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A LASTING HANDSHAKE

BY DAN CONNOLLY
PAGE 10

How two shortstops put competition
aside to blaze their paths to the majors
and build an enduring friendship

PHOTOGRAPHY: ED SHEAHIN AND GARY SOUSA

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ONE FAN'S OPINION

Orioles' Early Season Lagging Attendance: No Weatherman Needed

★ STAN "THE FAN" CHARLES

I am not telling you anything you don't know about April's weather, which has bled into early May in Charm City. But while most of us have observed an uncharacteristic number of empty green seats so far at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, did you know that, as of May 5, the near first-place American League East Orioles were sitting 26th of 30 MLB teams in terms of attendance.

The O's averaged 20,259 fans per game during their first 15 home contests. Only four other AL teams -- the Oakland Athletics, Chicago White Sox, Tampa Bay Rays and Cleveland Indians -- had smaller averages per game in that time.

What has been so alarming about where the O's sit in these attendance rankings is that on May 5, they finished up a three-game home series against the New York Yankees that drew just 51,679.

Before you begin the gnashing of teeth over this specific decline, the Yankees' one-time luster has been dulled of late, and last year's opening series with New York, also on week nights, drew 64,325 -- only 12,646 more fans than this year.

So what's the root cause for a decline that makes little sense, given the Orioles' attendance trend during the past four seasons? Not to mention the fact that owner Peter Angelos, not always the most popular guy in town, stepped up to spend more than \$235 million on free-agent contracts for first baseman Chris Davis, reliever Darren O'Day, catcher Matt Wieters, right-hander Yovani Gallardo and designated hitter Pedro Alvarez (not to mention the \$9.15 million the club took on for the acquisition of Mark Trumbo and the arbitration gains from a number of players). Those moves took a 2015 payroll of \$119.7 million all the way up to \$147,693,713 this season.

What's more confounding is that the O's won their first seven games of the season and spent much of the first month in, or very near, first place in the AL East.

So, what gives?

The most popular place to point fingers has been Mother Nature. While I

cannot pinpoint exactly the dates and types of weather in nearby markets, I do have to ask why the Washington Nationals averaged 26,144 for their first 12 home dates and the Philadelphia Phillies averaged 24,807 for their first 13 dates. It's pretty fair to assume they are part of the same basic weather pattern.

The other topic that seems to have legs when declining attendance is discussed now is the civil unrest from a year ago, after the death of Freddie Gray in police custody. I can't tell you that it's not a factor, I just don't see it as a big cause for this season's early downturn.

What really may be driving this season's early attendance decline was the manner in which the club decided upon the level of ticket-price increases for 2016.

A lot of times, the Ravens are applauded for the clear-cut fashion and transparency in their rather straightforward approach to price increases that seem to occur every two to three years. It's much easier for an NFL team, with personal seat licenses partners, to announce almost any level of increase per ticket. It's also much easier for their fans to absorb increases when applied to multiples per game of 10, rather than 81.

It's no secret the Orioles are one of the later teams on a yearly basis to release individual game prices and send out season-ticket renewals. On closer inspection, what happened this year was a confluence or a perfect storm that set the team up for the potential lackluster early season ticket sales.

The Orioles' success in 2014 allowed the team to leverage postseason ticket sales to lock in season-ticket holders for the next season. Therefore, when the team released season-ticket information or went to sell the individual game tickets for 2015, there was no resultant drag on sales numbers. In fact, demand dur-

ing the offseason between 2014 and 2015 was at its highest levels since the late 1990s and first few years in the 21st century.

It was with that recent history in mind that the Orioles endeavored to navigate tricky and prolonged negotiations, with not only Davis, but the subsequent addition of Gallardo and outfielder Dexter Fowler. Forget for a moment that Fowler never put on an O's uniform, and despite the protestations of his agent, Casey Close, Fowler was close enough to being fitted for the orange and black that his contract value was in the equation when the O's were deciding what level of ticket-price hike to institute for 2016.

By the time this paper is in your hands, the Orioles will have had a four-game weekend series against the Detroit Tigers (May 12-15) and a three-game, weeknight series against the Seattle Mariners (May 17-19).

My money is on a significant upturn beginning with those two series, when the weather finally figures to be more cooperative.

It's just an educated guess here, but the Orioles, if they had it to do over again, would not only not have traded right-hander Jake Arrieta to the Chicago Cubs in July 2013, but they would also have liked to get their pricing and ticket sales in play much earlier.

Let's put it this way, when the Nationals held their equivalent event to FanFest for this season in December 2015, they had tickets on sale for individual games and new season-tickets and mini-plan holders. That was not the case for those attending Orioles FanFest in December 2015.

Hindsight always being 20-20 may tell me that objections to games over weather in April are not in buyers' minds in November or December, when a baseball fan is mapping out and calculating how he or she can afford that 13-game mini-plan.

But that same fan, with that money still in his or her pocket on a cold, rainy April afternoon, may elect to keep that money in his or her pocket, grab a six-pack, kick back in their easy chair and just watch the game while listening to Gary Thorne and Jim Palmer wax poetically on MASN. ☒

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PressBox is a free publication distributed every month on the 15th in the Baltimore metropolitan area. Printed by Engle Printing & Publishing Company, EngleOnline.com

FRONT ROW



COURTESY OF LUCY WEICKER

George Weicker

Former Cardinal Gibbons Great George Weicker A Winner In All Ways

Pancreatic cancer ended Baltimore native George Weicker III's life at the age of 62 Feb. 21 in Nashville, Tenn., but that didn't stop him from leaving a legacy of academic and athletic greatness.

He'd spent his last 35 years at Franklin Road Academy in Nashville teaching math and building a winning tradition as the head football and baseball coach.

The former Cardinal Gibbons star played football, basketball and baseball before attending Davidson College on a football scholarship in 1971.

"He loved playing basketball for Coach Ray Mullis," said his uncle, Roland Knapp, of Baltimore. "He thought the world of him."

Weicker was the 1971 runner-up for Catholic Athlete of the Year and was Gibbons' scholar athlete representative.

"I watched him play a lot of baseball games," former Crusaders guidance counselor and principal Bill Hartman said. "He was a top student and a great athlete."

At Davidson, Weicker started all four years as a linebacker and played first base for the baseball team, becoming the Southern Conference Baseball Player of the Year and an All-American in 1975. He played five years of minor league baseball and was a hitting coach at Vanderbilt University from 1980-84.

Weicker was inducted into the Davidson Athletic Hall of Fame in 1995 and the Tennessee Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2015. During a 30-year tenure as head baseball coach at Franklin Road Academy, his teams won more than 600 games and two state championships. He also won a state championship during a 20-year stint as the school's football coach and had a 153-80 record.

"George wanted to coach his son for his senior year in baseball," Knapp said. "He was trying all the latest treatments but didn't make it."

A former Baltimore city schoolteacher, Evelyn Weicker remembers watching her son play in the Eastern League All-Star Game at Fenway Park in 1978.

"George singled off the Green Monster," she said. "It's one

of my greatest memories. He took his two kids on a tour of the park years later and showed them the spot. He was a great father."

Evelyn Weicker taught at Westport Elementary School in the early 1960s, and George attended her school so she could keep an eye on him. Her husband, George Jr., had played on the University of Maryland's 1954 Sugar Bowl team and worked as an industrial engineer at Bethlehem Steel. He also coached football at Glenelg High School.

"That's where it all started," she said. "Young George followed his father up and down the sidelines."

The Weickers lived in Edmondson Village, and George played in the Leakin Park Little League. He wanted to be a Gibbons Crusader because his neighborhood friends were going to attend the school.

"We were Episcopalians, but they didn't mind," Evelyn Weicker said. "He attended a Roman Catholic high school, a Presbyterian college and ended up a Methodist."

It was Evelyn Weicker who encouraged George Weicker when he returned to Baltimore from his minor league seasons to get a master's degree in education from Johns Hopkins. Once there, George Weicker met members of the Blue Jays' baseball team and founded a fall league for two years.

He never made it to the major leagues and relayed his thoughts on the matter in a 2007 interview on Vanderbilt's website: "I really was hoping to get up there just to be able to say I was up there. If you have 20 home runs in Double-A, you think you may get a shot. I was playing for the Cincinnati Reds where the roster didn't turn over."

Those Reds teams were known as the "Big Red Machine." But the minors led him to the love of his life. Playing first base during the inaugural season of the Nashville Sounds in the summer of 1978, he didn't recognize the Davidson coed he'd met before in the stands heckling him with her friend.

"We harassed him during the game, and while he tried to casually glance around to see who we were, he did not recognize me until after the game," Lucy Weicker said. "The next night was a rainout, so my friend and I cooked him a nice dinner. That was the first time we really sat down and visited and

got to know each other."

Playing Triple-A ball in Venezuela changed George Weicker's life, according to his mother.

"He was eating in a Caracas restaurant and watching kids pick up scraps off the street," Evelyn Weicker said. "It changed him and gave him a certain amount of humility. He lived an interesting life, but you would never know it from talking to him. He was never boastful."

More than 400 people attended his memorial service in Nashville Feb. 27. His players wore T-shirts with their favorite "Weickerisms" on them.

"Failure can't live in the company of perseverance."

"Creative repetition is the backbone of learning."

"Play for the guy next to you."

Calvert Hall baseball coach and former Gibbons teammate Lou Eckerl played football and baseball with Weicker. When the Crusaders beat Poly on the gridiron, 9-6, in 1969, it was Eckerl at quarterback who scored a touchdown and Weicker who kicked the game-winning field goal. Eckerl recalled a player you were glad to have on your side.

"George was always happy and laid back, a great teammate," he said. "He was very talented and thoughtful."

-- DEAN SMITH

Field Renovation Mutually Benefits Roland Park Baseball League, Poly

The Roland Park Baseball League is currently in its 65th year of operation, having grown from 12 teams in 1952 to 68 teams today. The league, which includes 60 recreational teams and eight travel squads, recently joined forces with another quality city baseball program in the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute.

The RPBL is in the process of rehabbing the baseball field at Poly. This spring, the RPBL added bullpens on each side of the field, with two pitching rubbers in each pen. An outfield fence was added. Blue tarps were bought for the mound and home plate area to increase the likelihood of Poly getting a game in after it rains during the morning. The two softball diamonds were also rehabbed.

The RPBL partnered with Poly because the RPBL was looking for field space for its older kids -- the 11-12 and 13-15 age groups -- and a spot to play in the fall when other field spaces were taken for soccer, according to Kurt Overton, the commissioner of the RPBL. The RPBL can play on Poly's fields once Poly is done practicing, and it doesn't use them on Poly game days.

"I think it's been great," Overton said of the relationship between the RPBL and Poly. "Just very easy to work with, and as long as we're willing to do things that help improve the facilities and are good for the students of Poly and Western and also good for Roland Park baseball, we found them to be very receptive. I think these strategic partnerships make an awful lot of sense, because these are facilities that can be used after hours. There's no reason why there can't be dollars that will go into improving them."

It's all a part of an initiative by the RPBL to team up and refurbish baseball diamonds in the city, so that young athletes in the area have a quality spot to play ball. For example, the RPBL is in the process of raising about \$190,000 to build a new field in Northwest Park; the organization has raised about \$140,000, according to Overton. The RPBL also teamed up with Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to play night games at Druid Hill Park.

"With the challenge of growing from 12 teams to now 68 teams, the need for field space has continued to grow with the popularity of the league," Overton said. "We have, in the last few years, begun an initiative to increase field space and availability for athletes."

The RPBL is currently using Poly's fields as a part of a

permit agreement, according to Paul Turner, real estate officer with Baltimore City Schools. The permit process allowed access to the fields in the short term, but a long-term agreement -- a memorandum of understanding -- will eventually follow, further outlining "the roles and responsibilities of both Roland Park Baseball and Baltimore City schools, along with Poly-Western High School," according to Turner.

Overton said at the end of the first year of working together, the RPBL will invest about \$25,000 into Poly fields. The RPBL has money allocated for field projects every five to 10 years that are more than typical maintenance, according to Overton.

Overton and Corey Goodwin, head coach of the Poly varsity baseball team, would like to see sod installed in the infield this summer; Poly currently has a skin infield. Goodwin also mentioned he'd like to see brick dugouts built and quality scoreboards installed. He's hopeful the partnership will give his program the chance to eventually "mirror" the facilities of nearby Gilman and Boys' Latin.

"The more people that come to our facility and play there and enjoy their stay there and like what they see, the more likely they are to want to come to Poly as a high school choice and potentially play ball there. That's my vision," said Goodwin, who is in his 13th year as head coach at Poly. "The word is that baseball is dying in the city. So these kind of projects and renovations will kind of help revive it."

-- LUKE JACKSON

Towson Football's Monty Fenner Honored With Inaugural Wardell Turner Scholarship

Towson University defensive back Monty Fenner found a surprise when he logged onto his student email account during spring break in March. He had been notified by a member of the compliance office in the Towson athletics department that he would be the recipient of the Wardell Turner Scholarship.

But neither Fenner, who is heading into his third year at Towson, nor any of his teammates had ever heard of the



COURTESY OF DAVID KAPUSTIN

Monty Fenner

award.

"I asked the captains about it, but nobody knew what it was, so they said ask Coach [Rob Ambrose] about it tomorrow," Fenner said. "After practice, I asked coach, and he said it was a great honor to have it -- you'll learn more about it later down the road." Fenner discovered that he wasn't supposed to find out about the honor until it was presented to him during the Tigers' awards banquet ceremony April 16. Fenner became the first recipient of the scholarship, which was established last October to honor Army Sgt. Maj. Wardell B. Turner, a four-year letter-winner at defensive back for Towson during the late 1980s.

In November 2014, Turner was killed in action in Afghanistan while serving in a NATO role advising Afghan security forces.

Ambrose, a former teammate of Turner's, used several teaching moments during the 2015 season to educate his players on the memory of one of their own and the sacrifice Turner and his family made. When training camp opened last summer, the Tigers skipped their afternoon practice session to visit Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, where they placed a wreath on Turner's grave.

The Tigers also held a special Military Appreciation Night Sept. 19, 2015, when they hosted Holy Cross. The program donated a portion of ticket sales to start the scholarship fund, as well as to the USO, the American Red Cross and the Maryland Veterans Memorial.

"He fought for our country and was a great representative of our school," Fenner said. "So the person who honors him has to show great character in the classroom, not just on the field, but off the field."

According to a press release from the Towson athletic department, "the scholarship will be awarded annually to a defensive back on the football team that is in good academic standing and demonstrates the qualities and attributes exemplified by Wardell Turner: leadership, selfless service and commitment."

Fenner said this is the first time he's won an award recognizing his accomplishments off the field.

A criminal justice major at Towson, Fenner said he takes most opportunities he's presented to speak with youths in troubled neighborhoods around Baltimore. He describes the neighborhood where he grew up in Chesapeake, Va., as lacking many opportunities to advance in life and thought he could be a role model for those seeking a better life.

"There's not a lot out there for them to see," Fenner said, "but I was raised in the same type of neighborhood that they are, so there's more to it when you stick to something in life. I chose football, but there are other things that you can be successful in."

-- SIMON HABTEMARIAM

Brother Of Lenny 'Batman' Robinson To Carry On Legacy In Great Chesapeake Bay Swim

Scott Robinson considers himself quiet and reserved, guarded to a certain extent until he gets to know someone. When he becomes comfortable, his warm personality takes over.

His brother, on the other hand, was the complete opposite in many respects. Leonard "Lenny" Robinson was known to many simply as Batman, a successful businessman and philanthropist who drove a Batmobile and dressed as the Caped Crusader to cheer up sick children in hospitals.

"There will only ever be one Lenny 'Batman' Robinson," Scott Robinson said. "He was very flamboyant, had a very big ego, and when you met Lenny, you would know you met someone pretty special."

Lenny Robinson, an Owings Mills, Md., resident who

started the Superheroes for Kids foundation to benefit children facing life-threatening illnesses, was killed Aug. 16, 2015, in a traffic crash on Interstate 70 in Western Maryland. The 51-year-old had pulled over on the shoulder of the road in his sputtering custom-made black Lamborghini, and another car struck it as he checked the engine.

Nearly 10 months later, Scott Robinson, 50, of Pikesville, Md., plans to carry on his brother's enduring legacy June 12, when he competes in the 25th annual Great Chesapeake Bay Swim. Scott Robinson will navigate a 4.4-mile course in the Chesapeake Bay waters to raise money for Port Discovery in Baltimore and the Lenny Robinson Hope for Henry Program at Sinai Hospital.

"One of his sayings was, 'You need to make a difference,'" Scott Robinson said of his brother. "At the end of the day, you need to ask yourself if you can make a difference, and the answer better be 'yes.' So this is sort of my way of giving back and being able to make that difference he always talked so much about."

Having taken up swimming as a hobby more than 15 years ago after several back surgeries, Scott Robinson spends most of his mornings in the lap pool at Life Bridge Health & Fitness in Pikesville. More recently, he often wondered how he could combine his love for swimming with Superheroes for Kids, just as his brother did through his Batman alter ego when he launched the foundation in 2012.

So when a friend approached Scott Robinson several months ago about a potential opportunity to work in conjunction with the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim, it was a no-brainer.

"My thinking was that if we could raise money for Superheroes for Kids and for charities Lenny had always been really fond of, then it would be really fulfilling for us," Scott Robinson said. "Port Discovery is one of our main ones, and they are going to have a future superheroes exhibit down there soon, so hopefully we can help support that."

This also marks unprecedented territory for both Scott Robinson and Superheroes for Kids, because it's the first time the foundation has done any of its own fundraising. Previously, Lenny Robinson had self-funded all the gifts -- bracelets, lanyards, keychains and flashlights -- Superheroes for Kids provided children with the money he earned after the sale of his cleaning company in 2007.

"Lenny, to his credit, never asked anybody for a dollar," Scott Robinson said. "He didn't have Superheroes for Kids to raise money from other people, but he personally funded the whole thing from money he had."

As for the race itself, Scott Robinson understands there are a number of challenges he faces just to cross the finish line but wouldn't have it any other way. For one thing, he has never tried swimming in the Chesapeake Bay, which consists of shifting tides, the threat of strong winds and cold-water temperatures at this time of the year.

To prepare for those rigors, he plans to go out to the bay in the days leading up to the race to better acclimate himself to the conditions. He also has been working tirelessly to knock some time off the 38 minutes it currently takes him to complete one mile in the pool.

"In a regular swimming pool that is heated and has clear water, you really can't simulate some of the things you will see in the Chesapeake Bay," Scott Robinson said. "But going to the Chesapeake Bay a few days ahead of the race should help me, as well as swimming in my community pool outside when it opens in late May, which is still pretty cold then."

Win or lose, Scott Robinson is more concerned with the overall experience than his outcome. Down the road, he said he plans to get involved with more events like the swim, though nothing is official yet.

"I'm not so interested if I win the race or not, but I just want to have a good time," Scott Robinson said. "My hope is that we can have a positive influence on the community, the race itself and everyone involved with it, and that's how I look at what we are doing here."

For more information about Superheroes for Kids and the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim, visit superheroesforkids.org.

-- JUSTIN SILBERMAN

SPORTS BUSINESS

With Patriot Point, Military Bowl Organizers Are Committed To Helping Veterans Off The Field

★ BY ED WALDMAN

For the organizations that run college football bowl games, it isn't always about the bowl game.

The DC Bowl Committee, the group that has put on the Military Bowl since 2008, works with the USO and Under Armour to put on youth football clinics and events and supports the Bill Phillips Memorial Fund, which assists college athletes and military members affected by tragic circumstances.

But in April, the DC Bowl Committee made one of its biggest moves: Closing on the \$2.3 million purchase of 290 acres of land in Dorchester County that it has renamed Patriot Point, a retreat for wounded service members and their families.

At Patriot Point, service members will be able to hunt, fish, crab, swim and boat. The property features 2.3 miles of waterfront along Parsons Creek, Slaughters Creek and the Little Choptank River, southwest of Cambridge, Md.

"To be able to be in the position to do this sort of thing, it's really exciting," Military Bowl president and executive director Steve Beck said. "We've been looking for something to get personally involved in. Not that writing checks to military charities isn't exciting."

The DC Bowl Committee formed a nonprofit, Patriot Point LLC DC Bowl Committee Inc., to purchase the property from the estate of James Bugg. In the just-completed legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly approved \$500,000 in capital funding, which will help with improvements on the property, including handicap access.

Eagle Bank, which was the title spon-

and the Taishoff Family Foundation are listed as the "founding partners" of Patriot Point.

"We just thought we would take [Bugg's] concept and beef it up a little bit and make it into a full-time retreat center for wounded servicemen," Beck said.

"I have talked with soldiers who have been down there," Beck added. "It changed their life. I thought this is some-

"FOR A WHILE [PATRIOT POINT] WAS JUST AN IDEA, AND NOW IT'S BECOME A REALITY. AND SINCE IT'S BECOME A REALITY, A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE CIRCLED AROUND US AND SUPPORTED IT."

> STUART PLANK

sor of the Military Bowl in its first two years of existence, is providing the financing for the project.

Beck said he heard last summer that the property, which was then known as "Poverty Point," might be available after Bugg's death. Bugg, chairman of the Yellow Ribbon Fund, had used the property as a "semi-Wounded Warrior retreat," Beck said.

A friend of Bugg's, Stuart Plank, approached Beck about the project. Plank

thing that we could get behind."

Beck, though, said he is not an outdoorsman.

"That's the funny thing about it," he said. "I don't know what the heck I'm doing."

Said Plank, brother of Under Armour founder Kevin Plank: "It's very exciting. It's something that kind of just fell together.

"I didn't see it getting this much traction this fast. For a while it was just an idea, and now it's become a reality. And

since it's become a reality, a lot of people have circled around us and supported it."

On the property are a four-bedroom main house, a six-bedroom guesthouse, and a barn and a caretaker's house that both need to be either remodeled or torn down, Beck said.

The main house was built in 1926 by silent movie actress Clara Bow, who owned the property before Bugg and reportedly threw wild parties with bootleg alcohol that was brought in by boat during Prohibition. The guesthouse was built about 10 years ago.

Beck said an architect is doing a master plan for the property, pro bono.

"We have so many dreams," Beck said. "There are about 80 to 100 acres of wetlands, 2.3 miles of shoreline. We want to protect the shoreline and preserve and protect the wetlands.

"We also want to build an eight-bedroom, 16-bed house," he said. "Then we could bring 25 to 30 veterans down there."

Said Plank, who is a developer of single-family homes in the Washington suburbs: "We're just working on a theme to kind of tie all the properties together. There are some older buildings that probably need to go. We've got to re-do the barn and the caretaker's house. For the long-term plan, our dream is build a nice lodge with a huge great room, and six or eight hotel rooms in it so that we can serve a lot of people."

So Beck will now go back to doing all the things that an executive director of a bowl game does during the "offseason."

"A lot of times, people will ask what I do for a living, and I'll say I'm the director of the Military Bowl, and then they'll say, 'What else do you do? That can't be all of it,' Beck joked.

"But last month, we had the DC Touchdown Club awards dinner, and we have a golf tournament coming up in June to benefit the Bill Phillips Memorial Fund."

And by that time, planning for December's ninth annual Military Bowl should be well underway. ☑




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BY DAN CONNOLLY

A LASTING HANDSHAKE

Jonathan Schoop knew all about Manny Machado before they first met in 2011.

Machado, after all, was the kid who received \$5.25 million from the Orioles as the third overall pick in the 2010 amateur draft. Machado was the Orioles' next-best thing: A Miami high schooler with extraordinary offensive and defensive skills. He was Alex Rodriguez 2.0.

This wunderkind was nine months younger than Schoop; he was a major investment for the Orioles and he played shortstop, the same position as Schoop, who had been in the organization since signing out of Curacao as a 16-year-old in 2008.

Something would have to change, and Schoop figured it would be his spot on the diamond. That became clearer when he met Machado in person during spring training in 2011.

"The first time I saw him, I said, 'Wow, he's got good talent, tall guy, he's got the skills,'" Schoop said. "Of course, there was a competition with us, because he was a shortstop and I was a shortstop. ... He was a first-rounder. I was [an amateur] free agent. I wanted to show him I was good."

If this were a Hollywood script, Schoop, the underdog, would have beaten out his rival for the shortstop job despite the long odds. Eventually and begrudgingly, Mach-

ado would extend his hand in the acknowledgment that Schoop was the better man, and any rivalry would be forgotten.

But this was real life in the minors. And this story has a much better twist, anyway. Schoop, just 19 at the time but always seemingly wiser than his years, almost immediately befriended Machado despite the position competition. He did it with an understated sincerity that resonated with Machado, the man-child form whom everyone selfishly wanted a piece.

"I remember this skinny Curacao kid, very quiet. He felt kind of nervous to talk to me because, I guess, I was a bonus baby at the time," Machado remembered. "We were both playing shortstop on the back fields of Twin Lakes (in Sarasota, Fla.). We just kind of connected. One ground ball, and we saw we were both talented and we just connected. We started talking, that's when we first kind of became friends, became who we are now."

Machado was bilingual; Schoop was still working on his English. They communicated mainly in Spanish but would also talk in English. The relationship helped Schoop become more comfortable with the language and helped Machado ease into his overwhelming role as potential organizational savior.

"He wasn't envious about anything," Machado said. "He wasn't envious about the money I had gotten or how talented we were. He just wanted to be my friend. He just wanted to talk to me every day, learn a little better English. It was an unbelievable first couple of years for me. It just made it so easy for me to know that there were actually people like that in the minor leagues, like Jonathan."

Once Schoop opened up, he began teasing Machado. He kept facetiously complaining about why he had to take grounders at shortstop since everyone knew Machado would get that assignment once they began the year at Low-A Delmarva.

"He joked with me all the time. 'You're the first-rounder, obviously you're gonna play shortstop and they're gonna move me somewhere else. I don't know why I'm here,'" Machado said. "That's why I liked him so much. Because he was so humble."

Schoop, of course, was right. When the two were assigned to Delmarva to start the 2011 season, Machado was the Shorebirds' shortstop and Schoop, the third baseman.

"It was really good, because I knew a guy like that is a really good shortstop. And I was made a third baseman, and I was trying to get better," Schoop said. "So we worked together every day to be better players, to

one day be major leaguers."

The script twist, of course, is that both made the majors within three years of their first meeting -- but neither at shortstop. One is arguably the game's best third baseman at 23 and the other's stock is rising dramatically as a 24-year-old second baseman.

SETTLING IN TOGETHER AS SHOREBIRDS

Ryan Minor admits, in retrospect, it could have been a difficult situation.

A second-year, minor league manager at Delmarva in 2011, Minor had been a top prospect himself in the Orioles' organization. He holds a special place in team history -- as a rookie, he replaced Cal Ripken Jr., at third base and in the starting lineup Sept. 20, 1998, ending the Iron Man's record, consecutive games streak at 2,632.

Minor knows tough assignments and the pressures of anticipated stardom. So getting two, high-ceiling prospects under the age of 20 who played the same position could have been a real challenge for a fledgling skipper.

"I think it could have been difficult, especially coming out of spring training and

defining what roles they were going to play," Minor said.

The key was Schoop, but Minor had gotten to know him during instructional league and thought the affable, determined kid would adjust without complaint. And that's what happened.

"Jonathan went into it showing no animosity, and that created some cohesion," Minor said. "Being a third baseman, I think Jonathan understood that was his fastest way to the big leagues, especially if he could play different positions."

Both were promoted that year to High-A Frederick, setting their course to the majors. By the time they started Double-A Bowie together in 2012, the duo was inseparable, on and off the field, and in the minds of the organization's decision-makers.

"You could just see it from the start that they were tight," Minor said. "And now, just watching them on TV, you see it. It is kind of rare. You always have a couple guys that gravitate in the minors, but it seems like those two guys could still be roommates."

'LIKE LITTLE KIDS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'

If this were a Hollywood movie, it would have to be rated R for violence and adult language. Because, by most accounts, Machado and Schoop are always feuding, always jawing, always verbally and physically attacking each other.

"These guys are like slap-boxing each other every day. They are wrestling each other," said Orioles shortstop J.J. Hardy, who stands in between the two on the dia-

mond and gets out of their way in the dug-out. "They are like little kids in elementary school that screw around and just have fun. It's fun to watch."

It's sometimes brutal to hear, however.

Machado and Schoop are so close, and have developed such impenetrable skin in regards to each other, that they often openly and loudly criticize one another when a mistake is made. Hardy said he's become used to it, but he'd probably be shaken if it were directed at him.

"If they don't make a play that they feel like they should have, the one is wearing the other one out instantly. 'Hey, you've got to catch the ball before you throw it.' Or, 'Make a good throw.' I'm like, 'Geez,'" Hardy said. "If anyone told me that, I'd be like, 'Yeah, you're right, I [screwed] up. I'm sorry.'"

Instead, Schoop and Machado get in each other's faces.

"Brothers fight all the time. We throw blows all the time," Machado said. "We go through our moments when we hate each other. But, at the end of the day, we still love each other on the inside, and we always care for each other. That's the main thing."

Schoop said it's a necessary -- albeit sometimes painful -- process that motivates both players.

"We are not scared to tell each other something to each other's face, like friends. If he is doing something wrong, I'm going to go straight up to him and tell him, 'Hey, you are not doing this good.' He'll come to me and say, 'You're sloppy today, let's go,'" Schoop said. "We talk about everything. Baseball, life, everything, to make each other a better person."

Schoop is rarely without a smile on his face and, because of that, is often considered the more mild-mannered, less intense

member of the duo. Not so, say those who witness the daily exchanges, which the rest of the Orioles secretly enjoy.

"They keep me younger, mentally, emotionally. You kind of live it through them," Orioles manager Buck Showalter said. "It's pretty entertaining, I can tell ya that. A lot of stuff that y'all don't hear, it's pretty entertaining. And Jonathan is a little quicker with a quip than people give him credit for."

VIDEO GAMES, ROCKET ARMS AND STEAK

It's easy to start an argument between Machado and Schoop. Pick a topic and sit back and listen.

Like, which one has the stronger throwing arm?

"He has a cannon of an arm," ➡



Schoop said. "But my arm is a little better than his. That's the truth."

In 2011, when they were together at Delmarva, Schoop's arm was selected as the strongest in the South Atlantic League. Schoop smiles broadly when that is brought up.

"Of course. Of course. You know that. You knew that before. That's not even a question," Schoop said. "I'm gonna have fun with that right now."

Machado's not buying it -- then or now.

"He knows I have the better arm. He just knows it. He just wants to be in denial that he does. And it's OK," Machado said. "I give it to him; he has more pop than me; he has way more pop than me."

Then Machado puts his right arm in the air, flexes, flashes a big smile and motions to his biceps and says, "But I have the machete. That's just how it is."

When they wrestle, who gets the advantage of whom? Once skinny kids, they are both now more than 200 pounds of muscle.

"Come on," Schoop says, "you have to respect me."

"I beat his [butt] all the time," Machado counters. "The younger brother always beats the big brother, remember that."

Even when they agree that one is better than the other in a certain activity, they argue on the degree of separation.

Many of their hours together are spent playing video games, specifically FIFA Soccer.

Schoop, who grew up in Curacao, a constituent country of the Netherlands, is a

soccer enthusiast, and that comes through when the two face off with video-game consoles. Representing the Dutch in international play or Real Madrid in league play, Schoop proudly says he crushes Machado, who usually plays as Barcelona.

"I'm way better than him," Schoop said. "It's not even close, like 4-1, 3-0. Not even close."

Machado has an explanation, and a rebuttal: "He played soccer growing up, so he knows all those little tricks, and how to move people around and ways to screw me over. So, yeah, he beats me in FIFA, but I beat him, too. Don't let him fool you."

When they aren't playing FIFA, listening to music, watching movies or hanging out at each other's homes, they are often eating together -- usually at high-end steak joints. Machado gives Schoop credit for helping him learn to eat in a way that has allowed him to improve his metabolism and maintain his weight and strength during a grueling season.

Machado likes to cook a little, and Schoop loves to eat. So Machado has made steak -- ribeye, Schoop's favorite -- for his buddy. The result?

"He's good; he's average. He's there, but he can do better," Schoop says laughing.

The problem, Machado contends, is that Schoop doesn't know how to eat steak correctly, something Machado expects to fix.

"He said last time it was a little burnt, but I know he likes stuff well done. So, you see, I'm trying to help him out with how he likes his steak, and he still says that it wasn't

good enough. This is why we fight," Machado said. "Deep down inside, he knows it's good, but he still wants to bash me down and say I can't cook. So I'm going to make him one the way I want to eat it, the way I'm teaching him how he should eat it, which is medium, and we'll see how it goes."

CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING LIVES

Life has changed dramatically for the duo during the past 18 months. Machado has gotten married. Schoop is engaged and had his first child, a daughter, last year. Schoop and Machado spend a little less time together now away from the ballpark, but in a sense, they've become even closer.

"The baby became a part of my life, and it's another change. With my family, I spend more time with them now," Schoop said. "But me and Manny seek contact all the time, we talk on the phone a lot of the time. He likes to see the baby and just has fun with her."

Machado said it's been fantastic watching Schoop become a doting father, and he can't help but be drawn into the experience.

"He's always constantly watching videos when she's not on the road," Machado said.

"She just learned how to walk. So we're in the back of the bus, and he's showing me the videos. 'Hey, look. Look, that's my girl. Look at her.' And she'll take two steps, and

she falls. But now she is up to five or six steps. And it's been pretty awesome to see him just so happy."

As Machado puts it, "We're growing into men together. It's awesome. We get to talk about our relationship problems; we get to help each other out. It's a two-way street."

At some point, they know their time together on a baseball diamond may end. Machado is a free agent at the end of the 2018 season and Schoop, the following year. Ultimately, baseball is a business, and it could send them to different cities. Opponents instead of teammates.

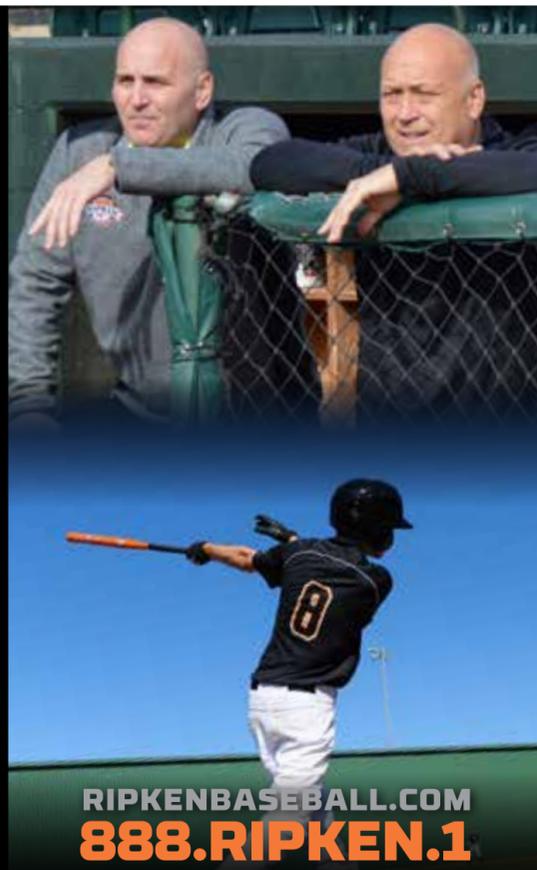
It's why they are cherishing the now, whether it's concocting intricate handshakes in the dugout or reveling in the opportunity to occasionally be double-play partners.

"We don't know how long, two more years, three more years, more?" Schoop said. "That's why we enjoy every day; every day we enjoy it and try and win. He's my best buddy in baseball. We say we are like brothers. We ride together and we die together, that's what we say."

No matter where baseball takes them, Machado said he can't imagine he and Schoop being too far apart in life.

"Our friendship goes beyond just being teammates and part of a clubhouse together. I think we go a lot deeper than that," Machado said. "It's just been an awesome ride."

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Allow this to be your warning that Father's Day is June 19. This month, "The 15" is a gift guide for Baltimore sports fan dads. I offer a small disclaimer at the top -- this is a fun list. Please don't read this and think, "That's stereotyping! My dad is nothing like that!" or "Are you saying only dads can enjoy that? Moms can, too!" I'm very aware that there's a level of generalizing that is going into this list. I'm hoping that as a son, grandson and father myself, I can have some fun in the process. Here it goes.

[01] GET HIM ORIOLES TICKETS. BUT GET HIM NICE TICKETS FOR A CHANGE.

It's rather common to get your dad Orioles tickets for Father's Day (or if you're particularly forgetful and don't remember until that morning you were supposed to get him a gift, you may just choose to promise him tickets). Get him the tickets right behind home plate or a suite this time. Dad has sat in section 330 a million times. Give him something a little better than that for one game. The Orioles are at home against the Toronto Blue Jays on Father's Day, but my suggestion is to do it on a Friday night. Sunday afternoons are excruciatingly hot. Friday nights are far more electric at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, because students fill up the upper deck and create an atmosphere. Take him then.

[02] OR ... PERHAPS HE'D PREFER THE CONRAD'S CRABS & SEAFOOD DECK AT AN ABERDEEN IRONBIRDS GAME.

The IronBirds aren't at home Father's Day weekend, but they're back the following weekend. Dad hates having to pay \$20 to park in a garage 15 minutes away from Oriole Park. But he loves the idea of being able to park directly outside Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium. What he loves the most is being able to devour hours' worth of all-you-can-eat steamed crabs, chicken, pork, etc. on the crab deck before taking off early because he doesn't care about the outcome of the game. He'll tell you he wants to leave early to beat traffic, but you'll chuckle because you know getting out of the parking lot in Aberdeen is cake.

[03] SOMETHING RELATED TO BROOKS ROBINSON. LIKE ... LITERALLY ... ANYTHING.

I don't care if he's 82 or if he's 28. Dad loves Brooks Robinson. It's like some sort of law here. The moment you become a father, you must have an absolute obsession with Brooks Robinson. If you visit shop.mlb.com and search "Brooks Robinson," the options are plentiful. I'm not sure where dad would put a miniature Gold Glove Award signed by Brooks, but he'll find a place. The Brooks Robinson Hall of Fame coin card looks like something to dupe old people into buying on HSN, yet I'm pretty sure dad would like it far more than that tie you were thinking about grabbing him.

[04] TAKE HIM ON A DAY TRIP TO TOPGOLF.

You know how on Mother's Day, all your wife really wants is for you to take her to a vineyard and try a



FATHER'S DAY GIFT IDEAS

bunch of wine all day? This could become a similar tradition. The only issue is that, right now, the closest TopGolfs are in Northern Virginia, so dad has got to be up for it. If he enjoys hitting golf balls, drinking, eating ridiculously good food and/or watching sports, this will be the spot for him. It's part driving range, far more sports pub. It's spacious and climate controlled. The food is excellent, and he won't want to leave.

[05] IF HE'S NOT UP FOR THAT, PERHAPS HE'D PREFER A BACKYARD CHIPPING BASKET.

I don't know how to explain this phenomenon. I don't play golf. It's a sport I'm terrible at. Yet, there's nothing I enjoy more than hitting golf balls. If dad already has a putting machine in his office, this is perfect for him. Even if the backyard isn't spacious, he'll enjoy working on his short game, whether he ever puts it to use. Get him a few sleeves of balls while you're at it and maybe warn his neighbors.

[06] JUST LET HIM NAP UNTIL THE FINAL HOLES OF THE U.S. OPEN.

For what it's worth, this year's tournament is just outside of Pittsburgh again at Oakmont Country Club. It would be the power move of Father's Day power moves to wake him at 5 a.m. and let him know he needs to get in the car because you're going to watch the final round. If that's out of the question, just arrange to celebrate at dad's house. He'd rather be there anyway. His bathroom is there; his recliner is there -- the whole deal. Bring some crabs over and sit out back. If dad has to do some grilling, that's actually fine -- he won't mind. But after lunch, let the man nap and don't change his channel. When the U.S. Open leaders hit the 13th hole, gently nudge him. He doesn't really want to watch any more than an hour or so of golf anyway.

[07] IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SPORTS, BUT GET THE MAN A KOOL-ERNAUT.

Seriously, go search for it right now. If he enjoys a cold beer,

this is his best chance of keeping said beer cold. How does it work? I dunno ... science?

[08] ANOTHER NON-SPORTS OPTION? HOW ABOUT A BOAT?

I don't really mean you should purchase him a boat, although that would be pretty cool if you have the means. I'm actually suggesting that you spend the day on the boat. If he has a boat, spend it on his. If he doesn't, somehow procure a boat. Go fishing. Go swimming. Let him nap on the boat. Stop by a joint like Nick's Fish House and dock there. Dad would rather be on a boat. Try to invite T-Pain to join you.

[09] HE'D LOVE A ROAD TRIP TO SEE THE RAVENS.

My own father isn't even the most obsessed Ravens fan, but when we took him to Carolina a couple years back, he had a great time on the trip. My suggestions this year are either Jacksonville Sept. 25 (perhaps dad enjoys the beach) or Dallas Nov. 20. (Texas A&M is home the day before, and the two-and-a-half hour trip is legitimately worthwhile to experience Kyle Field. Also ... barbecue.)

[10] TURF FROM M&T BANK STADIUM.

The Ravens don't need it anymore, so they're selling it to you. I don't really understand the obsession, but I do know that as a dad, if I had some, I would absolutely show it to people the moment they walked into my house. It makes no sense. It makes perfect sense.

[11] GET HIM SOMETHING WITH THE STATE FLAG ON IT. BUT PROBABLY NOT YOGA PANTS.

If dad is a local sports fan, he loves the flag. But dad would probably prefer the flag to be the pattern for his grill cover or the covers for his golf clubs than he would necessarily enjoy it on a Speedo.

[12] A NEW, BIGGER TV.

I don't care how new or large his TV is. Did he buy a 72-inch TV before last football season? He's ready for a new one for this season. Plus, the Ravens went 5-11 last season when he watched them on that TV. Obviously, he needs to upgrade. Get all the kids together and go in on it. There's always another room he could put the "old" TV in. Does he have a TV in his bathroom? He definitely wants one.

[13] "CREED" ON BLU-RAY DVD.

If he's seen it, he loves it. If he hasn't seen it, he will love it. In fact, if there are any "Rocky" movies at all that he doesn't already have on Blu-ray, go ahead and get those, too. Even "Rocky Balboa."

[14] ANY SORT OF UNDER ARMOUR POLO WILL DO.

At the end of the day, dad isn't exactly a fashionista. If there's a 5-year-old Under Armour style and they're selling the polos at 75 percent off at some outlet mall, go ahead and get him a couple. Don't really worry about the color. As long as they have the logo on them, he'll mention something about how he appreciates you supporting a local company. Ask the youngest member of your family if they know Kevin Plank played football at Maryland and then wear the shirt 10 times this summer.

[15] IF ALL ELSE FAILS, JUST BUY HIM A FREAKING BOATLOAD OF MEAT.

Happy Father's Day, dads. ☒

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ORIOLES INSIDER

Hyun Soo Kim Faces Challenging Adjustment

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a-na-na ... na-na-nanana ... Kim Hyun Soo!

If you had attended a Doosan Bears game in the Korean Baseball Organization anytime during the last few years, you likely would have heard thousands of fans chanting along with a catchy tune -- a personalized theme song for popular outfielder Hyun Soo Kim.

Now in his first year in Baltimore, Kim uses the song as his at-bat music at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. It -- and he -- hasn't quite taken the city by storm so far.

Kim, 28, became the first South Korean position player in Orioles history when he signed a two-year, \$7 million contract with the Birds Dec. 23, 2015. He was the Orioles' latest attempt to strike gold in Korea under executive vice president of baseball operations Dan Duquette, whose previous forays into the market were duds.

Hyun Soo Kim, though, was supposed to be the shining star who would make up for the Orioles' previous missteps in Korea. He was one of the finest players in the KBO, a nine-year veteran who starred in nearly all facets of the game -- and, yes, even had his own theme song. Kim garnered four KBO Gold Glove awards for his defensive work in left field, but he was known especially for his bat, compiling a career .318 batting average and .895 OPS during 1,131 games. His power was nothing to sneeze at, either, as he posted three seasons of 20 or more homers, including a career-best 28 blasts and 121 RBIs in 2015.

Perhaps most appealing to the Orioles was Kim's lifetime .406 OBP, bolstered by a patient plate approach that led him to more walks (597) than strikeouts (501) during his KBO career. On the surface, Kim appeared to be the perfect fit for a free-swinging Orioles

lineup that desperately needed an infusion of on-base ability. Even as Kim shifted from the notoriously hitter-friendly KBO to the majors, his plate discipline figured to translate well, making him a potential top-of-the-line-up hitter for the Birds.

Then things took a discouraging turn. Kim's first taste of American baseball brought a harsh adjustment period -- one so crippling that it nearly ended his major league career before it began. At spring training in Sarasota, Fla., Kim went hitless in his first 23 at bats, swinging the bat with little authority and seemingly growing more frustrated by the day. Manager Buck Showalter expressed public concern about Kim's inability to drive the ball, and he seemed especially displeased with Kim's shaky defense in left field.

Kim's leash shortened with each passing game. On March 26, Fox Sports reported the O's were internally discussing whether they could work out a deal to send Kim back to Korea. The Orioles didn't confirm the story, but they made it clear Kim was losing his spot, not only as the starting left fielder, but on the Opening Day roster at all. Kim finished spring training with eight hits -- all singles -- in 45 at bats, and Showalter benched him for the final week.

"It looks like he's not going to be on the 25-man roster to start the season," Duquette told the media.

But the story didn't end there. As part of his contract, Kim had the right to refuse a minor league assignment. The Orioles, after several discussions with Kim, couldn't convince him to accept a demotion to Triple-A Norfolk. They also couldn't work out a deal to return him to the KBO. Not wanting to eat Kim's entire \$7 million salary by releasing him, the Orioles turned to their last resort -- they begrudgingly included him on the Opening Day roster, even with no clear plan of how to use him.

As expected for a player who wasn't intended to be on the roster, Kim found himself buried on the bench during the regular season's first month. Kim appeared in just six of the Orioles' 23 April games, starting four of them. During the Orioles' pregame introductions on Opening Day April 4, Kim even got booed by some fans in the sellout crowd who felt he hadn't earned his place on the team.

This tale, though, has another interesting twist.

For all the concern about Kim's difficult adjustment, and all the criticism about his perceived inability to hit major league pitching, his bat looked more than healthy during his sporadic appearances in April. Kim reached base in 11 of his 17 plate appearances, including nine hits. He began his major league career with a two-hit afternoon April 10 -- both infield singles -- and capped the opening month with a 3-for-4 performance April 30, lashing two opposite-field singles and smoking a double down the right-field line.

After his hectic first few weeks as an Oriole, Kim was glad to be able to help the team in whatever small role he could, working behind the scenes to improve in the meantime.

"I'm trying my best to get back to how I did in Korea," Kim said through a translator. "It's not much of a difficulty playing games once in a while, but it's more like I'm finally able to contribute to the team winning."

Showalter and the rest of the Orioles were glad to see Kim make a contribution as well.

"Regardless of what's going on, just from a teammate to teammate and human being to human being, you want to see him have some success and contribute a little bit, and he did," Showalter said. "I think everybody takes a lot of satisfaction in getting him out there and feeling a part of it."

Kim has worked to regain the hitting mechanics he used in the KBO, which he felt he'd abandoned somewhat in Sarasota.

"Back when I was in Korea, I was able to hit the balls hard, and I was swinging hard," Kim said. "But during spring training, I was a bit pressured to make results, so I was just trying to make contact off the pitchers. Now I'm going back to how I was before. I'm swinging harder in order to have better quality hits."

Kim, who struggled to make solid contact off high-velocity fastballs in the spring, has mostly been shielded from hard throwers during the regular season. His three-hit game April 30 came against Chicago White

Sox right-hander Mat Latos, whose fastball regularly clocked in at less than 90 mph.

Kim knows that hitting the fastball consistently is his next challenge. It's a test that the previous position player to jump from the KBO to the majors, Pittsburgh Pirates infielder Jung Ho Kang, passed with flying colors, batting .287 with an .816 OPS and 15 homers during his rookie year in 2015.

"My old friend Kang, from the Pirates, gave me a lot of advice," Kim said. "You have to see more fastballs in order for you to get used to the velocity of the pitchers here. ... I'm trying to get used to the fastball I've not really been able to see during the games. So I'm staying in the cage and working a while with the [pitching] machines to get ready for the everyday games."

Thus far in 2016, Showalter has been picking and choosing his spots to play Kim based on the pitching matchups.

"You kind of have an idea about guys, who they might match up well against initially," Showalter said. "But nobody knows. I said it in spring the whole time when he hadn't had a hit or whatever. Nobody knows. You don't know. I still don't. I know he's had some good at bats off pitchers, certain guys. We'll see if he can go to the next level against some other guys at some point."

For now, Showalter thinks Kim can gain valuable experience in adjusting to the majors even when he's not on the field.

"I think Kim's benefited a little bit by being able to kind of step back and watch something unfold that he didn't know what was going to happen," Showalter said. "The stadiums, the pitchers, the fields, the lights. All the things that we do differently here."

Kim hasn't forgotten the lukewarm reception he received on Opening Day, but he aims to change the minds of skeptical Orioles fans.

"Going back to Opening Day, there was a slight booing for me, so that was slightly in my mind," Kim said April 10 after his debut. "So all I thought about going into the game was try not to get booed anymore."

If Kim can work his way into more frequent playing time and resemble the player who excelled in Korea, perhaps Orioles fans will sing a different tune:

Na-na-na ... na-na-nanana ... Kim Hyun Soo!

Editor's note: Kim uses a translator, who relayed his message in the third person. In this story, third-person pronouns are changed to first person.



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CONNOLLY'S CORNER

Mark Trumbo Has Gone From Simple Insurance To Accepted Assurance For Orioles

★ DAN CONNOLLY

Perhaps the best thing about the Orioles' under-the-radar trade with the Seattle Mariners this December is that it was, more than anything, supposed to serve as an insurance policy if Chris Davis were to sign elsewhere.

In a few months, it's gone from simple insurance to an accepted assurance that the Orioles have one of the best offenses in the American League.

Funny how things work out.

Some background: Knowing that the Orioles' lineup is built on launching home runs at cozy Oriole Park at Camden Yards, the concept of losing Davis' prodigious power at the cleanup spot this winter was concerning.

So club executive vice president of baseball operations Dan Duquette worked his low-risk, high-reward voodoo magic again. He dealt reserve catcher Steve Clevenger to the Mariners for Mark Trumbo and reliever C.J. Riefenhauser (who was claimed off waivers in February and is now in the Chicago Cubs' organization).

"We didn't know what players we'd be able to sign in the free-agent market when Trumbo became available in a trade," Duquette said. "He had hit over 30 home runs (twice), and so we thought he could be a positive addition to the club."

Even at the time, the deal looked a little one-sided.

Clevenger, a Baltimore native and gritty hard worker, basically had lost his shot at significant playing time when Matt Wieters accepted the club's qualifying offer in November, creating a logjam behind the plate.

Trumbo's tenure in Seattle also was coming to a close; he was due more than \$9 million in his final year of arbitration before free agency, and the Mariners' new front office regime wanted to use that money to fill other holes. The Mariners were considering non-tendering Trumbo, which would have made him an unrestricted free agent. Duquette seized the opportunity to acquire Trumbo before other clubs could get involved.

"Sometimes these things are about timing," Duquette said. "We knew we had

openings at a couple of positions, a potential opening at first base, and we were looking to upgrade at DH and outfield, and Mark Trumbo was a fit to fill one of those slots."

Although right-handed, Trumbo needed to fill the Davis role: first baseman and cleanup hitter who could bash a bunch of homers and keep the opposition from pitching around Manny Machado or Adam Jones.

Then the unexpected -- or at least fairly unlikely -- occurred. Davis re-signed with the Orioles, inking a franchise-record, seven-year, \$161 million deal.

"I knew that ownership wanted to re-sign Chris at a point that made economic sense. Sometimes the free-agent market goes well beyond what makes sense in the Baltimore market," Duquette said. "In this case, we were able to sign Chris. He wanted to come back to Baltimore, and we were able to get a deal done that made sense, where the team is concerned."

Suddenly, the Orioles had Trumbo and Davis, both 30 years old, one right-handed and one left-handed -- a pair of sluggers in a sport where power is a rare and coveted commodity.

Orioles manager Buck Showalter admitted he never fully considered managing both until Davis' new deal was officially announced.

"When did I think it could happen? When Chris agreed to the contract. There's so many variables there that you don't count anything until then. You do think about, 'What ifs?' How would it work?" Showalter said. "You have to look at that. It's been encouraging, to say the least."

What was Trumbo's reaction to the Davis signing?

"I was all the while rooting for Chris to come back here, overwhelmingly so," Trumbo said. "Just because I've played on some below-average teams in the past. And I think you are gonna have good years, and you're gonna have bad years, but the years that you win are that much more special."

This is Trumbo's seventh season in the majors and fourth team. He's never been in a playoff game. By re-signing Davis, the Orioles improved their chances of making the postseason, and consequently, Trumbo's as well.

"Winning is a lot more fun, the time

goes by a lot quicker, you don't get run down throughout the course of the year, endlessly racking your brain for answers as to why we're not winning," Trumbo said. "So to come into a contending team, especially with Chris being here and firing on all cylinders, is an ideal situation for anybody. But for me especially."

Davis and Trumbo played against each other in the minors and then in the AL West, when Davis was with Texas (2008-2011) and Trumbo with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim (2010-13). Davis didn't know if he was coming back to the Orioles this winter, but he knew he'd like to have Trumbo on his squad.

"I always knew he was a strong hitter. There was no doubt about it," Davis said. "I think a lot of times you just need the right environment, and I think that's what he's got here. It's a good group of guys that he feels comfortable around. I think there is a lot of trust here, and that's something that guys are definitely looking for."

What Trumbo has done in his short time in Baltimore has been tremendous -- and a big reason why the Orioles have been around the top of the AL East so far. During his first 27 games, Trumbo hit .324 with a .953 on-base plus slugging percentage while leading the team in homers (eight) and RBIs (22). He's played mainly in right field -- and has held his own defensively.

"Mark is a good athlete, and he wants to play every day," Duquette said. "He takes a lot of pride in his all-around game and has always had a good throwing arm. He has improved his first step in the outfield, and that has allowed him to play capable defense."

Bottom line, though, is Trumbo was acquired because he has a thunderous bat, slugging 131 homers in his six previous seasons. He's brought that and a whole lot more, and the Orioles are better for it. That has gotten the attention of -- among others -- the player Trumbo was supposed to replace.

"He's got a lot of power. But I think the most impressive thing for me is his knowledge of himself," Davis said. "Knowing what he is expected to do here and knowing what his role is and really buying into it -- that's really the big thing. You can have all the talent in the world, but if you're not buying into what the team is selling, then a lot of times it doesn't matter." ☒



UPON FURTHER REVIEW

Major League Baseball Needs To Implement Stiffer Performance-Enhancing Drug Penalties

★ JIM HENNEMAN

At last count, eight players have been suspended this year following positive tests under Major League Baseball's rigid drug program.

This leads to two conclusions, the first of which may sound somewhat contradictory. The strictly enforced system IS working. The second is easier to explain -- the players are as stupid as the owners when it comes to dealing with the subject.

In this day and age of "I don't know how (fill in the blank) got in my system, but I made a mistake and accept full responsibility," it boggles the mind trying to understand why a player would jeopardize the kind of contracts that are being rewarded. Until, of course, you come to the realization that those contracts aren't being jeopardized to the degree they should be.

And until they are, baseball is going to pay a steep price. The owners as well as the players, and let's not forget the agents who negotiate those multimillion dollar contracts, need to share the responsibility. They can talk about education regarding drugs, but it can be tough to educate stupidity.

The eight players suspended this year, some marginal and some significant, will lose 80 days of salary -- in 2016. Any remaining years on the multiyear, guaranteed contracts, remain in force because the collective bargaining agreement doesn't allow them to be negated. You might remember it was the CBA that pre-

vented any and all drug testing programs until the federal government threatened to step in.

It's time for the owners to step in on their own. They can start by refusing to reward offenders (see Melky Cabrera and Jhonny Peralta for openers) lucrative long-term, and guaranteed, contracts. Beyond that, given that they can't seem to help themselves (or trust other owners) in such cases, they need to insist on contract language that might save them from themselves. We are already hearing about issues that will be covered when the current CBA expires Dec. 1 -- this should be No. 1 on the owners' agenda -- if a player violates the drug program, his contract is nonexistent, history, worthless, null and void.

Period. End of sentence. End of paragraph. End of discussion. No more excuses about miracle medicines to cure a common cold -- that just also happen to contain a banned substance. Somebody needs to tell the players, either the owners or their agents, to go to their trainer before they go to their doctor -- or chemist.

The NFL deals with this issue seemingly every week and somehow is able to survive the scrutiny, but baseball is an everyday sport that stretches six months and can't afford daily dosages of reported drug abuse. Both sides need to get a grip on the situation, and it's not like they don't know where to start.

It's spelled \$\$\$.

In today's analytic era, we are being taught that statistics don't mean anything, unless it has something to do with

the percentage of times a pitcher throws a certain pitch, a batting average on balls in play, or perhaps something like defensive range factor, which is almost impossible to describe, but whether anybody wants to admit it or not, does actually depend on statistics -- particularly ones that say how often a batter hits a ball in a certain direction.

Well, here's an example of how things can get more than slightly skewed: Ryan Flaherty was listed as the Orioles' third baseman during the 7-0 loss to the New York Yankees May 4. He had a total of seven chances, including being the middle man on two double plays -- all of which were made from the right side of second base, all of which would have been fairly routine plays for a second baseman playing in a normal position.

With only one right-handed hitter in the lineup for the Yankees, Flaherty had no chances from the area normally guarded by a third baseman. In the meantime, second baseman Jonathan Schoop (who, by some strange calculations, is determined to be below average defensively at his position) spent a good part of night in short right field, where his range undoubtedly is limited.

Everyone knows that fielding percentage is not necessarily the best barometer for defensive measurements, but number of chances has always been a factor, as it should, but there's no question "The Shift" is greatly affecting how players are rated. Bobby Grich had three straight years handling more than 900 chances at second base for the Orioles from 1973-75, something never done before or since. He

wouldn't come close to those numbers today.

It will be interesting to see what the numbers show for third basemen at the end of the year -- and how they reflect on other middle infielders.

Thanks to ardent reader Joey (Brackets) Clifford for pointing out that the Yankees had scored four or more runs seven times in their first 26 games, but that didn't even turn out to be the bad news. At least the Yankees were 6-1 in those games, three of which came in the first five of the season.

The real bad news is the 1-0 loss to the Orioles in the 26th game, May 5, was already the third shutout suffered by the Bronx Bombers -- who also had lost four times while scoring only one run. Ouch.

No wonder manager Joe Girardi wants to outlaw "The Shift."

The weather obviously was horrible during the Orioles' first two home stands of the year, and midweek games in the first six weeks are always a drag, but when the Yankees draw less than 60,000 for a three-game series, it should raise a red flag. The promotions are heavily geared to weekend games, and Saturday nights have always been the top-drawing games, but there has to be some other contributing factors.

One thought is that the Orioles' multi-tiered ticket plan (no doubt aimed at the scalpers) may have actually outpriced the Yankees' fans. The Orioles introduced a scaled ticket plan this year that includes five different categories -- from low to high, Value, Classic, Select, Prime and Elite. It's kind of like the price of steamed crabs -- which used to be small, medium and large, but now are gauged as large, extra large, jumbo and colossal.

The Orioles' three-game series against the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim July 8-10 is particularly curious -- each game has a different price range. ☒

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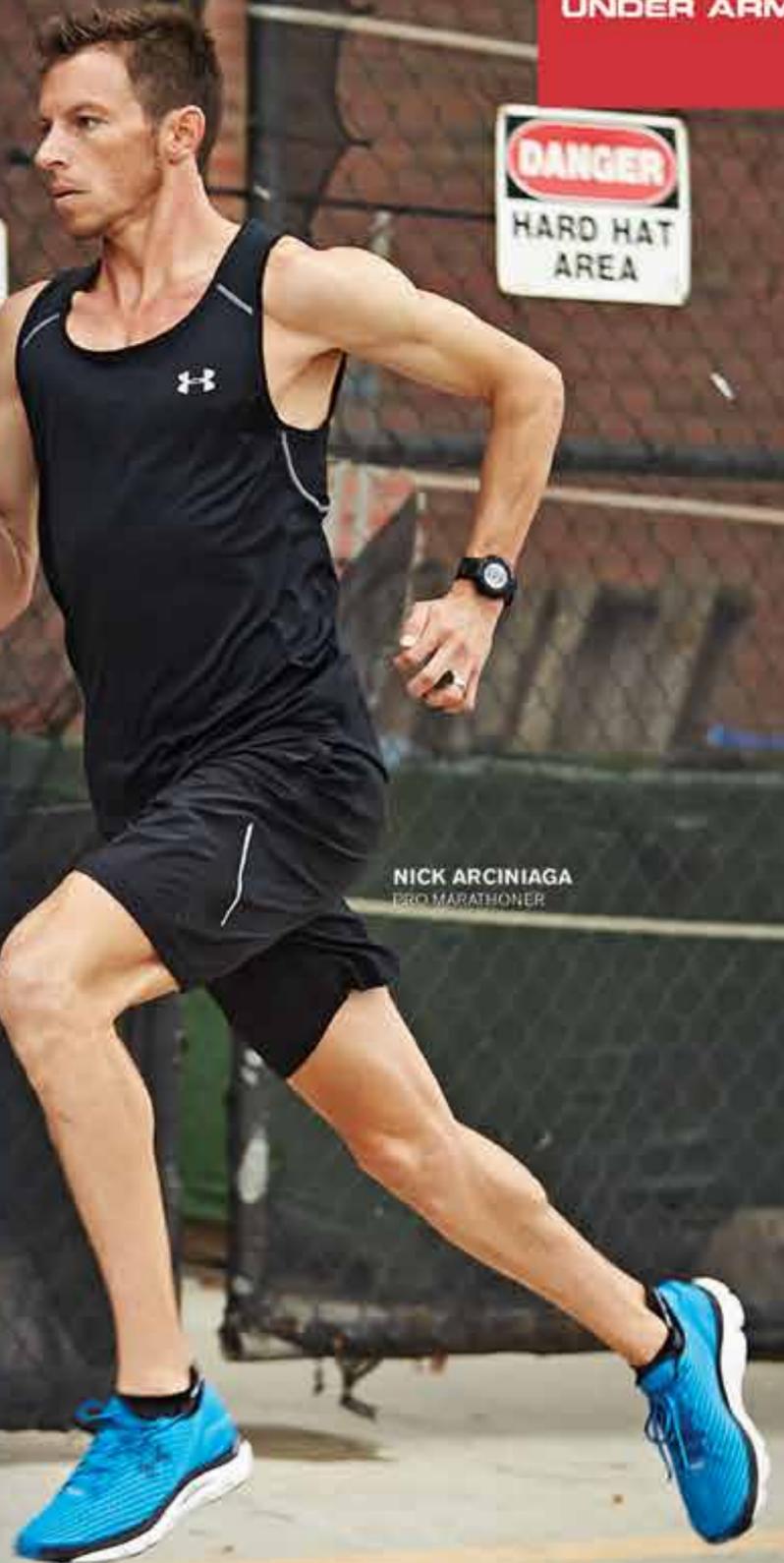
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RAVENS REPORT

Steve Bisciotti Wanted Pass Rusher And Got Three In 2016 NFL Draft

★ JOE PLATANIA

In his 12 years at the helm, Ravens majority owner Steve Bisciotti has been lauded for trusting his football people.

For the past two years, he has also trusted his own fan-bred instincts. This year, that hunch could pay off.

Before each of the last two drafts, Bisciotti had expressly stated he would like to see the Ravens' pass rush revived to the point where opposing offenses had to live in fear of the purple-clad defense the way they did early in the team's history. The unit developed a reputation to the point where a *Sports Illustrated* cover referred to it as the "Baltimore Bullies."

Three such players became part of the Ravens' 2016 11-player draft haul, tied for the second largest in team history and one short of the 1997 class that included 12 players.

The top pick that year was Florida State

linebacker Peter Boulware, who played defensive end in college but proved his versatility by becoming a stand-up linebacker and eventually notching 70 career sacks, a franchise record until it was broken by Terrell Suggs in 2011.

This time around, the Ravens didn't spend a top-10 pick on such a player but instead weaved their way through the draft's second and third days to get a mostly unknown trio that the organization feels can infuse youth and speed into the unit as marquee rushers Suggs and Elvis Dumervil get older.

The Ravens in general -- and Bisciotti in particular -- fervently hope that second-round pick Kamalei Correa, third-rounder Bronson Kaufusi and fifth-round small-college product Matt Judon can do just that.

"[Bisciotti was] very pleased," head coach John Harbaugh said. "It was something that we had targeted throughout the draft. I think a report came out that we were looking hard at pass rushers with that [first-round] pick, and we were. ... We also felt like we had picks throughout the draft

that we had a chance to maybe capitalize on, and it ended up working out that way.

"So, it was just a big priority for us. Steve said it -- I don't think it was a secret -- and we were able to fill it. I'm really fired up about that. I'm really excited about these guys getting to the quarterback."

One of the most effective ways to reach the pocket is to do so from many different angles, and the newly drafted trio each come equipped with different approaches.

Kaufusi is more of a down lineman, coming out of the Brigham Young system, who can play anywhere along the front. It is Correa and Judon -- who respectively attended Boise State and Grand Valley State -- who will likely both be moving from one level to the next, getting their hands out of the dirt and moving from end to linebacker, much as Boulware did 19 years ago.

"I don't see [the transition] too much as a challenge," Correa said. "... That's just because of my work ethic. I'm going to keep working at something. And if I don't get it, I'm going to keep trying."

"I know one day that I will be a great one. I am just going to keep working until I am."

The 6-foot-3, 245-pound Correa, an early entry junior who is the first Boise State player drafted by the Ravens, was on the 2015 preseason watch lists for the Bednarik, Nagurski and Lombardi trophies.

The 42nd overall pick -- tabbed after the Ravens traded down twice in the second round -- seems to fit the badly needed playmaker mold the Ravens need, having accumulated 20 career sacks, 31.5 tackles for losses and five forced fumbles. He also proved durable, appearing in all 40 career games in which his team played.

As for third-round pick Kaufusi, he brings great size (6-foot-6, 285 pounds) to an already stout Ravens defensive line, as well as good quickness and lateral movement in tight spaces thanks to a background that includes a lot of basketball experience.

A skill set like that -- as well as a stat line that includes 26.5 sacks and a whopping 44 tackles for loss -- might have visions of the Houston Texans' J.J. Watt dancing through the heads of Ravens fans. Kaufusi certainly has Watt's hell-bent-for-leather attitude.

"[The Ravens are] getting a player that is relentless every single play," Kaufusi said. "[I am a] player that wants to make plays, not only for myself, but also for my teammates and coaches."

"I'm a dedicated player, someone who wants to be the best and is willing to put in the time and sacrifice so that I can be at my best when my best is needed."

The 6-foot-3, 275-pound Judon is some-

one who sacrificed the limelight at Grand Valley State but became the nation's best in 2015, notching an NCAA-high 20 sacks, regardless of level. He concluded his college career with a school-record 34 sacks, eclipsing the previous record set by NFL veteran Dan Skuta, who now plays for the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Judon opened eyes with his ability to cut quickly in space and shed blockers; he also forced eight fumbles while in college. He returned from a 2013 knee injury to notch 28.5 sacks during his final two seasons.

"Over the years, [we have] drafted a lot of small-school players, and that's a challenge, the different levels of competition," assistant general manager Eric DeCosta said. "But, I think in Matt's case, we've got some excellent area scouts who go in there and go to those schools, and they loved him as a player in the fall. We looked at the tape. He went to the combine and had a great workout."

"... We felt very, very good about his ability to come in and help us right away."

Through most of their two-decade history, the Ravens have been a defensive devil to opponents, one that used to carry a two-pronged pitchfork: they could smother a run game and give enemy quarterbacks little-to-no time to breathe in the pass pocket.

The run defense has held steady through the years, but thanks in part to ill-timed injuries, spotty secondary play and a declining pass rush, foes have found the going easier through the air, especially in recent years as the league has gotten more pass-happy as a whole.

After the Ravens set a franchise record with 60 sacks during a 2006 season that saw them post their best regular-season record (13-3) and earn their highest playoff seed (second), the team has exceeded 40 sacks in a season only twice. In fact, the 2015 total of 37 quarterback takedowns represented a decline of 12 from the previous campaign.

As the sacks have gone down, the number of airborne touchdowns allowed has risen commensurately. Since Harbaugh became the Ravens' head coach in 2008, Baltimore has allowed 15 or fewer touchdown passes in a season only twice.

In fact, the last three seasons have seen the Ravens yield 25, 22 and a club-record 30 passing touchdowns; the latter figure broke the previous franchise-record high of 27, set during an inaugural 1996 season that saw the team win four games.

The Ravens are now beginning their third decade coming off a similar 5-11 campaign, and restoring the pass rush -- along with the aura it can bring -- seems to have finally become a priority.

"... We added some speed," general manager Ozzie Newsome said. "We added some toughness. We added some size, athleticism and guys that have made some game-changing plays on the collegiate level."

And at least with this draft, they infused the roster with the type of menacing defensive players who can excite their fans -- including the one who owns the team. ☒



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vs.



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NFL Bound: Baltimore Area Gets Defensive In 2016 Draft

★ ALEXANDER C. LEE

It feels like there is a new wrinkle in the NFL Draft every year. A few years back, the league moved the initial rounds to primetime. Now, it appears the site may bounce between cities. And on April 28 in Chicago, football fans across the nation watched Ole Miss offensive lineman Laremy Tunsil tumble to No. 13 overall after an incriminating video of him surfaced on social media.

You've got to give it to them; the NFL is never boring. The same can usually be said for Baltimore-area prospects in the NFL Draft, and 2016 was no different, especially on the defensive side of the ball. With the start of the season still four months away, here's a look at the players with Charm City ties who were drafted or have since landed on rosters as undrafted rookie free agents:

Sean Davis, S, Maryland

The Pittsburgh Steelers added tackle-machine Davis to their leaky secondary with the 27th pick of the second round (58th overall) a day after grabbing Miami cornerback Artie Burns in the first. Davis, a Washington, D.C., native, accumulated more than 100 tackles in his sophomore and junior seasons at Maryland before earning honorable mention All-Big Ten honors despite switching to cornerback as a senior.

"He is a really productive player at two positions: safety and corner," Steelers defensive backs coach Carnell Lake said. "He has been really productive in the tackling department. He has a good eye for playing the ball in the passing game. We really look forward to having him in the building."

It sounds like the Steelers plan to play Davis at safety initially, but his versatility was undoubtedly an attractive feature. Pittsburgh ranked 30th in the NFL against the pass last season. Davis should get a chance to compete for playing time right away. While he never was able to put it all together in a Terrapin uniform, he has the experience and prototypical size to do so in the NFL.

Cyrus Jones, CB, Alabama

With Davis off the board, the New England Patriots snapped up Jones (Gilman) two picks later with the 29th selection of the second round (60th overall). Jones won two national championships at Alabama, notching five tackles and a forced fumble against Clemson in January. From Gilman to

Alabama, Jones should have no issue assimilating into yet another championship atmosphere.

"I feel as though I'm greatly prepared for the next level thanks to Coach [Nick] Saban," Jones said. "He's a great coach, arguably one of the best, arguably the best in the country -- and I've heard many things that he's compared to Coach [Bill] Belichick and that our program is ran similar to how the Patriots' is run."

Jones is only 5-foot-10, leading some to believe he might be best utilized in the slot. But the Baltimore native proved time and time again he could hang outside against the best the Southeastern Conference had to offer. Either way, he should contribute right away on special teams after returning four punts for touchdowns as a senior. Hey, the converted wideout might even play some offense for the unpredictable Patriots.

Yannick Ngakoue, DE, Maryland

The Jacksonville Jaguars' selection of Ngakoue with the sixth pick of the third round (69th overall) marked the first time in a decade two Terps have gone in the top 70. Ngakoue, who grew up in nearby D.C., had a brilliant junior season in College Park, Md. His 13.5 sacks last season were an all-time Maryland record and ranked second nationally, earning him first-team All-Big Ten honors.

Ngakoue was just one piece of a Jacksonville draft that was widely lauded by draft pundits. Defensive back Jalen Ramsey (No. 5 overall) and linebacker Myles Jack (No. 36) could start right away. With last year's No. 3 overall pick, defensive end Dante Fowler, returning from injury, Ngakoue could find himself part of an impressive young core on defense. His ability to get to the passer directly translates to the pro level.

"I had a strong feeling that [Jacksonville was] going to take me," Ngakoue said. "I just left it all on the field at the workout and showed that I'm in shape. ... I'm thankful for the whole organization to believe in me and pick me."

Kendall Fuller, CB, Virginia Tech

The Good Counsel (Montgomery County) product became the fourth Fuller brother to reach the NFL when the Washington Redskins called his name with the 21st pick of the third round (84th overall). A torn meniscus ended Fuller's junior season, otherwise he might've gone much earlier, like his brother, Kyle, who went 14th overall to the Chicago Bears in 2014.

"He's too talented of a player to pass up," Redskins head coach Jay Gruden said. "He can play nickel, obviously. There's a big hope for him. He can play outside. He's

got great, natural football instincts at the nickel or corner position. Obviously, he's got great bloodlines. I think it's a great pick."

Fuller was second-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference and Defensive Rookie of the Year as a freshman in 2013. He followed that up with first-team all-conference honors in 2014 as well as second- and third-team All-American nods. The Redskins ranked 25th against the pass in 2015 but suddenly have a bundle of talent in the secondary with Fuller, second-rounder Su'a Cravens and free-agent cornerback acquisition Josh Norman.

Charles Tapper, DE, Oklahoma

The Dallas Cowboys selected Tapper with the third pick of the fourth round (101st overall). Not bad for a guy who didn't play football until his junior year at City College. Once a stand-out basketball player, the Baltimore native uses that athleticism in pass-rush situations and could compete for playing time right away in Dallas.

"When Dallas called, I was just so happy," Tapper said. "I feel like that's just the best place for me, being able to play the 5-technique, be one-on-one with the tackle, be destructive, get up field. They treat every play like get off the ball and then just react."

Tapper was miraculously named first-team All-Big 12 as a sophomore in 2013 and bookended it with first-team honors again as a senior in 2015. Last season, he had 50 tackles from defensive end -- 10 went for a loss and seven for sacks -- and helped the Sooners surge into national title contention. Tapper possesses an attractive blend of raw ability and a well-rounded skill set.

Quinton Jefferson, DT, Maryland

No player benefited more from Maryland's switch to the 4-3 defense last season than Jefferson, who impressed enough for the defensive-minded Seattle Seahawks to trade up for him with the eighth pick of the fifth round (147th overall). Jefferson has now played tackle and end in two different defensive schemes, which should help him provide depth in Seattle.

"I think I bring a lot of versatility," Jefferson said. "I think I can play all along the front. I think I am very disruptive inside, with the run and the pass. I feel like I can really get after it on third downs, kick inside on sub packages and rush the passer. That's at a premium in this league right now."

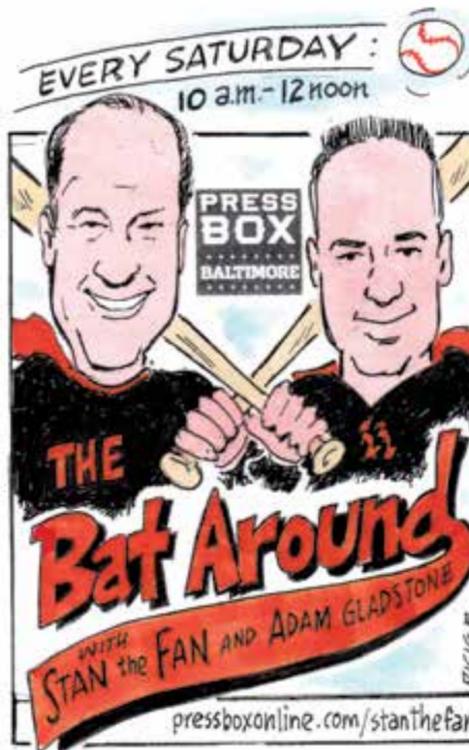
Jefferson's junior season ended prematurely in 2014 due to a knee injury, but he came back stronger than ever a year later. He collected 6.5 sacks and 12.5 tackles for loss en route to honorable mention All-Big Ten honors. He has a ways to go before he can make an impact at the next level, but there's nowhere better to learn than Seattle. ☒

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MARYLAND GAMING

University Of Maryland Offers Course On 'Gambling In the New Millennium'

★ **BILL ORDINE**



here's a certain reaction some folks have when they hear the title of the course University of Maryland professor Stephen McDaniel has been offering at the College Park campus.

The name of the course is "Gambling in the New Millennium."

"So they ask, 'Are you really teaching students how to gamble?'" McDaniel said.

Of course, the answer is, "No." However, after taking his course, McDaniel's students will understand a great deal more about the broad range of the gambling world and be far better informed consumers than most of their elders, who have been buying lottery tickets, betting on the races and frequenting casinos for years.

The gambling course is part of the university's I-Series of academic offerings, where the approach is to explore a specific topic in-depth and examine its various aspects.

"In the case of this course, gambling can be used as a prism to view economics, religion, government, public policy, public health, marketing, consumer behaviors -- so many different things," McDaniel said. "For the average 18- to 20-year-old, mention the word *history* and their eyes glaze over. But start with a subject that they are already interested in, and you immediately have their attention."

The most recent spring semester was the third time McDaniel has taught the gambling course. He's an associate professor in kinesiology, and many of his courses revolve around sports. McDaniel's gambling course has 80 students, and typically, there's a waiting list.

So what do McDaniel's students learn?

Well, the course is nothing less than a sweeping tour of gaming in America.

McDaniel discusses lotteries, casino gambling, horse racing, poker (online and live), sports wagering and even references the most recent entry on the gaming landscape -- daily fantasy sports.

He delves into how gaming operators -- whether it's the state-run lottery or a commercial casino -- market their products; how they use loyalty programs to

analyze the habits of their customers, and he gives extensive attention to the deleterious effects that gambling has on some people.

"What research has told us is that generally 1 to 3 percent of people are susceptible to developing a gambling problem, but that triples for this demographic," McDaniel said, referring to those of college age, give or take a few years.

The discussion of problem gambling, from how gaming can be a stimuli for the brain to the financial and social impacts of gambling addiction, is reinforced by guest lecturers who are problem gaming counselors and even recovering gambling addicts.

In addition to lessons that address problem gambling, McDaniel's course ranges far and wide across the gaming landscape. He has recruited guest speakers from the Maryland Jockey Club to talk about the horse racing industry; from the casino umbrella group, the American Gaming Association, and even from the state lottery.

McDaniel also supplements classroom lectures with gambling films, such as the classic James Caan version of "The Gambler;" the tale of the MIT blackjack card counting team, "21," and the documentary on poker, "All In: The Poker Movie."

After a recent class on causes and effects of problem gaming, a group of students chatted about the course. In every case, they had had some previous exposure to gambling, whether it was family penny-ante card games or regular poker with their friends or daily fantasy sports.

"I have three older brothers, and they all watch sports and bet a little, and my father enjoys poker," said Grace Hutchinson, a sophomore economics major. "What surprised me was when we had the speakers come in [from the gaming industry] -- I was expecting these big, imposing guys, and they were just regular people. Actually, I found that a little reassuring."

Other stereotypes are dispelled in the class.

"It was surprising to find out that the problem gamblers who lose the most money are the ones who could least afford it," said Andrew Gounaris, a sophomore kinesiology major. "You figure that people who gamble away \$200,000 have \$200,000 to lose, but that's not it. It's people losing that kind of money who

can't afford it."

Ryan Goldberg, a freshman finance and international business major, was surprised by both the scope of problem gambling and how some people become compulsive gamblers as a result of stimuli that reinforce a need for a gambling rush.

"I've never felt that I absolutely had to play poker or had to get a lineup in [in daily fantasy sports]," Goldberg said. "It was surprising to me that people are playing for [motives] that go beyond the money."

Occasionally, what piqued a student's interest was his or her own academic area, as was the case for Tom Kowalsky, a freshman marketing major. McDaniel's course illustrates how casinos collect data on their customers through casino loyalty programs. Through the patrons' use of player loyalty cards, casinos find out their customers' preferred games, financial thresholds and even when they

are likely to visit the casino.

"I was impressed by the marketing that goes into it -- how the lottery and casinos target customers and gear their advertising to different people," Kowalsky said.

McDaniel emphasized that it's not his place to tell students that gambling is either good or bad. But because of its prevalence in today's society -- 48 states have some sort of gambling and nearly 40 have casinos -- he believes it's important students understand as much as possible about an activity and industry that has such immense impact economically and culturally, as well as on public policy and public health.

"My job isn't to tell students what to think," McDaniel said, "but rather what to think about."

And if at some point in the future they walk into a casino, and they recall something from his class about the distinction of playing a game like roulette, where outcomes are random, as opposed to blackjack, where some skill can be brought to bear, that's not a bad thing, either, McDaniel said.

"Overall, I think I'd be a smarter gambler," said Jared Ungar, a freshman who is still undecided about a major. "And today, when we looked at problem gambling, that showed that if you're not a smart gambler, there can be a lot of different consequences." ☒



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Navy Defenseman Chris Fennell On Track To Become One Of The All-Time Greats

★ TODD KARPOVICH

Navy junior Chris Fennell is often compared to some of the best defensemen who have ever played Division I college lacrosse.

His size, speed and athleticism make him an imposing figure in front of the Midshipmen's goal.

After another successful season, Fennell was named the 2016 Patriot League Defensive Player of the Year, joining Jordan DiNola (2008) as the only Midshipmen to win the award. Fennell, however, is the only player in program history to take home the award twice and the first in league history to earn it in back-to-back seasons since Army's Bill Henderson (2010 and 2011).

"As a competitor, I am always looking at ways to improve my game," said Fennell, who was also a unanimous first-team selection in the Patriot League. "I am still looking to improve my off-ball play and sliding angles to help make me a better team defenseman."

Fennell said Navy has been successful this season because of the team's dedication to improving, both individually and as a team.

Navy had the nation's top scoring de-

fense during the regular season. The Mids allowed 88 goals in 13 games and were the only team in Division I lacrosse to allow fewer than seven goals per game.

In addition, Navy held nine of 13 opponents to single digits in scoring this season. This was the first time since 1970 that a Navy defense has held two opponents to one or fewer goals during the same season -- Delaware (5-1) Feb. 21 and Sacred Heart (7-1) April 22.

"It's a heck of a defense, led by Chris Fennell," said Navy coach Rick Sowell, who was named the 2016 Patriot League Coach of the Year. "It's a defense that doesn't have a weakness, to be honest with you. These guys are very serious about their craft. They watch a ton of film. The chemistry is good."

For Fennell, this year's honors are the culmination of hard work and unwavering commitment to become a better player. The junior's 6-foot-2, 211-pound frame provides matchup challenges for most opponents. In addition, he is a quick player who can beat opponents to ground balls or run a counter-attack.

"I use my size, length and speed to keep opposing attackmen off balanced," he said. "I think my size allows me to adapt my defensive style to fit the attackman I may be covering and keep them guessing." Last season, Fennell recovered from

a broken leg that prematurely ended his freshman year to earn USILA third-team All-American recognition. In addition, he was named the Patriot League Defensive Player of the Year, first-team All-Patriot League, a first-team ECAC Division I All-Star and was a member of the Patriot League all-tournament team. He also took home the Lt. Robert T. Bianchi Award, which goes to Navy's Most Valuable Player.

This year, Fennell, along with defensive teammate Matt Rees (Boys' Latin), was named to the watch list for the Tewaarton Award, which goes to the nation's top player.

"It always feels good to be recognized for an award of this magnitude, but I knew that the award is for a whole season, and you cannot celebrate awards like that in March and April," Fennell said. "My teammates are always supportive of me and keep me humble and focused on the team."

At the conclusion of the regular season, Fennell and Rees were atop the Mids' list for caused turnovers with 21 each, tied for the fifth most in school history.

Off the field, Fennell and Rees are close friends. That strong bond has helped the chemistry of the entire defense.

"Matt and I have been close friends ever since we met at [Naval Academy Preparatory School] four years ago," Fennell said. "We have been playing together for a long time and both have a tremendous amount of confidence in the other's abilities. We both hold each other to an exceptionally high standard."

"... Matt and I, along with our other three-year defensive starter, John Trainor, have developed a relationship on the field where we know what the other is going to

do before they even do it. Off the field, the two of us, along with John, are the best of friends, and you will always find us together out on the weekends."

In 2012, Fennell graduated from Delaware Valley Regional High School in Frenchtown, N.J., where he was a three-sport athlete in football, basketball and lacrosse. Even at an early age, he showed leadership skills. He was named captain of the football and lacrosse teams his junior and senior years. He then attended Navy prep school before heading to Annapolis, Md., full-time.

"The stats don't tell the whole story with Chris and the impact he has and the role he plays on our team," Sowell said. "First of all, he's a good athlete. He's really quick. He's also very smart. He is an intelligent player with [a] very high lacrosse I.Q."

In addition to his athleticism, Fennell is a stellar student. The rigors of balancing academics and athletics can be challenging at the distinguished Naval Academy, so time management is essential. Fennell said fitting in time to sleep can even be difficult.

"The ability to compartmentalize your day is paramount to having success while at Navy," he said. "There is always time built into every day for sports, school and sleep, but it is up to you to figure out what works best for you and to budget your time accordingly. Personally, I like to follow a daily planner and block out the time I will spend on activities daily."

After graduation, Fennell said he is looking forward to the opportunity to serve in the United States Armed Forces. He said he would like to pursue a career in coaching, following in the footsteps of his Naval Academy Preparatory School coach, Jon Birsner.

However, Fennell still has another year of lacrosse to firmly entrench himself among the game's all-time greats. ☒



Chris Fennell



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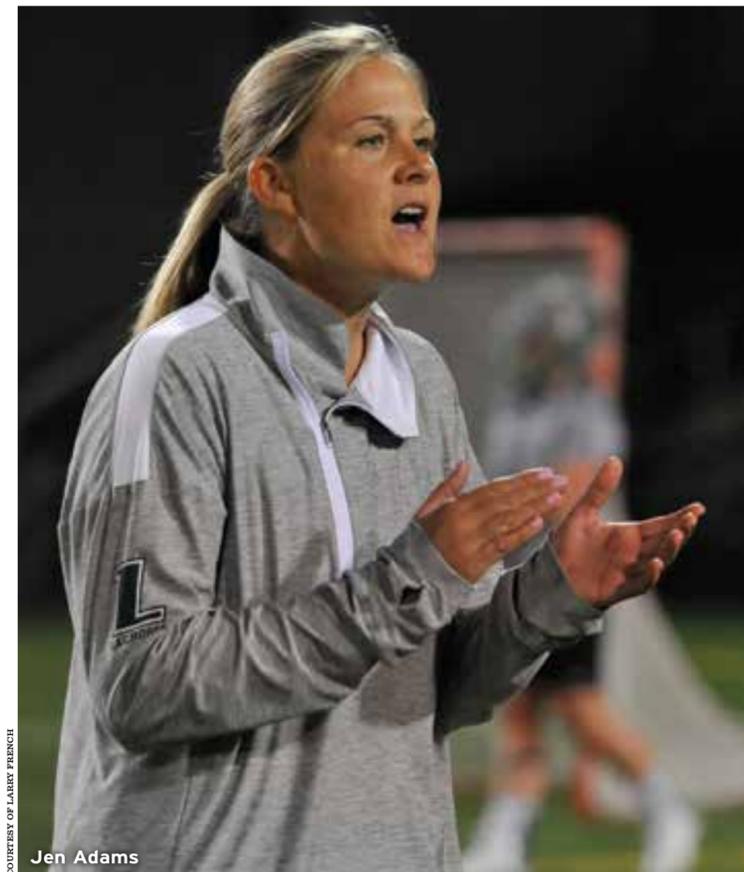
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Jen Adams

From Player To Coach, Loyola's Jen Adams Continues To Have Success

★ **KYLE STACKPOLE**

Loyola women's lacrosse coach Jen Adams is used to having success, especially during her time as a player.

She led Maryland to four straight national titles from 1998-2001 while establishing herself as one of the best lacrosse players in history. Her 445 career points are still the most all-time. She won National Player of the Year her first three seasons before earning the first Tewaaron Trophy, given to the country's best player, as a senior.

Growing up, Greyhounds senior goalkeeper Molly Wolf had a poster of Adams in her room.

"It's like Jen Adams," Wolf said, emphasizing the final two words. "She just is lacrosse."

Adams was named to the Division I women's lacrosse 25th anniversary team in April 2007, further cementing her legacy.

Now, the 36-year-old from Australia has returned the Greyhounds to national contenders since becoming their coach in 2009. Her fast, free-flowing style of play has led Loyola to an NCAA tournament win during each of its past five seasons. Entering the 2016 season, Adams' record as the Greyhounds' head coach was 96-42, and she led the Greyhounds (14-5 overall, 9-0 Patriot League entering the NCAA tournament) to another post-season berth this year after capturing their third straight Patriot League title.

"She came with a mindset of wanting to make the program great again," said senior attacker Maddy Blakeman, who led the team with 35 regular-season goals. "She came from playing at one of the top programs in the country, and so she has that mentality and, as a player, what it's like to be great. And I think that continued to her coaching perspective."

After contemplating various career choices, Adams, a sports marketing and management major, thought of becoming a sports agent or working for a professional sports company. Instead, she made the decision to coach.

She wanted to share her experiences with other student-athletes.

Throughout her career at Loyola, Adams has stressed the balance between getting to work and having fun. It's a trait Adams learned from Maryland head coach Cathy Reese when she was the Terps' associate head coach from 2007-08. The two also coached together

at Denver from 2004-06.

Adams' philosophy is shown through activities unrelated to lacrosse. In the fall, Blakeman said the squad would break up into smaller teams and play other sports, such as soccer or basketball.

Wolf remembers instances after tough practices in which Adams would instruct the team to line up on the end line. Instead of making her players run, which many of them expected, Adams would surprise her bunch with an impromptu game of dodgeball or wiffle ball.

The team is with each other "24/7," according to Blakeman, as many of the players live together in addition to attending games, practices and workouts throughout the week. In her mind, these events help keep a light mood.

They've seen results on the field, too, claiming three straight Patriot League regular-season and tournament titles since joining the conference in 2014.

"I definitely think that's impacted how we've grown and how successful we've been," Blakeman said. "If anyone's miserable and not enjoying themselves, you're not going to get anywhere."

Wolf said Adams knows the "perfect balance between fun and serious" but added that what sets Adams apart from other coaches is the freedom she allows her team to play with on the field.

Going back to her playing days, Adams always preferred to play fast and without much direction. She enjoyed going with the flow of the game, something she's implemented with Loyola's offense. There are some sets, Adams said, but the majority of the time, the players' chemistry dictates how the team operates.

Adams also pointed out that this type of style makes Loyola harder to scout. It forces the opponent to game plan for a team that doesn't necessarily know its own strategy entering the contest.

"What I really try to foster with my players is to give them the ropes come game day and say, 'I trust you and play the game how you like to play the game, and let's see what we can create on the field with that kind of mentality,'" Adams said.

On the recruiting front, Adams attempts to bring in players who are selfless, hard working and dependable. These characteristics serve as the ingredients for Loyola's culture, something Adams has been building with this program since taking over as head coach.

"She wants to put Loyola's name on the map while having amazing girls for the program play for her," Wolf said. "She finds the greatest girls to play with. I've made so many friends playing for her." ☒



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PNC Lacrosse Spotlight: Manchester Valley Senior Midfielder Lizzie Colson

★ TODD KARPOVICH



Lizzie Colson has been tormenting opponents since she arrived at Manchester Valley. Last year, she led the Mavericks to an undefeated season, scoring 83 goals with 27 assists. She also controlled 71 draws. This year, she has been dominant again, scoring four goals during a 13-9 victory against rival Century April 7. Colson, who comes from a family of top-notch lacrosse players, will attend Maryland in the fall.



Lizzie Colson

PressBox: As a senior, how have you gotten better each season at Manchester Valley?

Lizzie Colson: Every year, I try new things, and I push myself to be able to do something I couldn't do last season. I set personal goals based off of the season prior to that. I like to watch my personal development. Every year, I have teammates who push me to get better and support me in my lacrosse career, and that really helps me grow.

PB: You come from a family of lacrosse players. How did they inspire you to play the game?

LC: Coming from a family of lacrosse players pushes me to get better and work harder. I constantly have someone to shoot around with. It's such a fun experience, because we get to help each other grow as players and teammates.

PB: What type of advice do you give to some of the younger players?

LC: I always tell the younger girls that lacrosse is such a mental sport and to stay positive, even if things aren't going their way. I understand that as a freshman, playing against a senior can be intimidating, but it's important that they know everything they are capable of achieving. I think it is really important that they believe in themselves.

PB: How did the academics and athletics at Manchester Valley help prepare you for college?

LC: I think the academics at Manchester Valley help me prepare for my future because I have teachers who are very hands on and willing to help. I push myself academically, so that next year will not be such a wakeup call. Same thing goes for on the field -- I have teammates who are always pushing me; working on draw controls, timing my runs, goalies taking extra shots after practice, etc. I have so much support from the school, both academically and athletically, that allows me to be successful.

PB: What went into your decision to commit early to the University of Maryland, and how excited are you to play for such a successful program?

LC: When choosing my college, a lot of things went into my decision. Aside from the phenomenal lacrosse program, the academics and the campus sold me. When I walked on campus, I knew that was where I wanted to spend these next four years. I am beyond excited to play for Coach Cathy Reese. I cannot wait to be around players who will push me to be better every day. It's slightly intimidating going into such a successful program, but I can hardly wait to be a part and contribute. ☒

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VARSITY REPORT

Chris Robinson's Steady Leadership Takes McDonogh Girls' Lacrosse To Unprecedented Heights

★ WICK EISENBERG



On April 11, 2009, the McDonogh girls' lacrosse team jumped out to an early lead against Canandaigua Academy (N.Y.). The Eagles got too comfortable, though, and Canandaigua stormed back, winning the game, 12-10.

McDonogh played Winters Mill two days later and won that game, 15-3. At the time, Chris Robinson, the head coach at McDonogh since 2005, was excited to see his team rebound positively from its first loss of the season.

He had no idea what that win would start. "That loss really refocused our team and gave us a platform to make a run at a championship," Robinson said. "It catapulted us into a streak we didn't know was going to come about."

That win against Winters Mill began a remarkable winning streak.

The McDonogh girls' lacrosse team has won 152 consecutive games since that 2009 loss to Canandaigua, as of May 2. It easily shatters the previous national girls' lacrosse record of 104 straight wins, set by Loch Raven High School from 1973-1982.

During this run, McDonogh has won seven Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland A Conference championships and has become the consensus best high school girls' lacrosse program in the country.

Before the team's 2010 season, the Eagles were still using the loss to Canandaigua as motivation. Despite winning the 2009 IAAM A Conference championship,

the season still didn't feel quite as fulfilled because of the loss.

"2010 was a deep team, so to have a dream season was very possible," Robinson said. "For it to go beyond that has been pretty amazing. I thought a 30-game winning streak was possible -- but not to the point we're at now."

With something as major as the streak surrounding the team, it's surprising to find out how little the subject is discussed, with the exception of a meeting at the outset of every season.

During that meeting, Robinson talks about the historic nature of the streak but also how all those previous wins are in the past. The hope is to lessen the burden of trying to uphold such a historic run and to have the players' sole focus be on the next game.

It's certainly helped this year's team, which finished the regular season 19-0 and outscored opponents, 302-114. The Eagles were pushed to overtime during their regular-season finale against Century May 2, earning a 12-11 victory. Other than that game, the closest an opponent came this season was five goals, which happened against Vero Beach High School (Fla.) March 16 and Marriotts Ridge April 30.

"When I got here and made the team, I learned the streak isn't something to focus on, because it adds stress to the team," senior goalie Gabbe Cadoux said. "Staying calm and composed is the biggest component to it."

On the field, depth has played a big part in the McDonogh success story. The Eagles consistently fill their roster with talented players who can contribute. This has gotten easier the longer the streak has gone on.

Robinson said a lot of the top players

in the Baltimore area apply to the Owings Mills, Md., private school for the educational opportunity but also with the hopes of wearing the white jersey with the McDonogh name on the front.

That depth always shows up in the box score, as McDonogh seems to have a high number of goal scorers in every game it plays. The most scorers the Eagles have had in one game this season was 12 in a 20-goal effort against Archbishop Spalding April 27.

Against Marriotts Ridge, McDonogh had seven goal scorers during its 13-8 win. That's also the same number the team had against Notre Dame Prep April 1 and Roland Park County School April 21. In both of those games, the Eagles netted 15 goals.

"We play a fast-paced game with a lot of players," senior attacker Brindi Griffin said. "Even when the starters are off the field, we have so many girls who can come in and make an impact. We have a whole bench full of players who can play."

While it's nice to have a deep roster, there isn't a guarantee it'll be taken advantage of. McDonogh's coaching staff preaches playing lacrosse selflessly. That includes having some of the best players in the country who have been willing to make that extra pass or to sacrifice a little bit of their role as a star player to make McDonogh a better team.

"Growing up on club teams, sometimes you're taught to play a little selfishly," senior midfielder Savannah Buchanan said. "That's definitely the biggest thing with McDonogh lacrosse -- be unselfish."

While the team's historic run has been celebrated by some, it's been criticized by others.

Many people don't like dynasties. Unless a person is a fan of the New England

Patriots or the New York Yankees, that person probably dislikes those teams because of how often they win. The more wins the Eagles have racked up, the more gossip there's been that McDonogh bends recruiting rules.

"You hear people talk about us being the best team money can buy. Every kid on the team pays tuition; there are no athletic scholarships at McDonogh. It's a total myth," Robinson said. "The criticism of us being unfairly put together simply isn't true. We've never broken any rules, and we are looked at under a microscope all the time. We run a squeaky clean program and take a lot of criticism because we win and do so dominantly."

McDonogh has done its best to use those rumors to its advantage. The team is a close-knit bunch, knowing that few outside the community want to see the Eagles succeed. It's created a true us-against-the-world feel within the program.

Whenever McDonogh has an away game, the team knows it'll be entering a hostile environment filled with fans who hope their team will be giant killers. The same goes for when the whistle blows to start a game.

"We know going into every game, our opponent is going to give us their best shot," senior defender Sarah Dohler said. "Even if it's a team that doesn't have a great record, they're going to be a tough opponent because they will give us their very best."

One day, a team's very best might be enough to beat the Eagles. McDonogh has had overtime wins and its share of buzzer beaters since 2009, but the team has always found a way to pull out a win.

Robinson hasn't thought about what he's going to say in the team huddle if and when the streak is snapped. For Robinson, he hopes the streak ends because another team plays a great game, not because McDonogh has a bad performance.

Whenever that moment arises, despite the disappointment the Eagles will feel, it'll be a great opportunity to show the world what Robinson already knows about his players.

"On the field, our kids are tenacious and play hard, but off the field, there isn't one negative thing you can say about them," Robinson said. "They're well-mannered and good citizens that go on to be successful in life. We've had a long run and been good sports, winning for a long time. If we lose a game, we'll do it with class." ☒

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★ WALKS/RACES

MAY 22 -- KEEP PUNCHING 5K, 1 MILE WALK & KIDS RACES

Show your support for Brain Cancer Awareness month at the third annual Keep Punching 5K, 1 Mile Walk & Kids Races at Goucher College at 8 a.m. Keep Punching strives to support patients, healthcare providers and researchers in their fight to prevent and eradicate brain cancer and minimize treatment-related side effects that may adversely impact function and comfort. For more information and to register, visit eliteracemanagement.com/keep-punching-5k-1-mile-walk-kids-races/ or email Will Murdoch at will@eliteracemanagement.com.

MAY 22 -- COOL COURAGEOUS KIDS 5K & 1 MILE FUN RUN

Online registration is open for the Cool Courageous Kids 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run that will take place at Oregon Park Ridge beginning at 8 a.m. The Cool Kids Campaign is devoted to improving the quality of life for pediatric oncology patients and their families by focusing on the academic, social and emotional needs brought on by a cancer diagnosis. Visit coolkidscampaign.org/run for more information and to register.

MAY 24 -- 21ST ANNUAL MCVET 5K/10K RACE

This race will begin and end at the War Memorial Building near City Hall, and all proceeds will benefit the Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training Inc. The MCVET's mission is to provide homeless veterans and other veterans in need with comprehensive services that will enable them to rejoin their communities as productive citizens. Visit charmcityrun.com for more information and to register.

MAY 29 -- JCN 5K CARE RUN

Take part in this race to show your support for the Jewish Caring Network, a nonprofit Baltimore-based organization dedicated to providing free support services to families facing life-threatening, lifelong or serious illnesses. The men's run will take place at Druid Hill Park May 29, while the women's run will take place at the Maryland Zoo June 5. Visit wizathon.com/jcn5krun-women/ for more information and to register.

JUNE 5 -- SUPER HERO WALK

Batman or Superman? Wonderwoman or Catwoman? No matter who your favorite superhero is, come dressed for a fun, family-friendly romp around Lake Montebello to show off your support of Baltimore Child Abuse Centers. For more information and to register, visit bcacl.org.

JUNE 5 -- 6 DOT DASH

This 6K race will kick off at the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, 200 E. Wells St., and will wind through the Baltimore Inner Harbor before finishing back at the NFB. The race will benefit the NFB Jernigan Institute, whose mission is to develop innovative education, technologies, products and services that help the world's blind achieve independence. For more information and to register, visit nfb.org/dot-dash.

JUNE 11 -- BALTIMORE VISIONWALK 5K

A cure is in sight when you join the ninth annual Baltimore VisionWalk 5K at the Inner Harbor. For more information and to register, visit visionwalk.org.

JUNE 12 -- RUNNING WITH THE DEVILS 5K

Walk or run at Goucher College to impact one of the thousands who turn to the Red Devils to ease the burden of breast cancer. For more information and to register, call 410-323-0135 or visit runningwiththedevils.org.

JUNE 19 -- GBMC FATHER'S DAY 5K

GBMC Healthcare will host the 28th annual Father's Day 5K and 1 Mile Fun Walk to benefit GBMC's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU.) Registrations begin at 6:30 a.m., with the race starting at 8 a.m. at the GBMC campus, 6545 N. Charles St. For more information and to register, visit gbmc.org/5k or call 443-849-2407.

AUG. 5 -- THE AT&T SNEAKS COME OUT AT NIGHT 15K & 3X5K RELAY

Take part in The AT&T Sneaks Come Out at Night 15K & 3x5K Relay and run through the hills of Druid Park from 6:30-9 p.m. Funds from the event will benefit Back on My Feet Baltimore, a nonprofit organization that combats homelessness through the power of running, community support, and essential employment and housing opportunities. For more information and to register, visit give.backonmyfeet.org/sneaks or call 410-875-7500, ext. 174.

AUG. 6 -- CASEY CARES 5K

Lace up your running shoes and mark your calendars for the Casey Cares Foundation's seventh annual 5K run/walk at Oriole Park at Camden Yards in partnership with OriolesREACH. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Casey Cares Foundation, which provides uplifting and ongoing programs to critically ill children and their families. The 3.1-mile run/walk course will begin and end at Camden Yards and will also include refreshments and T-shirts. Teams and families are encouraged to register. For more information and to register, visit caseycaresfoundation.org.

AUG. 7 -- IRON GIRL COLUMBIA TRIATHLON

The 11th annual Iron Girl Columbia Triathlon will take place at 6:45 a.m. at Centennial Lake in Ellicott City. Iron Girl aspires to bring women of all ages together as a community by offering a supportive, energetic and empowering environment for females pursuing a healthy and active lifestyle. Visit irongirl.com/Events/Columbia_Triathlon.htm#axzz3zxZ0jBYt for more information and to register.



★ BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

AUG. 20 -- CRABFEST NATIONAL TRAVEL TEAM TRYOUTS

Evaluations for the CrabFest national travel team ages 10U, 11U and 12U will be held at Prince George's County Boys & Girls Club in Greenbelt. Players will train and practice with a staff of high school and collegiate coaches. They will also have the opportunity to compete in Disney's New Year's Classic at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando Dec. 28-31. For more information, visit crabfestregistration.com or call 301-346-4035.

SLOW-PITCH

The Baltimore County Lutherville-Timonium Rec Council has open team registration for the spring slow-pitch softball program at Seminary Park, which runs from May to mid-August. Men's leagues are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, and the coed league is Tuesday evenings. Individual players seeking spots will be referred to the registered team managers. Email tjharrington51@netscape.net or call 443-847-1072 for additional openings and details.

MASON-DIXON UMPIRES ASSOCIATION

The MDUA is looking for new high school baseball umpires in Baltimore. No experience is necessary. Email Mike Connors at mcommish@comcast.net or call 410-653-7307.

COCKEYSVILLE RECREATION

Visit cockeysvillerecouncil.org or call 410-887-7734 for updates about baseball registration for the Cockeysville Recreation Center.

ADULT BASEBALL

Join the Eastern Baltimore County over-40 baseball league, which plays with wood bats on 90-foot diamonds. Players of all skill levels are encouraged to visit over40baseball.org or call Mike Lockett at 410-446-0443.

BASEBALL CARD SHOW

A sports card and memorabilia show to benefit Monsignor Slade Catholic School will be held at Monsignor Slade Catholic School in Glen Burnie from 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. June 11 and July 9. For more details, call Leo at 443-416-6447.

NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL

Visit the Hubert V. Simmons Museum of Negro Leagues Baseball at the Owings Mills Metro Center. The museum is named after Bert Simmons, who played for the Baltimore Elite Giants. The museum is open daily, and admission is free. Volunteers are always welcome. Visit smnlbinc.org for more information.

CRABFEST

The 2016 CrabFest All American Games are now open to talented youth- and middle school-aged baseball players, as well as to those entering the ninth grade in September. Players selected from the Sept. 6 CrabFest All American Games will be placed on rosters for the Disney's New Year's Classic at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex Dec. 28-31. For more information and to register, visit crabfest.biz or email crabfestaa@gmail.com.



★ SOCCER/RUGBY

MIGHTY KICKS PUP LEAGUE

The Pup League provides year-round soccer training for boys and girls of all abilities ages 2-18. It's designed to build motor skills, self-confidence and basic techniques. Ongoing programs are available around Baltimore. Visit mightykicksbaltimore.com for more information.

CELTIC SOCCER CLUB

Tryouts for the Celtic Soccer Club are for boys ages 6-18 and girls 6-12. Registration and information are available at baltimoreceltic.com.

PIPELINE SOCCER CLUB ANNUAL TRYOUTS

Tryouts for 2016 teams are forming for a nonprofit youth soccer program. Teams are based around the Baltimore area for boys and

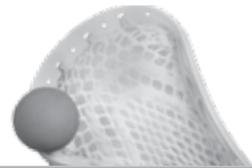
girls ages 8-18. Dates and times vary by age group, with tryouts taking place at Towson University's Johnny Unitas Stadium and Poly Western High School May 31-June 9. For more information and to register, visit pipelinesoccerclub.com/tryouts.html.

RUGBY

The Baltimore-Chesapeake Rugby Club, the region's only Division I men's rugby club, is looking for experienced players or those new to the game. For more information, email baltimorechesapeakeclub@gmail.com or visit baltimorerugby.net.

YOUTH RUGBY

Maryland Exiles Youth Rugby is looking for players for the upcoming spring season. Experience is not required. The team is open to all players attending high school or middle school in Maryland and students enrolled in GED or home school programs. Those interested can visit meetup.com/md-rugby.



★ LACROSSE/SQUASH

JUNE 10 -- LAX MAX TOURNAMENT

The tournament is open to recreation, travel, town and club teams for boys and girls ages U9-U19. Teams must register by May 25 in order of the birth date of their oldest player. For more information, visit laxmax.com or email pikesvillelaxmax@aol.com.

LACROSSE SHOWDOWN

Team registrations are now being accepted for the Maryland Lacrosse Showdown July 2-3 in Westminster, sponsored by Sandlot and NWA Lacrosse. Male competition in the single-age level teams U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and U17 and female competition in the single-age level teams U14, U15, U16 and U17 will play at least four 40-minute games. For more information and to register, contact Mark at 410-493-5182, email mascom13@aol.com or visit usamateursports.com/lacrosse_showdown/index.html.

SQUASH

SquashWise provides incentives for middle school students to excel academically, athletically and socially, as well as compete in local and national squash tournaments. No squash experience is necessary to become a tutor. Visit baltimoresquashwise.org to make your tax-deductible donation. To make equipment donations and/or become a volunteer tutor, email abbym@baltimoresquashwise.org.

YOUTH LACROSSE

The newly formed Baltimore Youth Lacrosse League is now accepting in-house registrations for the spring for all kids ages 4-12. Call 443-863-8377, email baltimoreyouthlax@gmail.com or visit baltimoreyouthlax.com for more information and to register.



★ GOLF

JUNE 9 -- MMHA GOLF OUTING 2016

Proceeds raised at this golf tournament at Mountain Branch Golf Club in Joppa will help fund the Baltimore Station, which supports men transitioning through homelessness, poverty and substance abuse. Visit mmhaonline.org for more information and to register.

JUNE 10 -- JONATHAN OGDEN'S GOLF TOURNAMENT

Join Jonathan Ogden and his celebrity friends for an unforget-

table day that will include on-course food and drinks, an after-golf awards dinner, a commemorative photo plaque of your group and an Under Armour shirt as part of your tournament gift package. Call Wendy at 410-336-8889 or visit jonathanogdenfoundation.org for more information.

AUG. 27 -- THREE CLUB CLASSIC

A nine-hole event played with three clubs will be held at historic Carroll Park Golf Course to benefit First Tee of Baltimore, whose mission is to provide kids the support to thrive academically and socially through golf. The use of only three clubs forces golfers to be creative and invent shots, especially around the greens. This event puts a major emphasis on shot making, club selection and making the most of limited resources. For more information, call 240-273-GOLF (4653) or visit 3clubclassic2016.ezevent.com.

MEN'S GOLF

Fox Hollow Men's Golf Club in Timonium has friendly competition at tournaments for all skill levels every other Saturday morning through October. Visit foxxollowmensgolfclub.org for information and membership application.



★ FOOTBALL

JUNE 2 -- RAVENS BEACH BASH

Come to the fifth annual Ravens Ocean City Beach Bash and join Ravens players, cheerleaders, playmakers, the team's band and mascots as they turn Ocean City into Ravenstown for the weekend. Organized activities will include the Ocean City Purple Friday Caravan, the annual Ravens Roosts parade, a bonfire and tailgate party. Visit baltimoreravens.com/ravenstown/beach-bash.html for more information.

RAVENS PLAY 60 GRANT

Applications for the Ravens Play 60 Grant, a grant program committed to increasing physical activity among Baltimore-area youth and encouraging healthy activities, are currently being accepted for youth ages 5-18 through May 31. The Ravens provide funding of up to \$5,000 to qualifying nonprofit organizations that create and/or continue programs or projects promoting physical fitness and nutrition education. Visit baltimoreravens.com/play60grant for more information.

WOMEN'S TACKLE FOOTBALL

The Baltimore Burn is recruiting female athletes who want to play tackle football. Visit baltimoreburnfootball.com or call head coach Jon Randall at 443-897-1192.

JOIN THE RAVENS' BAND

Become part of the Baltimore Ravens' game-day experience by joining Baltimore's Marching Ravens. Visit baltimoreravens.com/marchingravens.

★ OTHER ACTIVITIES

JUNE 25 - RAPPEL FOR KIDNEY HEALTH

Join this fun and unique event for all ages to benefit the National Kidney Foundation of Maryland, which raises vital funds for kidney patients. The rappel will take place at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore, 300 Light St. from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit kidneymd.org for more information and to register.

BOCCE

Baltimore Social operates a lot like the sports leagues of your youth, bringing friends and groups together to compete in a wide range of sports and activities, like soccer, skee-ball and sailing. Most of the leagues are six to eight weeks and include a final championship tournament and end-of-season parties. Visit baltimoresocial.com for more information.

MARYLAND OFFICIALS CLUB

Interested in becoming a high school swimming official in the

Baltimore-Anne Arundel area? Experience as a competitive swimmer or coach at the high school, college or masters level -- or prior experience officiating -- is strongly preferred. Email mcommish@comcast.net or call Mike Connors at 410-653-7307.

HOMESCHOOL SPORTS

Baltimore-area homeschooled boys and girls in grades 6-12 interested in playing interscholastic sports, like soccer, volleyball and baseball can register for the upcoming school season. Email chensports@verizon.net for more information and to register.

DUCKPIN BOWLING

Youth fall duckpin bowling leagues for participants ages 3-21 are forming at various duckpin centers in Baltimore. Most programs run on Saturday mornings and include bowling, shoe rental and coaching. For more information, visit ndya.org, call Stacy Karten at 410-356-0936 or follow duckpin bowling at Facebook.com/theduckpinnews.

BICYCLE REPAIR

At a cooperative bicycle shop, visitors can work on a donated bike, use tools to fix a broken bike or buy ready-to-ride secondhand bikes. Volunteer staff will provide assistance. Visit velocipedebikeproject.org for details.

ANDOVER TRACK

Online registrations are now being accepted for the Andover Apaches Track/Track on Point Track Club through May 31. For information about the program or to register, visit sports.bluesombrero.com/apaches.

KICKBALL

To participate in co-ed adult kickball around Baltimore, visit kickball-baltimore.com for locations and dates.

BALTIMORE FITNESS ACADEMY

BMoreFit's goal is to reduce childhood obesity in the Baltimore metropolitan area by educating and mentoring urban youth with targeted programs for improved health, fitness and nutrition. Visit bmorefit.org for details.

BABE RUTH MUSEUM

The improved Babe Ruth Birthplace Museum has reopened and is located right next to Camden Yards. Babe Ruth's legacy shaped the sports and American life we live now. Consider making a tax-deductible donation. Visit baberruthmuseum.org/donate/ or call 410-727-1539, ext. 3012.

BASKETBALL

Maryland AAU will host the AAU boys' U8 basketball national championship July 6-10 in Salisbury. Free practice time will be given to early registrants. The final date to register is July 5. For more information and to register, visit aaboysbasketball.org or call 410-927-5722.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Ultimate Frisbee is one of the fastest growing and most exciting sports, combining the nonstop movement and athletic endurance of soccer with the aerial passing skills of football into one fast-paced game in which everyone is involved. The Pikesville Ultimate Disc Association will host youth leagues for boys ages 8-12 at Wellwood Elementary School, 2901 Smith Ave. in Pikesville. The leagues will run every Tuesday night through May. For more information, visit puda.moonfruit.com, email Brett Weil at ultimate@pikesvillerec.org or call 410-262-6136.



THE REALITY CHECK

Orioles And Ravens Fans Should Embrace 'Seven Nation Army' As A Stadium Anthem

★ GLENN CLARK

Sitting at a bar in Bel Air, Md., I watched the Orioles face the Toronto Blue Jays with friends April 21. The Birds rallied back from down 2-1 to win the game, 3-2, and at some point in the late innings (my fault for not jotting down exactly when), the strains of the song "Seven Nation Army" by The White Stripes could be heard over

the MASN broadcast from Oriole Park at Camden Yards. It wasn't a particularly deafening version of the chant, as the announced crowd that night was only 17,644. But it was familiar nonetheless and admittedly got this particular columnist to sing along under his breath. While no one in my group actually heard me singing along, I did hear this comment from a friend:

"Ugh. I hate it when the Orioles do this. It's a Ravens thing."

As you'd imagine, that quickly led back to a debate as to who exactly it was that started the whole "Seven Nation Army" stadium anthem trend and ultimately to more members of my party coming out as anti-"Seven Nation Army." Some were opposed to the song being used at Camden Yards, while others were opposed to the song being used anywhere. (I really want to make the term "White Stripe-ist" work here, but I just don't know that I can. I'll

keep swinging, though. You all deserve that much.)

The Stripe-ists weren't contained to my group of friends that night. In fact, a simple Twitter search of "Seven Nation Army Orioles" led to some of the following comments.

From @mschainsaw: "Why are Orioles fans chanting 'Seven Nation Army'?? Idiots."

@disastromatic: "Orioles fans bust out Seven Nation Army because they are the worst, in fact."

@7Baltimore went directly to the team with his complaint: "@Orioles just stop the Seven Nation Army song and chant. It's embarrassing to our ball club."

@bradydoty: "Good citizens of #OPACY, can we decide here and now to stop pretending 'Seven Nation Army' is an #Orioles thing?"

And @AGremlinStorm: "Dear all sports stadiums: Stop using Seven Nation Army for anything. The Orioles already ruined it."

(If you're not familiar with "Seven Nation Army," it's the song played at M&T Bank Stadium during Ravens games and Oriole Park during Orioles games that starts with a swell baseline and then evolves into a repetitive "OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH" chant. You know it.)

Instead of throwing my voice into the debate that night, I immediately decided I'd save it for a column. Had I responded in the moment, it probably would have gone something along these lines.

"ARE YOU ALL CRAZY?!?!?!?"

"Seven Nation Army" is wonderful, and not just because of the memory of 50,000 people belting it at the top of their lungs after Delmon Young cleared the bases. It is a memory I fall back on any time my kid is screaming at the top of his lungs and I need to go to my happy place.

This is the entire list of decent stadium anthems regularly used in sports.

1. "Seven Nation Army."
2. AC/DC's "Thunderstruck."
3. Absolutely nothing else.

What in the world are you looking for from your friendly stadium DJ? Do you need a little more practice spelling out "Y-M-C-A" to make sure you have it exactly right? Maybe you haven't moved past Y2K and you desperately need more chances to bark along to "Who Let The Dogs Out?"

(Seriously, though, did we ever figure out who actually released those hounds? FX could really use a quality follow-up to the O.J. Simpson season of "American Crime Story.")

"Seven Nation Army" is a truly great song from one of the better acts of the 21st century. It may well have been played at Ravens games, and elsewhere around the world, before being added into the rotation at O's games. But here's the crazy thing. A lot of Orioles fans ... are also Ravens fans, too. WILD!

Hot-takery aside, the strains of the "Seven Nation Army" chant have provided the soundtrack for some of the most electric moments in the histories of either of Baltimore's downtown sports palaces. The tune works.

Of all of the things to be bothered by, a chant that genuinely rallies fans together at stadiums performed to the tune of one of the best rock and roll songs of the last 20 years? Really?

Perhaps those "Seven Nation Army" dissenters should consider a trip to Wichita, Kan. You know, get far from this opera for evermore. I'll just be here working the straw. You know, making the sweat drip out of every pore.

As one does when they're working the straw. At least I think. ☒

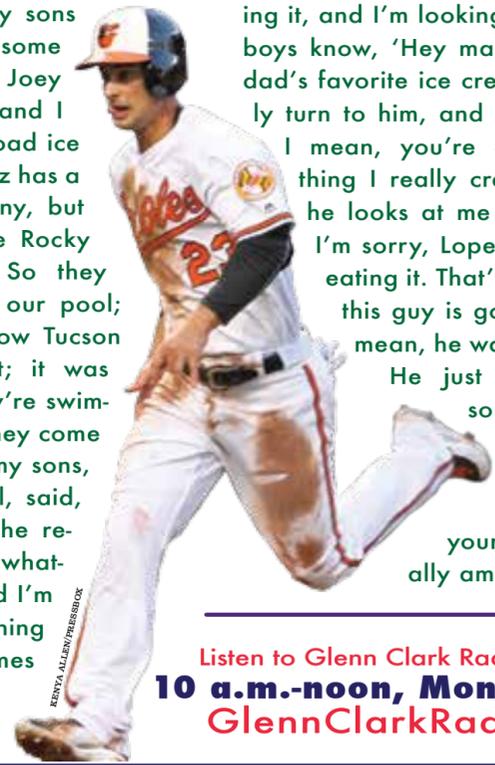


THEY SAID IT ON GLENN CLARK radio

Andy Lopez, Joey Rickard's coach at Arizona, joined Glenn Clark Radio April 8 to talk about the Orioles' outfielder's hot start to the 2016 season.

"I'll tell you a quick story about his freshman year. My sons were on the team here in 2010 and 2012, and they were teammates on that national championship team. So they came over the house, Joey came over the house. I was joking with him about

this. ... I think it was like their second week on campus, so they all came over the house. My sons brought them over, some of the players, and Joey was one of them, and I really like Rocky Road ice cream. Coach Lopez has a real weakness, many, but this is one - I love Rocky Road ice cream. So they were swimming in our pool; it was hot, you know Tucson weather in August; it was boiling hot. So they're swimming in our pool, they come in our house, and my sons, David and Michael, said, 'Hey guys, go in the refrigerator and get whatever you want,' and I'm sitting there watching TV, and Rickard comes out with a bowl of Rocky Road ice



cream, the carton. Not just the bowl, the carton, and he's sitting there eating it, and I'm looking at him, and my boys know, 'Hey man, you're eating dad's favorite ice cream.' And I finally turn to him, and I go, 'Hey Rick, I mean, you're eating the only thing I really crave in life,' and he looks at me and went, 'Oh, I'm sorry, Lopes,' and just kept eating it. That's when I knew ... this guy is going to be OK. I mean, he wasn't intimidated. He just goes, 'Oh, I'm sorry, Lopes,' and just went about his business. He's a solid young man - I really am happy for him."

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June 3-5 | Baltimore, MD
Boys & Girls: Youth



June 11-12 | Memphis, TN
Boys: Youth & High School



June 11 - 12 | MD / DE Beach
Boys: Youth



June 10 - 12 | Ocean City, MD
Girls: Youth



June 11 - 12 | Baltimore, MD
Boys: High School



June 11-12 | Austin, TX
Boys: Youth & High School



June 18-19 | Cincinnati, OH
Boys: Youth & High School



June 18-19 | Virginia Beach, VA
Boys & Girls: Youth & High School



June 25 - 26 | Charlotte, NC
Boys: Youth & High School



June 25 - 26 | Potomac, MD
Boys: Youth & High School



June 25-26 | Dallas, TX
Boys: Youth & High School



July 7-9 | Salt Lake City, UT
Boys & Girls: Youth & High School



July 15 - 17 | Baltimore, MD
Boys: Youth & High School



July 23 - 24 | MD / DE Beach
Boys: Youth & High School



Oct 22-23 | Jarrettsville, MD
Boys & Girls: Youth & High School



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