in the fall and the track in the spring. He also notched a time of 9:01 in the 3200m, placing 12th in the nation and second in Ohio during his junior year.

“CJ epitomized the best qualities of an Ignatius runner. He was a strong leader,” head cross country coach Dr. Michael Gallagher ‘71 said. “He was always physically and mentally prepared for his races. He gave 100%, all the time, every time.”

Ambrosio has decided to matriculate to Duke University in the fall, a prominent North Carolina school that fit perfectly.

“Duke offered us a deal we couldn’t pass up – Excellent academic school, great engineering program, located in beautiful Durham NC,” Ambrosio said.

Raised in North Carolina for nine years, Ambrosio will run alongside former Wildcat Tom Sullivan ‘16. Ambrosio has big goals with the Blue Devils.

“I want to win ACC Title with Duke in Cross Country and make nationals at track,” he said.

Ambrosio certainly has the talent and work ethic to do so.



Thomas Barrett

University of Kansas

Thomas Barrett will be remembered as one of the key reasons the 2016 Saint Ignatius varsity football team made it back to the state title game in December. As a defensive back, Barrett could be seen laying out massive hits on opponents and getting to the ball quickly in his first season starting for the Wildcats.

Barrett finished the 2016 season with 8.5 tackles, 1 interception, and 5 breakups in 12 of the 15 games played for the Wildcats. Barrett will now be playing for a program that is on the rise at the University of Kansas. The Jayhawks went 2-10 this past season, but got one of the biggest wins in program history when they knocked off Texas.

A critical part of the mighty Wildcats defense in 2016, Barrett will be focused on helping to build the Jayhawks football program into a consistent bowl contender. At the same time, Barrett will be building his own business career at the highly competitive University of Kansas School of Business. The Westlake native is one of the smartest in his class and hopes to succeed at one of the best schools in the nation.

Another interesting fact about Barrett is the fact that he has not missed one day of school in his four years at Saint Ignatius High School. Now that's grinding it out, both on the field and off.



Brent Chernosky

Bellarmino University



Saint Ignatius lacrosse has long been a force in Northeast Ohio, but only recently have the Lax Cats become a state powerhouse.

It is players like Brent Chernosky who have helped the Lax Cats made such a leap in recent years.

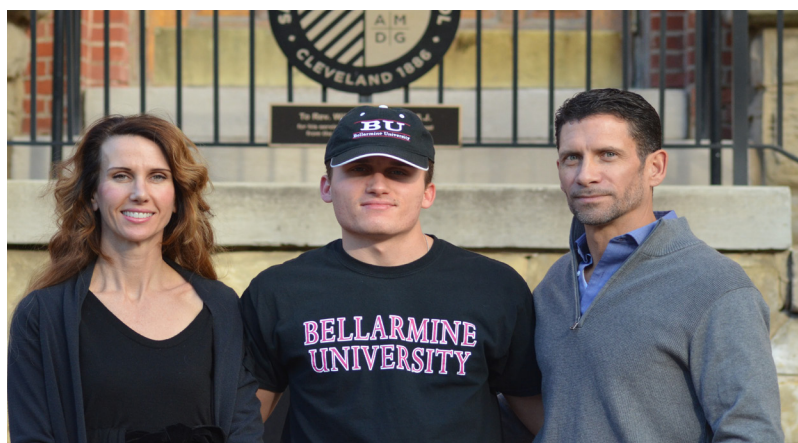
The Berea native has poured in hours of hard work on the field, showing his leadership for the program's many promising young players. A midfielder, Chernosky made the team as a freshman and earned significant playing time by his sophomore season, quickly becoming a team leader and major contributor as a starter.

Chernosky played an essential role in the Wildcats' postseason run in 2016, as Chernosky and the Lax Cats reached the state championship game for the first time in program history. He tallied 14 goals and led the team's midfielders with 13 assists last season.

Bellarmino University will be the next stop for Chernosky. The Catholic university in Louisville, Kentucky boasts strong academics and a Division I lacrosse program.

"I chose Bellarmine because it seemed to be a great fit for me athletically and personally," Chernosky said. "It is a smaller school with smaller class sizes, and I feel like I will benefit more in this environment than in a larger school. It also has a very strong nursing program, which is something that I would like to pursue in college. Athletically, the coaching staff is great and the program keeps improving every year. My class coming in next year has a lot of talented players from some powerhouse schools and I feel like we will have a very strong team."

Chernosky will look to make an immediate impact for the Knights, as his goal is to help Bellarmine win a national championship. In the meantime, Chernosky will enjoy one last season as a key leader of the Lax Cats.



Michael Chime

Yale University

For the second year in a row, the Wildcats will send a football player to the Ivy League. Last season, Jack Cook '16 began his football career at Harvard University. This upcoming fall, defensive lineman Mike Chime will head to New Haven, Connecticut to play for the Bulldogs of Yale University.

Chime comes off a senior season in which he helped a huge, strong defensive line shutout opponents. Chime provided critical momentum shifts in games that helped the Wildcats finish 13-2 in the 2016. This past fall, he was second in tackles with 58.5, notched 25.5 tackles for a loss of 90 yards, recorded 9 sacks for 52 yards, and forced two big fumbles.

Chime's season climaxed at the end of the year in the State Championship game. The senior got the Wildcats off to the best start you can imagine. On the ensuing punt after a St. Xavier three-and-out, Chime broke through the line and blocked the punt, picked it up and took it to the endzone for the game's first touchdown to give the Wildcats a 7-0 lead in the state final.

Chime averaged 2.5 tackles a game and was one of the leaders this on the defensive line, which also included Joe Gibbons and Mike Czaja. The defense held opponents to just 1,162 rushing yards in 2016, and just 77.5 per game and 2.5 per rush. Very impressive for one of the biggest and toughest defenses the school has ever seen.

Chime will now play for a historic program at Yale University in the Ivy League. The Bulldogs are one of the winningest programs in college football, and Chime will help Yale improve on a 3-6 2016 campaign, which included a win over Harvard.

Chime certainly has the tools and the skills to succeed at Yale.



Erik Demchuk

Paradise Valley College

Erik Demchuk, much like Connor Adams, has been on the rise in the Saint Ignatius baseball program since his sophomore season as a utility player for Coach Ganor. Demchuk has the ability to play a little outfield, infield, and is a part time pitcher.

In 2016, Demchuk appeared in 14 games and batted .227 with 5 hits in 27 plate appearances. He will be one of the leaders for the Wildcats this upcoming season and looks to have a breakout season in the starting lineup for Saint Ignatius. His sophomore year is when he really showed the program what he is made of, hitting .279 as a mainstay on the junior varsity level with 4 RBI's and 7 runs. He also was a consistent starting pitcher for Coach Matt Rosinski's 2015 junior varsity squad. He notched a 2.01 ERA and finished with a perfect 6-0 record. He struck out 19 batters in 7 starts and let up just 13 runs for the 2015 JV 'Cats.

The North Royalton native will now continue his academic and baseball career at Paradise Valley Community College in Paradise Valley, Arizona, home of the Pumas. Paradise Valley Community College is a Division II program associated with the National Junior College Athletic Association. The team went 25-29 last year and Demchuk looks to bring his winning ways from Saint Ignatius and transfer that to Arizona.

"I chose Paradise Valley because I have wanted to play baseball in the Southwest ever since I was little," Demchuk said. "I feel that it will open up a lot of doors for me athletically and academically. I am excited to have the sun all year round and be able to play baseball in the middle of the winter. I also hope to really build on my skills to become a better ball player."

Since it is a community college, Demchuk plans on staying at Paradise Valley for two years, develop his baseball skills in The Copper State, and move onto an NCAA affiliated program either on the West Coast or in Ohio to take his baseball talent to the next level.



Ryan Jacobs

Miami University

Ryan Jacobs is one of the four Wildcat Baseball players headed to play at the next level, and he will be the one staying closest to home, heading Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

The Chagrin Falls native heads into his senior season as a three-year starter, being a mainstay since his sophomore season. Jacobs has developed into a huge bat for the Wildcats, batting a .311 average in 2016 with 15 RBI's, 13 runs, and 7 doubles, second best on the team in that category. He has continued to improve each game and during the offseason, and looks to make even more noise this upcoming season with a lot of motivation after back-to-back state semifinal appearances.

Another part of his game that has improved is his defense in the outfield. Jacobs developed into a reliable starting left fielder last year. He had 29 putouts from the No. 7 position on the field and had just one error all season long playing one of the toughest positions on the field.

Jacobs heads to a program that went 27-29 next fall, but an impressive 14-10 record in the Mid-American Conference.

"I chose Miami University because it has been a dream of mine since freshman year to be able to play baseball as a RedHawk," Jacobs said. "I fell in love with the school the first time I saw it. The coaches at Miami have been very good to me over the past 2 years as far as my recruiting goes, and I could not be more excited to suit up and play for them. I also feel that Miami is a school that I can not only thrive in athletics, but academically and socially."

With one more season as a Wildcat and with his eyes currently on winning a state title this upcoming season, he has set his goals for the collegiate level.

"My goal athletically in college is to be able to contribute to the team in any way possible, trying my best to help the team win the MAC, and make it all the way to Omaha to compete in the College World Series," Jacobs said.



Joey Libertin

University of Chicago



Joey Libertin did not start his Saint Ignatius swimming career as an experienced swimmer.

Upon arrival as a freshman, Libertin was a self-described “amateur swimmer,” simply hoping to make the sectional team. He poured in time and effort into improving, and surprised even himself by year’s end.

Libertin punched a ticket to districts, becoming the first in his family to accomplish the feat.

Now, in his senior season, Libertin has become a team leader and one of the best swimmers in the area. The team captain has accomplished a lot in his four year career, and is preparing for the quickly approaching postseason. The Highland Heights native gave fans a glimpse of his talent in the National Catholic Championships two weeks ago, notching a time of 1.43.76 in the 200 freestyle finals, good for ninth place out of 36 competitors from across the nation.

“He has expanded his versatility this year by becoming one of the team’s faster sprinters to go along with his top spot in the middle distance and distance events,” head coach Mike Lehto said.

Following his senior year, Libertin will join a school known for recruiting the best from across the country, the University of Chicago. Libertin believe he’ll fit in well there.

“I chose UChicago because of its great academic, beautiful campus, and close swim team,” Libertin said. “Since my freshman year, I have wanted to go there and when I was accepted I couldn’t be more thrilled. Along with being a top academic school, the UChicago swim team was very close knit and I felt at home as soon as I stepped on campus. On my overnight visit, the classes captivated my attention, and the student life seemed to be amazing.”

Libertin’s ultimate athletic goal is to win an individual championship with the Maroons.

“This is a lofty goal, but it is something I want to do,” Libertin said. “Besides that, I want to contribute to my new team the best I can do whether that be in regular season meets, conferences, or NAAs.”

**Joey Libertin cannot attend today due to a prior commitment.*

Stephen Milhoan Xavier University

Today is a bittersweet day for Saint Ignatius soccer fans.

It's a sweet occasion as four players, including one of the best in school history, committ to play soccer in college.

Yet one of the top classes in the soccer program's history departs today. Watching these young men on the field has been absolute joy for fans of the Soccer Cats.

One of the Wildcats' most fun players to watch, Stephen Milhoan, signs his national letter of intent today to play soccer at Xavier University.

Milhoan made the Wildcats' back-to-back-to-back state championships possible with his nimble moves and powerful kick. The forward set numerous records in his four years, including the mark for goals in a game (7) and a career (80).

National recognition has rightly flowed in steadily for Milhoan. The Medina native received the Gatorade Boys Player of the Year award last season and was named the NSCAA National High School Player of the Year for the 2016 season.

"Winning the most prestigious high school award just makes me want to work that much harder for college," said Milhoan.

The young man has carried himself well off the field, too, keeping his grades up and always showing a humility and maturity beyond his years.

So Milhoan's committment to another Jesuit school in Xavier University should come as no surprise.

"I chose Xavier University because when I went down on my visit, I had the gut feeling that this was the best spot from me," Milhoan said. "I loved the coaches and how the team came together as a family. The campus and the students gives the feeling of a bigger Ignatius."

Milhoan will look to make an impact immediate for the Division I Musketeers. His goal is to "have a break out freshman year and be invited to the 2018 MLS Draft next year."

A lofty goal indeed. But with Milhoan, no goal is out of reach.



Braydon Nelson

St. Bonaventure University



Braydon Nelson enters his senior season as one of the Saint Ignatius baseball team's elite starters. The Wildcat hurler will head to St. Bonaventure next fall with some Saint Ignatius history with him.

Nelson will be the third straight Wildcat in three seasons to go to St. Bonaventure and play for the Bonnies. In 2015, Samuel Fuller '15, an all-star center fielder who brought his quickness to the basepaths, started as a captain in his freshman year at St. Bonaventure. Then this upcoming spring, Murphy O'Brien will make his collegiate debut alongside Fuller for the Bonnies. Also, current Saint Ignatius first base/assistant coach John Whelan graduated as a Bonnie.

Nelson will be next in 2018, as he committed to St. Bonaventure this past month. The Brecksville native has risen as a middle reliever and/or starter for Coach Brad Ganor. Nelson finished the 2016 campaign with a 3-0 record and 3 saves, and had an impressive 0.63 ERA.

He threw back-to-back complete games earning his 2nd and 3rd wins vs. Holy Name and Canton Central Catholic this past season, and did not allow a run in either outing. He had two huge appearances in the 2016 postseason when he got the save and closed out the District Championship game and Regional Championship game, helping the Wildcats return to the State Tournament.

The National Merit Scholar will head to St. Bonaventure for the outstanding academics more than anything. Nelson's father received his MBA from the Franciscan university in Allegheny, New York, and the starting hurler for the Wildcats this upcoming spring hopes to do the same. The Bonnies Baseball program has not made it to its conference tournament since 2008, and haven't made it to the NCAA Regionals since 2004, however the addition of a strong arm in Nelson will help strengthen the Bonnies pitching staff in the coming years.

Tommy Patacca

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)

Tommy Patacca will be one of four Soccer Cats this year heading off to play at the collegiate level, and much like the others, he will head to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) with some bling.

Patacca graduates as a three-time state champion and two-time national champion with head coach Michael McLaughlin's Wildcats. Patacca was one of the leading defenders out on the pitch in both 2015 and 2016. He led a defense that allowed an average of under a goal per game, and shutout opponents 13 times in 23 games in 2016. Patacca became known for his aggressive approach on the field and played tough defense, helping the Wildcats to get into an easy offensive rhythm and control the ball.

The Independence, Ohio native will always remember winning the third state championship. Patacca guided the Soccer Cats to a state-record third consecutive boys state title, a feat no other Ohio school has achieved.

Now getting ready to play on the next level, Patacca is eager to arrive at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis to play for the Jaguars, a Division I member of the Summit League. The Jaguars are a program coming off only a two-win season, yet are on the rise with a talented sophomore class, and a phenomenal incoming freshmen class led by Patacca.

"I chose to attend IUPUI because the university offers exactly what I'm looking for," Patacca said. "I'm excited to begin studying in the energy engineering field, and play soccer for a great program with outstanding coaches."

Patacca now hopes on making a positive impact for IUPUI this coming fall and help build future success in the program, led by Brian Barnett, who will be entering his second season at the helm of the Jaguars. Patacca wants to learn as much as possible from others and develop his game to its fullest potential.



Kaden Russell

Duke University

Kaden Russell will go down as one of the best wrestlers ever to walk the halls of Wildcat High. Russell has a unique story, which caught the eye of Blue Devils of Duke University.

Russell, a native of Kent, Ohio, suffered a knee injury that kept him sidelined both his freshman and sophomore seasons. So in his junior year, in the words of outstanding head coach Mark Sullivan, “he was an unknown.” Well, Russell took that underdog role to heart and came away with a breakout junior season, capturing the 182-pound Division I State Championship by defeating Eric Deluse of Lancaster, 4-3.

He recently broke the record for fastest pin in school history with a 5-second takedown. He also captured the 182-pound National Catholic Invitational Championship.

Russell will be joining another successful Saint Ignatius wrestler to head to the Atlantic Coast Conference. George DiCamillo '12 is currently at the University of Virginia, wrestling for the Cavaliers. DiCamillo is a three-time ACC Champion at 133 pounds.

One of Russell's most prized accomplishments, however, happens to be off the field. Starting in 2015, the Saint Ignatius Athletic Department has awarded one player from each sport to either wear or represent the number '34' in honor of Mr. Jim Skerl '74, who lost his battle with cancer in 2014. Mr. Skerl's push to fight for justice among the world and a deep passion and love for Christ meant a lot to Kaden, as he was honored to wear the number 34 in 2015 on the football field. Kaden started one year for head coach Chuck Kyle's Wildcats as a defensive back, finishing with 14 tackles and 2 breakups. Russell received the honor again this year on the wrestling team.

“Earning the #34 Mr. Skerl Award for football in 2015 and again in 2016 for wrestling are high on my list of accomplishments because Mr. Skerl was such a great man,” Russell said.



Dimitri Simcox

Columbia University

In the past few years, the Saint Ignatius swimming and diving team has grown by leaps and bounds. Much of the progress can be credited to the seven-member senior class, including one special member, Dimitri Simcox.

The Lakewood native has poured in his time and effort to help the Aqua Cats become one of the best teams in the state. Last season, thanks in part to Simcox's performances in his events, the Wildcats finished seventh at states. Simcox placed 10th in the 50 free and notched a solid sixth place in the 100 free.

Simcox and the Wildcats have also started out the season well, performing especially well at the National Catholic Championships in Baltimore, Maryland. Simcox has played a critical role, including at the National Catholic Championships, staking 3rd in the 100 free at 47.06.

Above all, Simcox calls his top accomplishment "being a part of a growing swimming program at Saint Ignatius, and being able to compete at the state meet at the end of the season."

Simcox will continue his promising young career at Columbia University in New York City. The senior chose the Ivy League school for "the location, the academic opportunities, and the coaches and team members."

Simcox has lofty goals for his first season as a Lion.

"I want to score at the championship meet as a freshman, and help win dual meets throughout the season," Simcox said. "I want to continue to improve throughout my 4 years and potentially make the NCAA championship meet."



John Spellacy

East Carolina University



John Spellacy finished his football career at Saint Ignatius as a three-year starting center for the 11-time State Champion Wildcats. He played center for two Saint Ignatius elite quarterbacks Saint Ignatius, Dennis Grosel '16 and Pat Ryan '17, and by his senior year, Spellacy was the leader of the one of the biggest and toughest offensive lines that Wildcats fans will ever see.

"Starting as a sophomore, that doesn't happen a whole lot at Saint Ignatius," said head football coach Chuck Kyle '69. "But John is a special lineman, and I could not have told you at the beginning of his sophomore year that he would start. But as the seasons were going, I thought 'This kid should start.'"

The Westlake native was one of the major factors in helping the Wildcats return to the State Championship in 2016 after missing the playoffs in 2015, despite a 5-4 record. Spellacy, whose most memorable moment was being voted captain by his teammates, led an offensive line in 2016 that paved way for over 3,304 rushing yards on the ground and 47 rushing touchdowns. Spellacy was vital in helping Saint Ignatius take down state powers Mentor, Archbishop Moeller, St. Xavier, St. Edward, and Olentangy Liberty this past season, as the Wildcats were only a few plays away from winning the school's record 12th state championship.

For his efforts John was named to the cleveland.com Offensive All-Star team as an Honorable Mention and first team All-Ohio.

Spellacy will be going to help anchor the offensive line at East Carolina University. The Pirates are coming off a 3-9 season, so Spellacy has a chance to rebuild the program.

"I chose East Carolina University because it offers the best combination of academic and athletic opportunities for me, and because they showed tremendous faith in me throughout the recruiting process," Spellacy said. "After meeting all of the players and coaches, I knew it was the right place for me."

Spellacy said he hopes to make a positive contribution to the program. He definitely left his imprint on Saint Ignatius.



Patrick Strauss

Le Moyne College

As far as lanky soccer players go, Patrick Strauss is one of the most humble and effective ones you'll see on the pitch.

The Lakewood, Ohio native brought security and a calmness on the backline, rarely showing any stress or allowing himself to succumb to pressure. Strauss played an essential part of a Wildcats squad that won its third straight Division I OHSA State Soccer Championship last fall.

The title might not have been possible without Strauss' veteran play as a defender, and even sometimes as a midfielder. Strauss did not always touch the ball frequently, often lurking back and waiting for opponents to approach before unexpectedly striking. His aptness for defense led to his selection for the High School All-American game in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Strauss will continue his promising career on the pitch and in the classroom at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York. The Division II Jesuit school suits him perfectly.

"I chose to attend Le Moyne because coming from a Jesuit high school, I will be at a college rooted in Jesuit education," Strauss said. "I like the campus size and feel, and the students I met. Also, when I went to visit, a professor took time from his holiday to come meet with me about the academic program I'm interested in. Additionally, I chose Le Moyne because of the interest they showed in me. The head coach gave me a personal tour of campus and the team showed a brotherhood that I wanted to be a part of."

Strauss also said he hopes to make an immediate impact on the field and to continue his development.

Le Moyne will be lucky to have Strauss, an exceptional Man for Others on the field and in the classroom.



John E. Vrablic

Brown University



John E. Vrablic will be graduating from Saint Ignatius having been part of the greatest three years the Saint Ignatius soccer program has ever seen. Vrablic played a critical part in bringing home back-to-back-to-back State Championships to Saint Ignatius as a playmaking midfielder.

An alum of Holy Trinity Parish in Avon, OH, Vrablic has cherished the fact that his senior teammates, 14 of the them, have created a lasting legacy at Saint Ignatius by doing something no other Ohio school has done before – win three state boys soccer championships in a row. Vrablic became a regular starter his senior year and blossomed into one of the key goal scorers for the Cats. The team captain was named Most Valuable Midfielder in 2016 for the Saint Ignatius soccer program.

Brown University soccer is regarded as one of the top Ivy League soccer programs. The Bears went 8-8-1 this past fall, though Brown finished 13-3-3 in 2012 and made it to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. Vrablic chose Brown University because of its location in Providence, Rhode Island, the academic standards as an Ivy League school, and the phenomenal coaching staff, led by Patrick Laughlin in his 8th season at the helm of the Bears. Laughlin was once an assistant coach at Cleveland State University.

In college, Vrablic hopes to be a starter his freshman season for the Brown Bears, and eventually put himself in position to move onto the next level.



Austen Yarian

Hillsdale College

If you have followed Saint Ignatius basketball in the past four years, you, along with diehard Wildcat fans, have watched Austen Yarian blossom into one of the toughest big men in the state of Ohio. Yarian has helped take the reins of the 2016-17 Wildcats as a true leader on the court, trying to help the Wildcats get back to Regionals and punch their ticket to Columbus.

Yarian has the skills of an all-around player, having the ability to pop a three from the outside, or back down and be a monster inside getting the tough baskets. He has even become an electrifying passer, tossing touchdown passes to his teammates wide-open down the court for transition scores.

In the 2016-2017 season, Yarian has been the second leading scorer on the team, averaging 14 points per game, and shooting 54% from the field. Yarian has also been the team's leading assist man with 3.4 assists per game, and its leading rebounder with 10.6 rebounds per game. Yarian has played on the varsity level since his sophomore season, drawing high expectations from media all around the state and at Saint Ignatius.

It's safe to say that he has lived up to them.

Yarian will be headed to Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan next fall to play for the Chargers out of the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference on the Division II level. Hillsdale is a program that is currently 10-10, but went an impressive 18-10 last season. Yarian is looking to make a big impact next year as the leading big man.

"When I looked for a college, I looked for one that I fit socially, fit athletically, and fit in the aspect of academics," Yarian said. "I felt that socially I fit perfectly with the way I'm treated and respected there. I feel athletically perfect because I want to compete at a level of basketball I know I can thrive in. And academically, I feel like I will be challenged and I love that because I want to get the most out of the education that I will be given."

Athletically at Hillsdale, Yarian is looking to do three things – win games, win championships, and eventually play overseas.

Yarian certainly has the God-given ability to do so.





Photos courtesy of Al Fuchs '79 and Baylight Studio.

Bios written by Joe Ginley '12 and Brendan DeVenney '16.

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