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SUMMER CAMP GUIDE

PAGE 34

PRESS

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★

DEEP CONNECTION

PAGE
10
BY KEVIN ECK

TORREY SMITH
may never catch another pass for the Ravens, but in the game of life, Smith and his wife, Chanel, keep making big plays for their adopted hometown of Baltimore



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PHOTOGRAPHY- SABINA MORAN/PRESSBOX

2017 PROMOTIONS SCHEDULE



APRIL

22 Orioles Welcome Mat
(First 20,000 fans 15 & over)

6 Orioles Tote Bag presented by MLB Network
(First 20,000 fans 15 & over)

7 Youth Baseball Day presented by Ripken Baseball
(Pre-registered youth teams)

8 Orioles T-Shirt
(All fans)

9 Birdland Yard Flag
(First 20,000 fans 15 & over)

19 Fireworks (Postgame)
presented by Kaiser Permanente (All fans)

20 Orioles Maryland Flag Script Replica Jersey
presented by Morgan State University
(All fans)

21 Youth Baseball Day presented by Ripken Baseball
(Pre-registered youth teams)

24 Field Trip Day presented by MASN & WJZ-TV
(Pre-registered students)

29 Orioles Memorial Day T-Shirt
(All fans)

JULY

1 Zach Britton Bobblehead
(First 25,000 fans 15 & over)

21 Fireworks (Postgame)
presented by Midstate Community Bank
(All fans)

22 Infielders Bottle Stopper Set
(All fans 21 & over)

AUGUST

1 Orioles T-Shirt
(All fans)

5 Jonathan Schoop Bobblehead
presented by Ocean City, Maryland
(First 25,000 fans 15 & over)

6 Exclusive Orioles Card Set presented by Topps
(All fans)

18 Fireworks (Postgame)
presented by Baltimore Area Credit Unions
(All fans)

19 25th Anniversary Oriole Park at Camden Yards
Replica Ballpark
(All fans)

MAY

1 Orioles Beach Mat presented by Visit Sarasota
(First 15,000 fans 15 & over)

2 Orioles Floppy Hat presented by Miller Lite
(First 20,000 fans 21 & over)

3 Manny Machado Starting Lineup Figure
(All fans)

4 Youth Bat & Ball Set presented by Play Ball
(All fans 14 & under)

16 Fireworks (Postgame)
(All fans)

18 Orioles Greyscale Cap
(All fans 15 & over)

21 Orioles T-Shirt
(All fans)

SEPTEMBER

3 Orioles Cap presented by DAP
(First 20,000 fans 15 & over)

4 Orioles T-Shirt
(All fans)

19 Orioles Knit Cap
(All fans)

22 Fireworks (Postgame)
(All fans)

23 Orioles Hooded Sweatshirt
(All fans 15 & over)

24 Oriole Bird Bobblehead Toothbrush Holder
presented by United Concordia
(All fans 14 & under)

Fan Appreciation
Weekend

JUNE

Schedule subject to change.



KIDS RUN THE BASES (Postgame)
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ONE FAN'S OPINION

Examining Dan Duquette's 2017 Pitching Mission

★ STAN "THE FAN" CHARLES

If you have been busy preparing your taxes since about mid-December, you may have missed Orioles executive vice president of baseball operations Dan Duquette's rather frenetic search for pitching depth.

Now, let's be as clear as we can, there isn't a time of year Duquette isn't trying to better his roster. And when he does, it's pretty clear what the aim is: to better an area of the 40-man roster.

The difference this time is the sheer non-stop grab for arms of all kinds -- righties, lefties, starters, relievers, young and old.

Since late December, Duquette has acquired right-handed pitchers Logan Verrett and Gabriel Ynoa from the New York Mets. Then, in response to some questions surrounding the lack of a second situational lefty, Duquette plucked Vidal Nuno from the Seattle Mariners and, almost before he arrived, Duquette, aware of the New York Yankees' impending roster crunch, was able to acquire his second lefty, Richard Bleier.

If you are counting, that's four pitching acquisitions. Then, as the season was ready to start, Duquette picked up right-hander Alex Asher from the Philadelphia Phillies, signed out-of-work righty Edwin Jackson to a minor league deal and picked up his third left-handed reliever in Andrew Faulkner from the Rangers. In the seeming frenzy to the start of the season, he brought in yet another right-

handed arm, former Toronto Blue Jays prospect Miguel Castro.

All told, Duquette added eight pitchers to the Orioles' depth charts, and all but Jackson have minor league options. So what is all this about? For the past couple of seasons, we were told right-handers Mike Wright and Tyler Wilson, and even recently righty Joe Gunkel, were ready for the next step in helping the big league club.

It seems to me Duquette has embarked on a plan similar to a basketball coach who doesn't have a solid big man. Instead of being more talented than the opposition, he is going to wear them down. In basketball, three bad centers still give the coach a way to average the minutes, and it still gives your team 18 fouls to use.

Duquette, Showalter and the Orioles' brain trust know very well what the Orioles' strengths and weaknesses are. And in this case, they may have a new idea of how to make up for the deficiencies within their staff.

So far, the Orioles have carried two right arms of questionable distinction -- Wilson and Oliver "out of options" Drake. Neither of them has been very good to-date, and neither seems to have their position nailed down.

During the Duquette era, the Orioles have had, shall we say, a reputation for creativity when it comes to using the disabled list and turning a 25-man roster into more of an accordion-like, 35-man roster.

Consider the home game against New York April 9, when the Orioles needed to activate lefty Wade Miley from the DL

to start; it was a game the Yankees won, 7-3, despite Miley battling through five scoreless innings. As it happened, during the Orioles' tilt with the Yankees April 8, outfielder Joey Rickard strained a finger sliding into a base and *poof* -- he went on the 10-day DL to make room for Miley.

After the April 9 game, manager Buck Showalter acknowledged three pitchers -- Drake, righty Brad Brach and lefty closer Zach Britton -- were not available due to concerns of overuse.

It's understandable the Orioles would want to have the important arms fresh for the games that can be won.

Meanwhile, with the Orioles' starting pitching being so iffy, it seems the team is planning for an almost unprecedented shuttle between Baltimore and Triple-A Norfolk. With all these arms, there stands the chance that in column No. 1 you might have Nuno, Bleier and Faulkner, as almost clones from the left-hand side. Then you have the potential for Verrett, Asher and Castro to be the right-handed equivalents.

With all six of those pitchers having options, it's easy to see the design of a plan that would have their tickets punched to Baltimore multiple times this season. Could the Orioles' use of the DL get so clever, that like the Patriots, the league will institute new rules to change that ability for hocus pocus?

Righty reliever Darren O'Day had, perhaps, his worst outing as an Oriole against the Yankees in the game Miley started April 9. In two-thirds of an inning in the top of the ninth, he surrendered three walks, allowed a key stolen base and gave up a big hit that broke open a 3-3 tie and allowed the Yankees to win, 7-3.

Don't get me wrong, O'Day is a solid contributor, but his injuries and missed time in 2016 have to once again call into question the club's odd decision to allow lefty reliever Andrew Miller to leave for the Yankees on a four-year, \$9 million per year deal without so much as a fight in December 2014. And then, just one year later, the club signed O'Day for four years at \$7.75 million per.

O'Day has been a terrific reliever and a leader in the Orioles' clubhouse for six years. But, at the end of the day, as good as he has been, he has never been the kind of difference-maker Miller was and would have been in black and orange.

This is very rarely brought up in these parts, in large part due to O'Day's great clutch factor. But the O'Day since his big contract has not resembled the great O'Day from before the signing. ☒

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★ FOLLOW THE ORIOLES ALL SEASON LONG AT PRESSBOXONLINE.COM/BASEBALL ★

Soccer Takes Ex-Fallston High Goalie On International Adventure

When her collegiate career ended a few years ago, Audrey Baldwin wanted to continue playing soccer. That's why she has become a bit of a world traveler.

Baldwin, a goalie at Fallston High School and Harford Community College before moving on to two other schools, has already played in Portugal, Iceland (twice)

and Denmark before recently signing with Juvisy, a French team whose season runs through June.

The 25-year-old started for two years at HCC -- after helping Fallston to a Class 2A state title in 2009. As a freshman at HCC, she earned All-Conference and All-Region honors, and as a sophomore, she was All-American. The next stop was Arkansas State, but Baldwin left there after one year and moved to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, where she started and played in every game during her lone season there.

Baldwin's personal coach is Jason Muffoletto, who runs the men's and women's soccer teams at HCC, and he advised the goalie it might be best to think about hitting the road to further her career.

"She wanted to play professionally, and I suggested that she go overseas and get [herself] established to get some notice, so when it's time to come back, she'd have some high-level experience behind her," said Muffoletto, who has worked with Baldwin since her Fallston days. "The way she's improved is almost unbelievable. She lives, eats and breathes her job, and her passion for soccer is amazing."

Baldwin officially signed with Juvisy in late February. She played her first game for Juvisy's second team in March, and her side beat the division's first team, 2-1.

Baldwin enjoyed finally getting in a game after she dislocated a finger on her left hand in training. She also hurt the finger next to that one and missed a few weeks.

"It was actually relaxing," Baldwin said from France. "It felt good to be back, and I thrive off of the pressure. To be competitive and to have the pressure on me again felt really good."

Baldwin lives in a team-arranged house about half-hour from Paris with a teammate, and her weeks are filled with four to five days at practice and several days in the gym.

She has traveled to Paris several times and has visited what she calls "touristy" places. Baldwin loves the fast-paced nature of Paris, saying there's something to do on every corner.

The Juvisy season runs until May and resumes in September. The French team will let her know around season's end if it will re-sign her. Baldwin might return to Harford County during the break and train with Muffoletto before deciding on what comes next, especially if the French team does not bring her back.

If Baldwin does need to move to another team or even to another country, well, she's been through that before.

She began her overseas career during fall/winter 2014 with a team in Portugal. Baldwin paid her own way, "starting with one team and then trying out for the top team and playing with them." Her first signing came in Iceland during spring 2015, before she moved on to Denmark that fall.

Baldwin returned to Iceland last spring and came to France for the current spring season. She says she enjoys being able to see different parts of the world while keeping her soccer dreams alive but admits it's tough at times.

"Playing overseas really is an amazing opportunity," Baldwin said. "It has made me grow so much as a person, but it also has made me truly value what I have at home. I love coming home to my family and familiarity after seven-to-eight months of moving around during the year."

Baldwin said she never really thought about doing something like this until her senior year of college, and wondered if she had the proper level of ability. However, Muffoletto, plus her coach in Texas and a friend, convinced Baldwin going overseas could be worth a shot.

For now, Baldwin is simply playing soccer and checking out the sights in France. She'll be ready for whatever happens at season's end.

Baldwin simply wants to keep playing the game she loves. She's been getting to do just that and seeing the world at the same time -- not a bad combination.

"I love the routine at home of the gym and the training," Baldwin said. "But it is fulfilling to go to a new place and be able to represent home and compete with people from all over the world."

-- JEFF SEIDEL

IFX Offers International Options For Soccer Players Looking To Elevate Their Game

During a 22-year career as a college soccer coach at McDaniel College and Stevenson University, John Plevyak was approached by graduating players who wanted to continue their careers as professionals and take their game to the next level. But there were no options to train at a higher level overseas.

After leaving Stevenson after the 2015 season, Plevyak followed up on a tip from a friend about a new kind of soccer development program that would help players scratch that professional itch. He accepted a position as a scout for the International Futbol X-Change (IFX), an organization offering international soccer exchange programs for professional, amateur and youth players designed to accelerate their soccer development and expand their cultural awareness.

"More and more kids are looking to train at a higher level," Plevyak said. "IFX is an intensive training experience for players between 13-21 at a very high level. You can train with a foreign club and experience the international game. There are multiple options. You can go for 10 days to get a taste of international competition or you can go for a year and come back with a degree. Little by little it's getting bigger and bigger."

IFX programs are offered with international clubs in England, Germany, Italy, Spain and Brazil. The IFX Youth Year is a high school study abroad designed for ninth-12th grade boys and girls to study, train and play soccer with an international club. The Pro Year is designed for college players 18 and older to study abroad. There are also programs that offer bachelor's and master's degrees. Prices vary by country, age group and length of time and range from \$13,000-\$30,000 depending on the program.

"It's perfect for that gap year between high school and college and you are not quite at Division I -- you come back with a better chance to make a team," Plevyak said. "There's also a 10-day trip that's for teams and also for individual players. It includes a training camp and an assessment. You can get a flavor of what it's like. That includes some sightseeing. If you are a Division III player who has just graduated, you can give it a shot and see if you hook on to a team."

The IFX was founded in 2003 by Michael Carlson, who



COURTESY OF AUDREY BALDWIN

Audrey Baldwin

played in Germany for both the Freiburg and Nuremberg clubs.

"We have scouts up and down the East Coast," Plevyak said. "The program is growing rapidly, and Mike has put together a legitimate scouting organization nationwide."

As an IFX scout, Plevyak covers most of Maryland, New Jersey and east of Philadelphia all the way to the shore, as well as from Pennsylvania to the Maryland line.

"There are a lot of great players in Maryland alone and some great club teams like Pipeline," Plevyak said. "I talk with the coaches to see if they have somebody who can play at the next level, and then I'll go see them play a couple of times and talk to the parents. The MIAA is extraordinary with McDonogh, Loyola, Gilman, Curley, Spalding -- they all have Division I players. Baltimore has always been a soccer hotbed -- Patterson Park, Highlandtown, Locust Point -- those boys could play when I was coming up."

Primarily a basketball and baseball player, Plevyak's own soccer journey began while shooting baskets at Mount St. Joseph in the early 1970s while waiting for his father, who was the athletic director. The Gaels' soccer coach, Bernie Reif, came running in.

"He told me, 'Put that ball down, I need a goalie,'" said Plevyak who was a sophomore. "In my first game against perennial power Curley, the ball came to me, and I kicked it straight up in the air, and then I headed it. I didn't know the rules. It was one of those games where their shots kept hitting the crossbar and we won, 1-0."

He went on to play soccer in high school and college before being injured. He then coached at Mount St. Joe's before joining the staff at McDaniel and then Stevenson. Plevyak has seen the sport explode during the years.

"I used to play soccer on Sundays in eighth grade for St. Dominic's," Plevyak said. "There weren't any rec leagues. My friends would ask me, 'Are you going down there to play kickball?'"

Now, with IFX, he can help players realize their dreams of playing professional soccer for an international team.

-- DEAN SMITH

SquashWise Alumnus Turns To Coaching, College After Playing Career

Although Darian Rich had never played organized sports before, he began playing squash in seventh grade and stuck with it despite some friends dropping out. At one point, he became SquashWise's No. 1-ranked player.

Now, Rich is still involved with SquashWise, but has a different role with the nonprofit, youth development program located in Baltimore.

Rich, 19, joined the program immediately after graduating high school nearly two years ago to become a part-time coach and mentor. Centered around introducing squash to middle school students, Rich says tutoring and career development is part of the program just as much as the game of squash.

SquashWise now partners with Kipp Ujima Village Academy for their middle school recruitment, but when Rich attended Baltimore Civitas Middle/High School, he first heard of the program from a friend there.

"It's not a typical sport where I come from, you hear about basketball and football and things like that," Rich said. "It is hard to stick with a sport like squash [while] going to a public school and all your friends grow up around basketball and football."

Not only did Rich stick with the sport, he flourished. In addition to being the program's No. 1-ranked player toward the end of his high school career, he was also selected to the U.S. Squash top 100 boys U19 rankings. He later won the 2015 Urban Doubles Championship in Denver with Carlos Marks, after being behind two sets, to eventually win the match, 3-2.

"You can never go wrong with trying something new," Rich said. "That was big for me ... for me to do that [at that age]."

Rich now works primarily with kids at that same age, mentoring, coaching and encouraging mostly sixth-graders. Also a squash coach at Coppermine Racquet & Fitness, he said

coaching has helped him pay for college, and it sometimes helps his own game, but what makes his current role with the organization rewarding is when his students succeed.

Recently, one of his students won a tournament.

"I would like to take credit for [their successes] and it sounds good," Rich said. "But the good news like that makes it all worth it."

SquashWise's expectation is that 100 percent of their members will graduate high school and have college access, and Rich said those who put forth effort will be rewarded.

"The program is guaranteed results," Rich said. "If you give them a little bit, then they'll work overtime for you."

For Rich, "overtime" occasionally meant studying until 10 p.m., as he remembers doing in high school with certain members of the organization.

"Darian is a prime example of how squash can shape a person's life," said Abby Markoe, executive director and co-founder of SquashWise. "His passion for the sport is contagious."

A student at the University of Baltimore, Rich is currently taking a semester off to make sure he selects the right major in the fall. Rich said he was hesitant to pay to take more classes while weighing the options of becoming a criminal justice major or keeping his focus more toward the athletic training field.

Rich was uneasy about sitting out a semester because SquashWise generally requires that employees must have either finished an academic program or be enrolled in school. However, he was assured he would be allowed to stay onboard while he figured out the best curriculum for him.

"They have taken care of me since seventh grade until now," Rich said. "They walked me through every step, every obstacle, every challenge."

Looking back, Rich said he is thankful for what the program has done for him but is ready to move on and blaze his own trail in life.

"I want to be more independent," Rich said. "I'm going to branch out on my own. I think I'm ready to put on my big-boy pants."

-- JACOB TROXELL

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M&T Bank Stadium Concerts Provide 'Positive Boost' For City

★ ED WALDMAN

When Metallica takes the stage at M&T Bank Stadium May 10, Kirby Fowler will be waiting for one thing.

"I really associate Ravens games with 'Enter Sandman,'" said the president of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore of one of the iconic group's best-known hits. "I think it's going to be great when they play that."

This will be Metallica's second concert at the home of the Ravens -- the heavy metal group also played there in July 2000. Beyonce played M&T in 2016; Billy Joel and the teeny-bopper group One Direction played there (separately!) in 2015; Jay-Z and Beyonce played (together!) in 2014; Jay Z and Justin Timberlake (together!) in 2013; U2 in 2011. The stadium has also hosted two HFSti-

vals, in 1999 (when it was known as PSINet Stadium) and 2005.

Those types of events are a big deal to the city, said Fowler and others.

"Hosting concerts of big-name bands, such as Metallica, is important to building Baltimore's brand as a first-class entertainment destination," Al Hutchinson, president and CEO of Visit Baltimore, the city's tourism agency, said in a statement to *PressBox*. "When loyal fans travel to Baltimore to see a concert, they often also support our local hotels, restaurants and attractions, which positively impacts our economy. Everyone wins."

Said Fowler: "It's another positive boost for the city."

According to Fowler, it's hard to quantify just what that boost is, but he compared it to a Ravens game or a sold-out Orioles game. And, he added, the anecdotal evidence says it's significant.

When his wife and daughters were taking in One Direction in 2015, he was

at a bar in Federal Hill. And he's sure he wasn't the only parent waiting for their children there.

"Remember, that there's no tailgating allowed at the concerts," Fowler said. "So many of the attendees are going to restaurants before and after the concert. There is so much spinoff. I remember going to the U2 concert. There were so many people leaving restaurants, emptying their wallets."

Fowler doesn't think the type of artist -- hip-hop; geezer rockers; teeny-bopper -- has any effect on how much spinoff spending there is, as long as they're a big name and as long as they sell out. He pointed to the "diversity" of acts that play the Royal Farms Arena and draw big crowds.

Fowler would love to see Bruce Springsteen play M&T, and he would have loved to have seen Prince there as well.

"There just aren't that many bands

that have that kind of appeal," he said, also mentioning Taylor Swift and Adele.

And while Metallica is certainly a heavy-metal band, they are "a little more accessible than most," he said.

"These concerts are tremendous generators of tax dollars for the city and state."

ABOUT THE FIELD

Metallica won't be the first concert to take place on a natural grass field at M&T Bank Stadium.

The stadium had grass during its first five seasons, 1998-2002, and hosted concerts then, including the HFStival in 1999.

And last June, not long after the new grass field was installed, Beyonce strutted her stuff.

The Ravens didn't respond to requests for comment from *PressBox*, but in the December 2015 announcement that they were switching back to natural grass, team president Dick Cass said measures would be taken to protect the field because they didn't want to give up events like concerts.

When the stadium had a grass field for the first five years it was open, the root layer was only six inches deep. The new field has a root depth of 12 inches, which helps the grass withstand not only collisions between 300-pound players, but events that put multi-ton stages on the field. ☒

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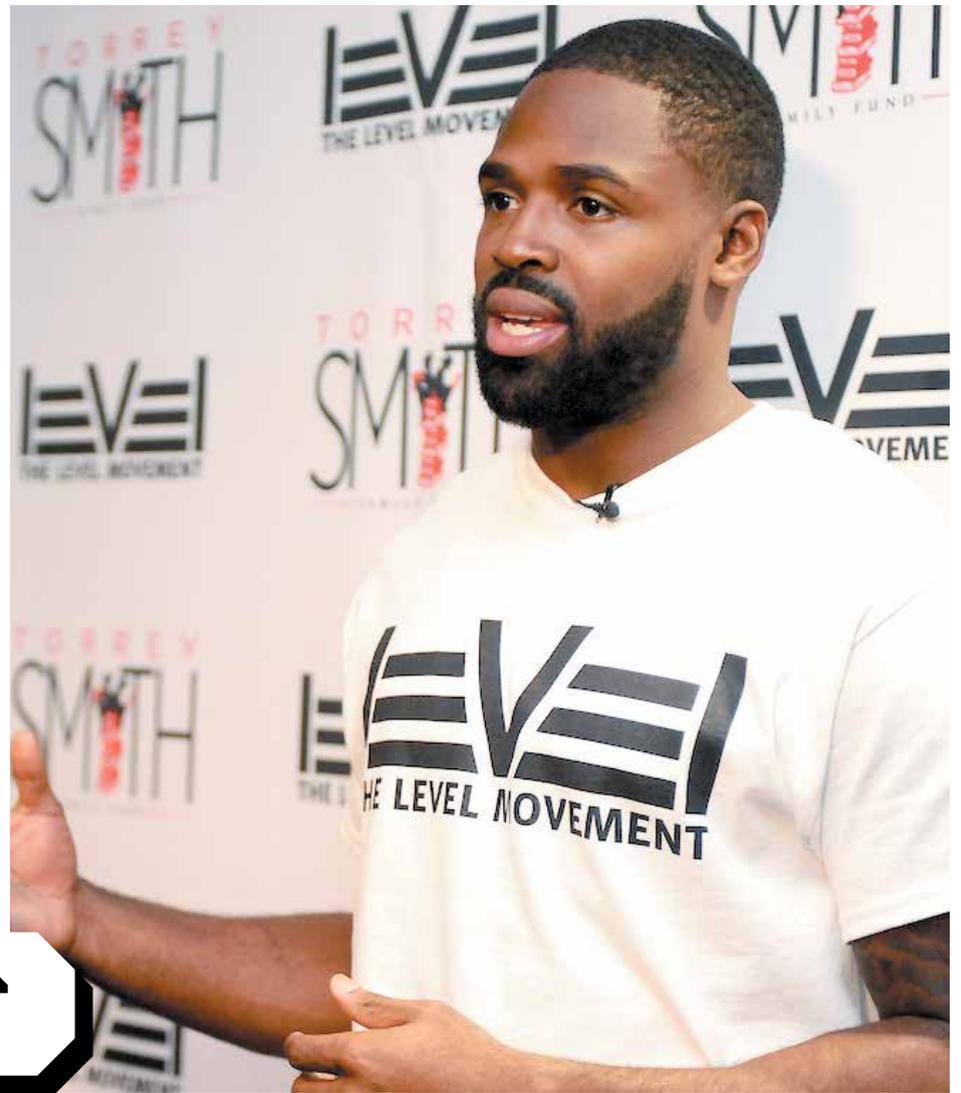
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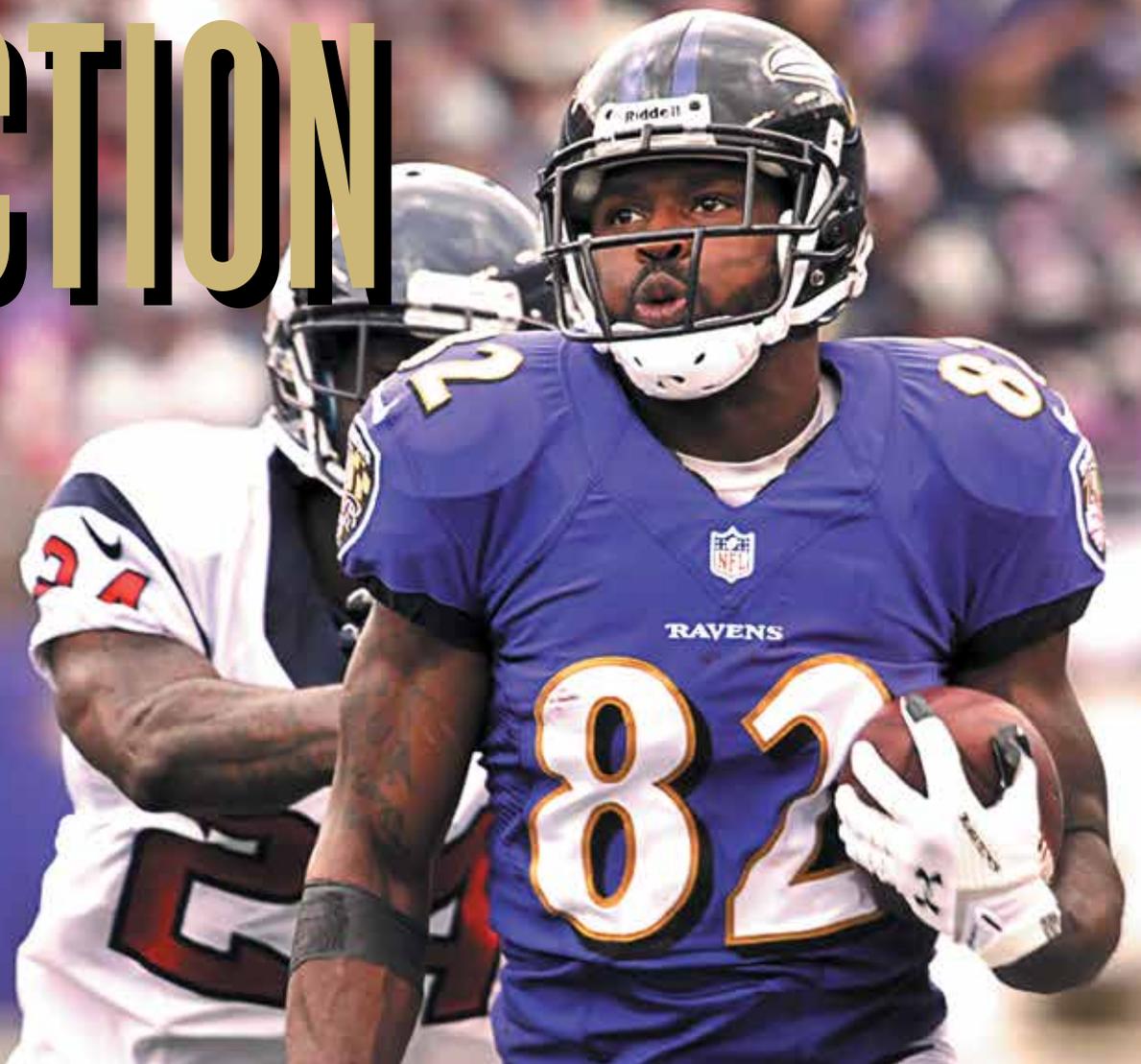
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DEEP

CONNECTION

BY KEVIN ECK



TEN DAYS

after signing with the Philadelphia

Eagles in March, former Ravens wide receiver Torrey Smith met with a group of Baltimore media members at Royal Farms Arena prior to The Torrey Smith Family Fund Charity Basketball Game.

When Smith, who played the past two seasons with the San Francisco 49ers, was asked if there had been a chance of him returning to the Ravens, he replied, "There's always a possibility of everything, but things didn't work out. ... No hard feelings."

It was a diplomatic answer, but as he continued talking about being in Baltimore for the sixth annual charity event that bears his name, it was clear Smith did not leave his heart in San Francisco. He may no longer wear purple, but Smith's love for Baltimore and its people has never wavered.

"I became a man here," said Smith, who was drafted by the Ravens out of Maryland in 2011, played four seasons in Baltimore and helped the 2012 team win Super Bowl XLVII. "Both my kids were born here. It's going to be home for my family when I'm done playing."

Smith, who was born in Colonial Beach, Va., and graduated from Stafford High School in Fredericksburg, Va., sold his house in Baltimore last summer but said he still gets treated like a hometown hero whenever he comes back.

"Sometimes I can't even tell that I've been gone," Smith, 28, said with a smile. "Everyone always shows a lot of love, and I appreciate it. I meet people here, and I feel like their nephew or grandson or something. The love shown for my family has always been amazing, and it's home for us."

While with the Ravens from 2011-15, Smith caught 233 passes for 4,005 yards and 34 touchdowns, including the playoffs. Playing on a losing team in San Francisco the last two seasons, Smith's production dropped, but he should improve with Philadelphia, a team that many observers feel can be a playoff contender with more help at wide receiver. However, Smith's contributions have always transcended the numbers on a stat sheet.

Regardless of whether Smith's home stadium is on the West Coast or a couple hours from M&T Bank Stadium up I-95, the majority of his considerable charitable endeavors -- including the basketball game that features his former teammates and local celebrities -- remains in Charm City.

"When I left the Ravens, I said that our commitment to the city will still be the same," said Smith, whose charitable organization provides support for at-risk youth. "Our roles in the community are bigger than football."

Another example of Smith's commitment to the city occurred last October when he spent his bye week with the 49ers back in Baltimore co-hosting "Conversations For Change" at Dunbar High School. A panel that included Smith and his wife, Chanel, discussed issues facing young, black males in Baltimore during an interactive forum.

"Torrey realizes he can't fix the entire world, so he's going to have an impact where he knows he can have an impact," said Kev-

in Byrne, the Ravens' senior vice president of public and community relations. "As he lived here in Baltimore and settled here as a Raven, he saw a real need and saw that he can have an impact."

Smith's main message that day at Dunbar was: "Regardless of where you're from, what your situation is at home doesn't define you."

"When I talk to kids about some of the things I've been through, they relate," he said. "They find out we're more alike than we are different. The more people realize that, you're able to communicate more and open up."

A MOTHER'S BEST FRIEND

The hardships Smith faced growing up are well-documented. The eldest of seven children, he was born to a 16-year-old single mother. Monica Jenkins graduated high school as a mother of two, and she had two more kids before her 20th birthday. Jenkins was going to school and working two or three jobs, so at 4 years old, Smith became the man of the house.

"Torrey grew up helping me raise my children, so he was my best friend," Jenkins said. "He would go to school all day, do his sports, come home, make sure the kids were good and everybody's homework was done. A lot of times, I would leave the food in the refrigerator. He would come home, put the food in the oven, and he would set the timers and make sure they ate."

"Then I got married and had an abusive husband. Torrey grew up seeing abuse. So he matured a lot faster than a lot of kids."

One of young Smith's duties was fixing breakfast for his three siblings while his mother caught up on sleep. Jenkins nicknamed him "The Microwave King" for his microwave mastery.

"He fixed everything in that microwave," she said. "I had a black magic marker, and I wrote on the food what to set the timer on. Several times, I woke up and he had fixed eggs. I said, 'Boy, how'd you cook the eggs?' He said, 'In the microwave.'"

Rather than being resentful of his situation or using it as a justification to engage in antisocial behavior, Smith proved wise beyond his years.

"Why learn the hard way?" he said. "I had people in my family who made mistakes, including my mom, so that told me to do the opposite. I understood that at an early age."

Jenkins beams with pride when talking about the man her son has become and the positive influence he has had on others, including her.

"Torrey has really inspired me to change my life for the better," she said. "He inspired me to face all the inner stuff I had bound up in me that I just held in for years and years. He had just as much built up in him, but just watching him do what he does made me want to bring it out the way he's bringing it out."

"I worked my butt off until he went into the NFL, and then he said, 'I don't want you working like this anymore. I'm going to

take care of you,' and that's what he did. He bought the house, bought my car. Now I'm a real estate agent, and I mentor single females who have gone through a lot of what I've gone through."

GIVING BACK

Jenkins said Smith "always had a kind heart." Having benefited from the generosity of others growing up, he began paying it forward when he was in middle school, volunteering in activities such as feeding the homeless.

"My family needed and received help, so I knew if I was ever in that position, it's something that I would do," he said.

Ralph Friedgen, Smith's coach at Maryland, said he recognized when he was recruiting Smith there was something special about him beyond his football skills.

"The character of the individual is surely what sold him on me," said Friedgen, who still keeps in touch with Smith. "I'm not surprised at what he's doing in the community. I could see that happening back when he was in high school."

While attending Maryland, Smith met Chanel, who was a member of the Terps' track team. They quickly learned they had more in common than just an ability to run fast.

"The more we got to know each other, we realized we had that connection of giving back," Chanel Smith said. "Both of us did things in the community throughout college, and we planned on doing so going forward. It wasn't too far into our relationship that we realized we both had this passion for giving back."

As they neared graduation, the couple created their nonprofit organization.

"When we first started the nonprofit, we kind of just did what we were told to do," said Chanel Smith, who has a joint degree in elementary education and sociology and worked as a teacher in Baltimore County while Torrey began his career with the Ravens. "We did back-to-school drives and holiday stuff, and we would show up and it would be great, and we would smile and give out gifts, but we always left feeling incomplete. We realized the one-off events that we were doing were cool, but they weren't really impactful, so we went back to the drawing board."

"About a year-and-a-half ago, we re-evaluated everything that we were doing. We shifted our focus so that now we're developing actual programs that really impact the community for more than one day. We are super hands-on."

One of those programs is the "L.E.V.E.L. (Leadership, Education, Vision, Effort, Love) Teen Summit," the first of which was held last summer. Torrey Smith welcomed 31 at-risk, inner-city Baltimore high school boys to the Maryland campus in College Park for a weekend retreat that focused on character-building, decision-making, goal-setting, etiquette and overcoming adversity.

"We wanted to get them onto a college campus and be able to see what it's like to stay in a dorm, to walk around campus and

have that feel, while also talking with them and having meetings and speakers talking about things that they have to overcome," Torrey Smith said.

When speaking to the teens at the summit, Smith stressed the importance of values and education. He told them his goal always was to go to college and he wasn't going to let anything distract him from achieving that goal, regardless of what may have been going on around him. He said he dreamed of playing in the NFL, but he also was determined to get his college degree.

"Torrey had the opportunity to come out of college early and go to the draft," Jenkins said. "I'll never forget the day he called me about it. I said, 'Get your education.' And he said, 'That's what I'm going to do. I'm going to get my education first before I play pro football because that's what I came to college to do.'"

Smith graduated from Maryland with a degree in criminology and criminal justice. In 2015, he and Chanel enrolled in the University of Miami's executive masters of business administration program and are two classes short of completing it.

Enhancing literacy skills is another component of The Torrey Smith Family Fund. With the "Reading Oasis" program, the organization and its partners have created reading rooms in several Baltimore schools.

"Torrey Smith and his wife came to our school and created the Torrey Smith Reading Room, where they took an old room, repainted it for the kids, put a beautiful mural up on the wall and filled the room with books for the students to read," said Anthony Brooks, the principal at Gardenville Elementary School. "It has computers, nice seating. It's just an awesome place."

What touched Brooks even more than the Smiths' generosity was how down to earth and accessible they were.

"His wife actually got down on the floor and scrubbed the floor to make the room clean for the kids," Brooks said. "They also had an assembly for all the children. He saw every kid in our school. He shook all their hands and talked to them about making the right choices and the importance of reading and school. It's more than giving material things. He's giving the children the wealth of wisdom."

'THE BRIGHTEST LIGHT'

When the Ravens selected Smith in the second round of the 2011 NFL Draft, they believed the speedy receiver would be the deep threat the team had been lacking. What they knew for certain was they were getting a high-character individual.

"You want to fill your roster with special people like Torrey," Ravens head coach John Harbaugh said. "He worked hard to be the best player he could be, and he produced in a big way for the Ravens. He cared about his teammates on and off the field."

Byrne saw the latter quality exhibited on Smith's very first day as a Raven. At a news conference with the team's

top two draft picks that year -- Jimmy Smith and Torrey Smith -- media members began peppering the cornerback from Colorado with questions about his stock in the draft having dropped due to the baggage he brought with him. Torrey Smith, a model citizen who doesn't smoke or drink alcohol, was quick to have his new teammate's back.

"All of a sudden, Torrey interrupts the press conference and says, 'Hey, I've spent some time with this guy. We were room-

"He's not someone who sponsors from afar or who has ideas and hopes others follow through," Byrne said. "He shows up and does the hard work."

Smith -- a three-time nominee for the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award, which recognizes players who make a significant positive impact on their community -- quickly became one of the Ravens' go-to guys when a player was needed to make an appearance at a community event.



mates at an all-star game. He's a good guy. You guys are all going to find this out, but I know this already," Byrne said. "I remember running up to the draft room and telling John Harbaugh, 'Torrey Smith is going to be one of the great leaders in our franchise. It was bold the way he put himself out there.'"

Byrne also has been impressed by how involved Torrey Smith is with his charitable organization.

"When it was important to do something in the community and we wanted the brightest light out there, he was the guy we wanted, and he always said yes," Byrne said. "There was one assistant coach who wondered if Torrey was doing too much. He said, 'I keep seeing the clips, and he seems to be somewhere almost every day. And on his day off, he's doing multiple things.' It's just who he is. He really is sincere, and he's got great energy. He can't sit still, but with

that energy he's doing something good. You are blessed to know Torrey Smith."

HONORING HIS BROTHER

It's obvious Smith takes his philanthropy and responsibility as a role model seriously, but there's a fun side to him as well. At his charity basketball game -- which he refers to as a "fun-raiser," pun intended -- Smith flashed his infectious smile often that Sunday afternoon while shooting hoops and joking around with the likes of former Ravens teammates Ed Reed, Ray Rice, Anquan Boldin, Jacoby Jones and Tyrod Taylor.

Smith said he's humbled by his friends donating their time.

"They could be anywhere," he said. "They could be on the beach somewhere or working out, but they're here giving their time to the community and the kids love it."

Reed said all it took to get him to travel from Georgia to Baltimore to play in the game was a simple phone call from Smith asking him to come. Reed joked he even played hurt.

"When Torrey called me, I was looking forward to it," Reed said. "And then Friday I was playing in the backyard with my son, I sprained my ankle, and I called Torrey on Saturday and said, 'Hey man, I broke my foot. I'm not going to make it.' Eight hours later, I'm walking on it, so I'm like, 'OK, it's all right.' This is what it's about. I get to see my brothers and be back in the Baltimore community."

For Smith, the most special part of

the event takes place at halftime, when he awards college scholarships in his late brother Tevin Jones' name to four high school seniors.

Jones was 19 when he was killed in a motorcycle accident Sept. 23, 2012. Less than 24 hours later, Smith was thrust into the national spotlight when he caught six passes for 127 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Ravens to an emotional, 31-30 victory against the New England Patriots in a Sunday night game.

"The way the city helped my family respond to his death helped us ease our pain through the love and support they showed here, so it's fitting that we continue to give that love here," Smith said.

Jones had been planning to attend Germanna Community College in Fredericksburg, Va., in January 2013.

"This is Torrey's way of keeping his brother alive," Jenkins said. "Being able to help somebody else's child go to college because his brother didn't get to."

Smith, who remains the most productive homegrown Ravens wide receiver, may never catch another pass in a Ravens uniform, but he undoubtedly will continue to make his presence felt in Baltimore for years to come.

"He cares about this community, and he keeps coming back to make it better," Harbaugh said. "When it comes to being a great, giving person, he talks the talk and walks the walk." ☒

- PHOTOGRAPHY -

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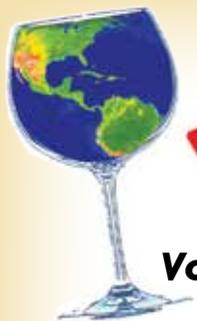


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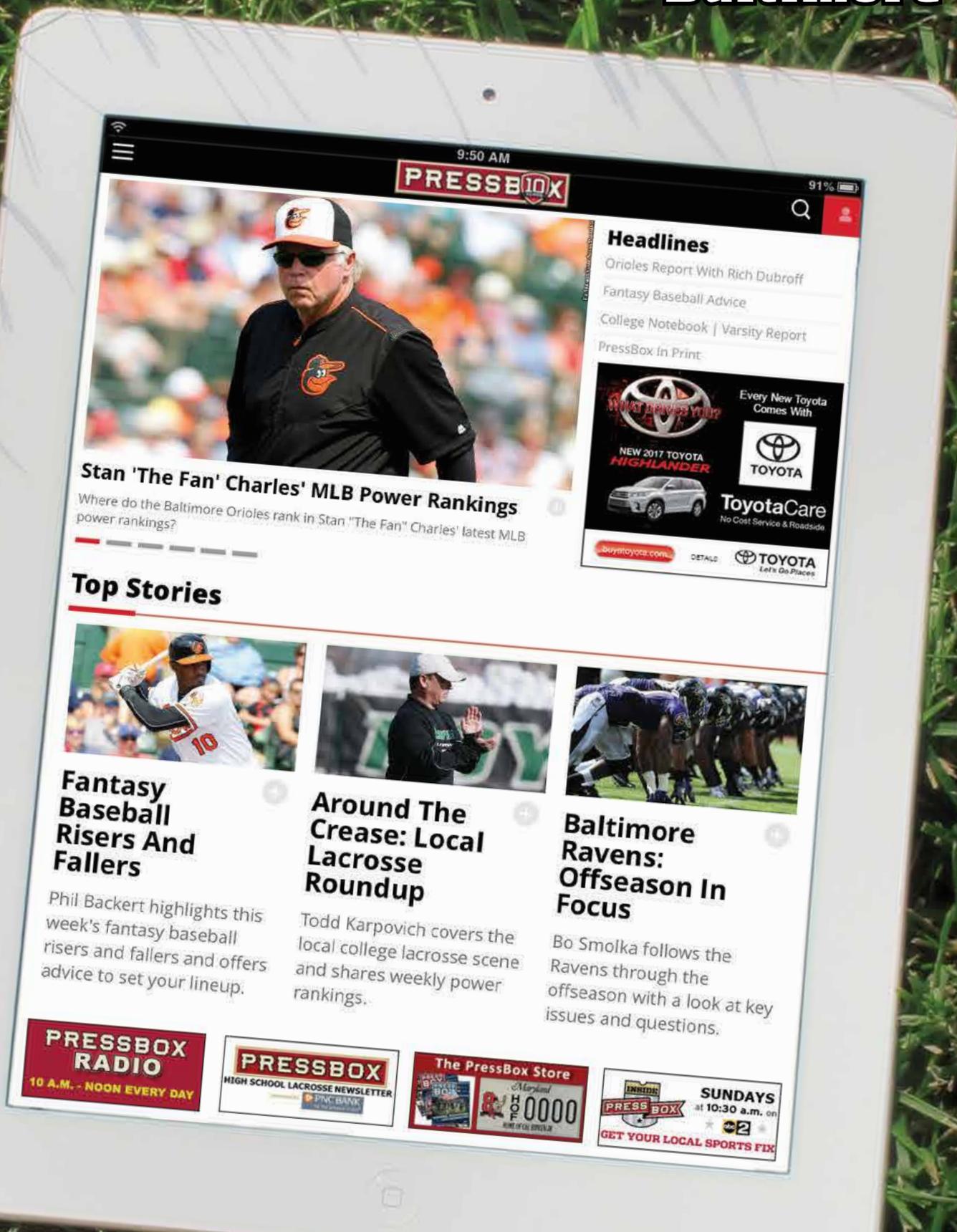
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The Orioles enter the 2017 season with many individual milestones on the horizon. Here's a look at 15 that could be achieved this season.



ORIOLES MILESTONES TO WATCH IN 2017

01 CAN ZACH BRITTON BREAK THE ORIOLES' ALL-TIME SAVES RECORD THIS SEASON?

It's amazing. Britton, who didn't record his first major league save until May 15, 2014, needs 41 saves to pass Gregg Olson for most in team history. Olson recorded 160 saves for the Orioles from 1989-93, and in less than three seasons, Britton has racked up 120. The left-hander, who went 47-for-47 in save opportunities in 2016, must first pass Jim Johnson, who had 122 saves, 101 of them in 2012 and 2013.

02 HOW HIGH CAN ADAM JONES GO ON THE HIT LIST?

Jones begins the 2017 season with 1,448 hits, ninth on the all-team list. It's entirely possible Jones, with a slightly above-average season, can rocket all the way to fourth place on the hit list. In his nine-year Orioles career, Jones has averaged 161 hits per season, and with 167, he'll surpass Brady Anderson (1,614), who's currently fourth. On the way, Jones will pass Brian Roberts (1,452), Ken Singleton (1,455), Nick Markakis (1,547) and Boog Powell (1,574).

03 HOW HIGH CAN JONES GO ON THE HOME RUN LIST?

With his first home run of the 2017 season, Jones will equal Rafael Palmeiro for fifth place on the homer list with 223. Brooks Robinson has 268; so Jones, who has never had more than 33 home runs in a season, will have to wait until he passes Brooks. Surpassing Powell (303), Eddie Murray (343) and Cal Ripken Jr. (431) will require a lot of work and a possible Jones contract extension. (Jones' contract runs through 2018).

04 HOW ABOUT CHRIS DAVIS?

Davis' first home run of 2017 will be the 200th of his Orioles career. He's committed to the Orioles through 2022, and if he can average 30 home runs a year, he'll be in second place behind Ripken. Davis would have to hit nearly 40 home runs a year to surpass the Iron Man as the leading home run hitter in team history. This year, Davis should pass Anderson (209), who is just behind Jones.

05 ARE THERE ANY MILESTONES APPROACHING FOR BUCK SHOWALTER?

Last season, Showalter became the second-winningest manager in team history, passing Paul Richards. Now, Showalter, who has managed 1,029 games, is just 27 games behind Richards, who managed 1,056. Without postponements, Showalter is set to manage Orioles game No. 1,057 May 5. Showalter is also 51 victories from equaling Earl Weaver's 1,480 wins as a major league manager.

06 CAN CHRIS TILLMAN LEAVE HIS MARK ON ORIOLES' STAT LISTS?

Tillman, who is in the last year of his contract, begins 2017 on the disabled list, but with 72 wins, he is seven away from Mike Boddicker and Scott Erickson, who are tied for 10th with 79. If Tillman can return by

May, he could move up on the strikeout list, too. He has 771 strikeouts and trails Boddicker and Sidney Ponson (836), who are tied for 10th, and Dennis Martinez (858) for ninth. Scott McGregor (904) and Steve Barber (918) may be out of reach this season.

07 HOW ABOUT TILLMAN AND WIN-LOSS PERCENTAGE?

Tillman's .600 winning percentage is ninth on the team's all-time list. To be eligible for the list, a pitcher must have at least 50 decisions. Tillman has 120 (72-48). This is a list that's easy to fall down on, but only Mike Mussina (.645), Jim Palmer (.638), Mike Cuelar (.619) and Dave McNally (.616) have more decisions ahead of Tillman.

08 WHERE DOES DARREN O'DAY STAND ON THE ALL-TIME GAMES LIST?

When O'Day signed his four-year extension in December 2015, the right-hander said he hoped to appear in the most games in team history. From 2012-15, O'Day appeared in at least 68 games per season, but last year injuries restricted him to 34. Starting 2017 with 307 appearances, O'Day could take a big jump on the team's all-time list. If he's in 68, as he was in 2013-15, he'll move into sixth place with 375, passing bullpen coach Alan Mills (346), McGregor (356), Johnson (360), Eddie Watt (363) and Mark Williamson (365). Three years of 68 games would put O'Day in second place with 511, trailing only Palmer with 558.

09 ARE THERE ANY RECORDS PLAYERS WOULD LIKE TO AVOID?

Davis begins 2017 with 1,007 strikeouts as an Oriole. He has two seasons of more than 200 and an-

other with 199. Davis needs just 299 -- less than two seasons worth -- to pass Ripken, who had 1,305 strikeouts in 21 seasons. Ripken never had a season of 100 strikeouts.

10 DOESN'T JONES GET HIT BY PITCHES OFTEN?

He does, and Jones' 82 entering the season are the third-most in Orioles history. Anderson (148) and Melvin Mora (107) are ahead of him. Jones has never been hit more than 13 times in a season, so it looks as if he won't move higher on this painful list this season.

11 HOW ABOUT STOLEN BASES? WHERE DOES JONES RANK THERE?

Entering 2017, Jones has 81 stolen bases in his Orioles career, and his career high is 16 (2012). He needs four to tie Don Buford for 10th place with 85. Here's one Orioles' mark that won't be challenged for a long time: Anderson has 307 career steals. As a team, the Orioles stole a major-league-low 19 bases in 2016.

12 JIM PALMER'S RECORD IS SAFE.

Tillman probably would have gotten his fourth straight Opening Day start had he not had a sore right shoulder. Palmer is the only pitcher in franchise history to make four consecutive Opening Day starts (1974-77). Tillman, Mike Mussina (1994-96 and 1998-2000) and McNally (1969-71) have all had three consecutive Opening Day assignments. Jones started for the 10th straight Opening Day in center field. He's the first player to start that many openers at the same position since Ripken started 14 consecutive at short-stop (1983-96).

13 WHEN WILL J.J. HARDY SURPASS 1,500 HITS?

Hardy and Jones are two Orioles who should pass the 1,500-hit milestone this year. MLB.com estimates Hardy, who began the season with 1,433, will get his 1,500th hit in Baltimore July 22. Jones' 1,500th hit should come at Yankee Stadium April 29, and Davis' 1,000th hit could occur in Baltimore Aug. 3.

14 WILL MIKE MUSSINA MAKE THE HALL OF FAME THIS YEAR?

No Oriole has been voted into the Hall of Fame since Ripken was a decade ago, and it's questionable whether Mussina would enter the Hall as an Oriole if he were voted in. But Mussina has made great strides in his first four years of eligibility, moving from 20.3 percent to 51.8 percent. At this rate, the great right-hander will make the Hall, which requires 75 percent of the vote, within the next two years. Mussina has six years of eligibility remaining.

15 WHAT'S ONE ORIOLES RECORD NOT LIKELY TO BE BROKEN?

Ripken's consecutive games streak of 2,632 will never be broken by any player, but his total games played of 3,001 is also highly unlikely to be eclipsed. Jones isn't even in the top 10. He began the season with 1,321, and will likely pass Markakis (1,365), Al Bumbry (1,428) and Singleton (1,446) for eighth place. Only Ripken and Brooks Robinson (2,896) have played more than 2,000 games with the team. ☒

[BY RICH DUBROFF | PRESSBOX IS AVAILABLE EVERY MONTH ON THE 15TH]

Celebrity Orioles Fans Share Their Favorite Spots At Camden Yards

By Glenn Clark

APRIL 6, 2017 marked the 25th anniversary of the first game played at Oriole Park at Camden Yards. In celebration of the ballpark turning 25, PressBox spoke to some well-known Orioles fans about where they most enjoy sitting when they attend a game at the legendary stadium.

For some, it's about the atmosphere that exists in a certain part of the ballpark. For others, it's about which seats give you the view of the game that you want the most.

So where's your favorite seat?



KENYA ALLEN/PRESSBOX

"I've been a season-ticket holder at Camden Yards since it opened. For the past 20 years, I've been sitting 12 rows behind home plate. To me, they are the best seats in the house. I love baseball and have learned a lot more about the game by sitting there. I can see everything, and I like having the scouts in front of me. You can always get one of them to explain any 'what just happened?' moment."

- Mary Ellen Iwata,
former vice president of original content and development,
The Weather Channel

"In 1991, I was thrilled to have been taken on a tour of the building site for Camden Yards. I still have a picture of me in a hardhat standing at what was to become home plate. I couldn't imagine how it would all come together, but it certainly did. I think of that day nearly every time I come to the Yard and sit just up from that same area, now looking at an actual home plate."

- Pat Sajak,
"Wheel of Fortune" host

"Right behind home plate, because I can tell our batters where the catcher is setting himself up – inside or outside!"

- Johnathon Schaech,
actor "DC's Legends of Tomorrow"

"It's the same old story. I sit as close as I can as long as I can. One night, in a driving rain, I sat in Cal Ripken's seats behind home plate in a game between the Yankees and the good guys. I never moved. I had a flimsy umbrella and was in an avalanche of water, but I'll be damned if I'm giving up on my seats. Besides, if it was good enough for [former Orioles third baseman] Melvin Mora to still be out there, it was good enough for me!"

- Roy Firestone,
legendary sportscaster

"It depends on who I'm going with. If I'm going with my buddies, I want to sit in the bleachers. There's just something magical about sitting in the bleachers, having beer on a summer night and enjoying a baseball game and looking at it from that perspective. If I'm going to specifically watch the game, then I want to sit in the lower level behind the third-base dugout, because I think those are probably the best seats, and you can kind of see everything, and you can peer into the dugout to see what [Orioles manager] Buck Showalter is doing and the reaction from the players. If I'm going with my kids, it's very important that I'm in the shade [on the third-base side]."

- Bryan Nehman,
WBAL Radio morning show host

"We tend to sit behind home plate or behind the Orioles' dugout. My kids like to be as close to the guys as possible and prefer to see how the pitchers work. Personally, the bleachers are great, and those sections down the left-field line, close to the foul line where the seats start to turn, are really cool, too. But usually, we end up 15-20 rows behind home plate."

- Jason La Canfora,
CBS NFL insider

"I like sitting in center field under the scoreboard. I like those seats, because you can see the whole field, and everything is in front of you. I'm always a big fan of sitting there. I also like sitting on the third-base side, because you can see into the Orioles' dugout and try to figure out what they're telling each other."

- James Ellsworth,
WWE superstar

"After we hit the bars near Camden Yards, I usually score tickets from my buddy Carter, and we sit behind the first-base dugout. It's mostly so I can see the shortstop. It takes me back to when I played shortstop for Towson rec and Towson travel [teams]. It's the best view to see the left side of the infield. Then I usually bounce around to center field. I always liked sitting there, because [former Orioles center fielder and current vice president of baseball operations] Brady Anderson was my favorite Oriole growing up."

- Zachary Merrick,
All Time Low bassist

"I watched the first game at Camden Yards in Cleveland's dugout. That cannot be topped. It's a long story, but it's a great view. I really love the center field deck. Also, sitting behind [Diamond Comic Distributors CEO] Steve Geppi is always fun. Sitting in left field, where my favorite heckler used to act up on Sunday games, too – and, of course, standing room only!"

- Jamie Costello,
ABC2 (WMAR) anchor

ORIOLES REPORT



Hyun Soo Kim

KENYA ALLEN/PRESSBOX

Hyun Soo Kim: What A Difference A Year Makes

★ RICH DUBROFF

A year ago, South Korean outfielder Hyun Soo Kim trotted down the orange carpet on Opening Day and was greeted by catcalls, as Orioles fans booed a player they'd never seen play before.

Kim had refused the Orioles' request to go down to Triple-A Norfolk after an awful spring training, and the team was frustrated by his refusal. His contract said he couldn't be optioned without his permission, and now he was declining it.

Faced with Kim's stubbornness, manager Buck Showalter felt he had no option but to play him, but only occasionally. Through the end of May, Kim was batting .360 but played in only 18 of the Orioles' first 50 games.

Showalter played Kim much more regularly after that, and he ended his first season in the United States with a .302 average and a robust .382 OBP.

In 2016, South Korean journalists were a daily presence. But this year, they'd moved on. Kim, who is accessible but not expansive in interviews, was relieved.

"There are not a lot of differences," Kim said through his translator, Derrick Chung. "All my teammates, they've been great, just like last year. I'm more used to the routine, the culture. I was way more comfortable. I feel more comfortable than last year, but I need to work on my English more."

Kim and Chung are always together, and while the left fielder isn't necessarily a regular part of clubhouse conversations, he no longer feels like an outsider, and his team-

mates feel the same about him.

"He's more comfortable with us because he's been with us a year now," right-hander Dylan Bundy said. "He knows all of us personally, so as a friend, it makes it easier just being in the clubhouse with all of us and for us with him. He's done a great job coming over here, especially from a different country. It's got to be hard."

They've noticed his English has improved, too.

"You can tell he's gotten a lot better at it. He's hearing it every single day, you can hear it and practice saying it. And of course, we teach him certain words," Bundy joked.

One of the biggest changes has come in translators. Chung, a 29-year-old who played four seasons in the Toronto Blue Jays' organization as a catcher and infielder, is a Korean-American from Southern California, who can easily guide Kim around the game.

"I just think he has a year of development, a year understanding our culture, a year understanding how we are as Americans, just getting himself comfortable here with the day-to-day life of being over here," center fielder Adam Jones said. "I know that a lot of things are still uncomfortable for him, in terms of either driving or maybe directions, simple things, day-to-day life. The baseball, when he comes here, he's very comfortable. It seems like he's gotten more and more comfortable in his skin, in the clubhouse. It's great to see."

Not long after arriving, Kim could chat simply in English, and while he needs Chung for interview requests, he's able to understand his teammates and manager.

"He's continued to grow," Showalter said. "He was under the radar once you got to know him. An interpreter is necessary, but he can function well without him. He's got

great facial, body communication. Last night, I asked him what that last pitch was, and he got what I was talking about.

"He's adjusted well. I don't think, after halfway through the season, it was a challenge for him."

Kim has exhibited a sense of humor around his teammates sufficient enough so that Showalter can kid with him -- even about the Orioles' failed attempt to demote him last March, which came up when the team played Norfolk to end this year's exhibition season March 31.

"I was talking with him after he came out of the game in Norfolk, I said, 'You could have been here. You could have played here,'" Showalter joked.

Kim is careful to not say much that could annoy either fans in his adopted country or the one he's always called home. Asked what he likes better in the U.S. than Korea, he won't bite.

"I can't really specify certain things because it's just a different culture here," Kim said. "There are things here that are nicer than Korea, but also there are things in Korea that are nicer [than] here. I just can't pick one thing that's better here."

He does readily admit he quickly developed a taste for U.S. food: crab, pasta and steak are his favorites, but he won't forget home.

"I still like Korean food better," Kim said.

Kim's biggest hit of 2016 came in Toronto Sept. 28, when he slammed a two-run home run to give the Orioles a crucial 3-2 win against the Blue Jays.

Six days later, during the Wild Card Game, a fan in the Rogers Centre left-field stands threw a beer bottle at Kim, causing Jones to scream at the crowd.

"I told him when he first got here, I got his back, no matter what," Jones said. "I know he's going to be uncomfortable because of the language barrier."

"You're going to be the only Korean here, you're going to be the only one speaking the language, you're going to be the only one doing your own thing. Hey, you're one of my brothers. Once you put on that uniform, you're one of my brothers, and I got your back." That incident was very unfortunate, but if it happens again, I'll be right there to have his back."

Kim and Bundy have become good friends, the South Korean and the Oklahoman.

"Every now and then, occasionally, we'll go out to dinner. He'll take us to some Korean spots in different cities we go to or we'll take him to steak places," Bundy said. "There's interaction there. We hang out off the field, too. The language isn't a problem. We've got his translator there with us. We're teaching him words, and he's teaching us things."

Bundy has wondered how he would do if he had to play baseball in South Korea. How would he communicate?

"I've thought about that," Bundy said. "That's the scary thing to think about. You go over there, and you don't speak the language that's from there, so how do you communicate with people? It's hard. Obviously, I think he's handled it great."

Kim's locker is near slugger Mark Trumbo's, and the designated hitter has enjoyed him in the clubhouse.

"I think he's understanding more than most people might think," Trumbo said. "I think the speaking part, he's working hard on. He surprises us almost every day. He'll throw a word in that you didn't expect, and he takes a lot of pride in it, too. He doesn't want to be one of the guys that relies totally on having a translator all the time. I think that's one of the biggest things is, once you start getting the language down, everything becomes a lot easier."

The second spring training went far better than the first, and the Orioles hope 2017 will feature an even more productive Kim.

"In Korea, I was always trying to be perfect, trying to have the prettiest swing, the prettiest form, but here in the U.S., I am trying to be more aggressive and not really fear mistakes," Kim said. "I'll try to be more aggressive and put more effort in not having any kind of fear." ☑



CONNOLLY'S CORNER

Five Reasons Why The Orioles Will Be Better In 2017

★ DAN CONNOLLY



It's always tricky to make season predictions as a baseball beat writer.

If you suggest the team you cover isn't going to be good, you'll be labeled by the players and fans as too negative. If you predict a high win total, well, then you're a homer.

I've been all around that slippery slope in my years covering the Orioles. I try to ignore outside opinions and focus on the overall roster, the quality of teams in the American League East and where I think certain players are in their development.

Last year, I predicted the Orioles would win 88 games, finish third and capture an AL Wild Card berth. They won 89, tied for second in the division and lost the Wild Card game. I'm not always that close. In 2012, I shorted the Orioles about 15 wins in my preseason prediction. Since then, though, I've been pretty solid, give or take three wins.

So, this year, I'm going with 90 victories, a second-place finish and another Wild Card berth. I'll say they get to the AL Division Series, but stop there.

What makes me second-guess my call is twofold: the uncertainty surrounding the health of right-hander Chris Tillman, who will need to get back from a shoulder issue by May to further stabilize the rotation and help preserve the bullpen, and an always competitive division that

should be tougher in 2017.

But there are plenty of reasons I think the Orioles will be at least one game better this year. Here are five:

1. Gausman and Bundy Take the Next Step

Right-handers Dylan Bundy, the fourth overall pick in the 2011 draft, and Kevin Gausman, the fourth overall pick in the 2012 draft, have been linked for years. Each had his first full season in the majors in 2016. And there's no reason to think Bundy, 24, and Gausman, 26, can't be better this year.

They'll have their struggles at times -- primarily with pitching deep into games -- but these two may be the most talented 1-2 punch the Orioles have had in their rotation in two decades. What they need is experience, and they gained a valuable dose of that last year. I expect that will translate into lower ERAs and higher win totals for both.

2. The Offense Is More Balanced, But Still Potent

It's not perfect. There are still too many swing-and-miss guys. But with the addition of patient veteran Seth Smith, the return of Joey Rickard from injury and a full year of MLB experience for Hyun Soo Kim, the Orioles should have more ways to score than bludgeoning opponents with the long ball. That should help the club improve with runners in scoring position.

Regardless, this team is going to score runs because of its immense power potential. Chris Davis was bothered by a thumb injury for a chunk of 2016, and that likely contributed to his down season. Mark Trumbo, the AL home run leader, was resigned. And Manny Machado, already one of baseball's best at 24, keeps improving.

3. So Many Optionable Bullpen Pieces

For several years now, the Orioles have had one of the game's best bullpens. Part of that is sheer talent. Led by outstanding closer Zach Britton and superb set-up men Darren O'Day and Brad Brach, Orioles manager Buck Showalter has plenty of quality relief choices.

But what also makes the bullpen so good is the way Showalter balances his group. He is exceptionally careful to not overuse individual relievers, and he's willing to potentially sacrifice the outcome of one game to keep certain pitchers rested for the long-term.

One way to do that is to keep refreshing bullpen personnel. This year they can do that more often because they have so many optionable pitchers on their 40-man roster. Most of their relievers can go back and forth between the minors and majors without being put through waivers. Last year, the club's best long reliever, Vance Worley, was out of options, and that hamstrung the Triple-A Norfolk shuttle some. This year, it will be running in full force.

4. The Bench Is Deeper

Showalter has been criticized for not using his bench much; but, frankly, it hasn't been either good or versatile during

his tenure. At times last year, he had just three reserves, including a backup catcher. So, he couldn't often use pinch-runners, pinch-hitters or defensive replacements as much as he would have liked.

This year, Showalter has an outfield with left-handed and right-handed hitters that can be platooned. He has a variety of options with speed and power, and there are legitimate major leaguers in Norfolk that could be called up if injury or ineffectiveness hit the bench.

Overall, the rosters in the big leagues and at Triple-A are deeper, and that should make Showalter, a tremendous tactician, more dangerous.

5. I Believe In Ubaldo

I saved this one for last because it is on the shakiest ground. Right-hander Ubaldo Jimenez hasn't lived up to the four-year, \$50 million contract he signed before the 2014 season. In his first three seasons in Baltimore, Jimenez was 26-31 with a 4.72 ERA in 86 games (79 starts).

So why would I suggest he'll be better in 2017 at age 33? Because Jimenez was 3-3 with a 2.82 ERA in 12 games (eight starts) during the second half last year. And because Jimenez was 13-9 with a 3.30 ERA for the Cleveland Indians in 2013, the last time he was in a contract year. Maybe that's just incidental, but some players seem to crack under the pressure of needing a new contract; Jimenez handled it fine the last time.

The bottom line is he's good when he can repeat his complicated delivery and throw strikes from a deceptive wind-up. But when his mechanics get out of whack, his control suffers. And simplifying his delivery seems to eliminate the deception he needs to succeed.

There's no guarantee Jimenez can figure it out for a full season -- he hasn't as an Oriole -- but I just have the sense he can at least match what he did in 2015, when he was 12-10 with a 4.11 ERA. Actually, I think he'll do better than that. ☒

WEEKLY MLB POWER RANKINGS

BY STAN "THE FAN" CHARLES

TRACK THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE ORIOLES AND THE REST OF THE LEAGUE

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UPON FURTHER REVIEW

Despite Initial Skepticism, Camden Yards Has Become A Bucket-List Destination

★ JIM HENNEMAN

Oriole Park at Camden Yards has become so widely accepted as “The Ballpark That Changed Baseball Forever,” it’s easy to forget how much opposition there was at first to both the location and the design. That may sound like “Believe It or Not” stuff a quarter of a century later, but there were no slam-dunks in what turned out to be a series of brilliant decisions.

So while seemingly all of baseball rightfully celebrates the 25th anniversary of the park that spawned its own generation of venues throughout the country, it’s also fair to pause and remember what was left behind.

In the interest of full disclosure, it should be noted the family home I grew up in was located in the right-field suburbs of what became Memorial Stadium. It was Municipal Stadium before that, and I have vivid memories of conflicting sentiments from neighborhood residents.

Municipal Stadium, a limited-use facility that hosted two Army-Navy football games (1924 and 1944), had been built in 1922. It was part of Venable Park, a huge parcel of land on the northern edge of the city that separated countless blocks of Baltimore’s famed “row homes” from an area known for country estates for the wealthy.

Much later, those estates would famously become known as the Greystone houses beyond the centerfield fence at Memorial Stadium that tortured hitters during afternoon games. Based on what happened later, I can only imagine what the reaction must have been when the decision was made to put a stadium in the front yard of those “estates.”

In the post-World War II years, I had a paper route delivering *The News Post* and *Sunday American* (later to become *The News American*) in the Ednor Gardens area. Some of those Greystone houses, built in the 19th century and complete with “sun rooms,” were in my territory.

More than a few of them were occupied by residents who had been through this battle before and wanted no parts of a repeat. When *News Post* sports editor Rodger H. Pippen led the crusade for a new stadium to be built on the site between 33rd and 36th streets, I lost more than a few customers, so I knew firsthand about the wrath of some residents in what had evolved into a growing neighborhood.

But times were changing; there were now blocks and blocks of the iconic Baltimore row homes surrounding the “estates,” and gradually the young neighborhood learned to tol-

erate and eventually embrace the increased activity on 33rd Street. It was a great place to grow up and good time to be a sports fan in Baltimore, as Memorial Stadium became a central part of the city’s fabric.

But even before “the world’s largest insane asylum” reached the age Camden Yards is today (25), there was talk of another makeover. The eventual sale of the Orioles from Jerry Hoffberger to Edward Bennett Williams, and a threatened move by the Colts that eventually came to fruition, put the city’s planners on notice and the “great stadium debate” raged on for the better part of two decades.

There was fierce early opposition to any plan to relocate from 33rd Street, and this time it came mostly from those who lived in the area and considered Memorial Stadium a necessary staple of the neighborhood, as opposed to an unwanted eyesore. I can attest to the fact that many residents of that area never accepted the downtown decision -- some kept a promise not to go there and others have refused any temptation to revisit the 33rd Street site, preferring instead to keep a mental picture intact (today, in part, it’s the site of a large YMCA and seniors housing).

But even the most diehard opponents -- not only to the location, but those who thought the Warehouse should be demolished or those who felt old fashioned and modern urban weren’t a good design match -- have come to grips with the fact that the end result is a masterpiece.

There are a lot of people who get a lot of credit for the finished product. Chief among those are former Gov. William Donald Schaefer for his insistence on Camden Yards as the site; former Orioles CEO Larry Lucchino for sticking to his belief that old can also be modern; lead architect Janet Marie Smith, who found a way to make all the pieces fit; and the Maryland Stadium Authority, which had right of final approval on most aspects and has done a good job of keeping the place fresh, inviting and up-to-date.

Camden Yards has been recognized as a jewel on the baseball map since the day the doors opened for the first time. Twenty-five years later it is older than two-thirds of the venues in Major League Baseball. If imitation is the highest form of flattery, then it’s safe to say Oriole Park at Camden Yards has been flattered more than any other sports facility.

Chicago’s Wrigley Field and Boston’s Fenway Park are baseball’s two most iconic parks. Both are more than 100 years old.

Oriole Park at Camden Yards has already been a bucket-list destination for 25 years. I don’t think it’ll take a century to get iconic status. In fact, it may already be there. ☒

★
Jim Henneman can be reached at JimH@pressboxonline.com.

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RAVENS REPORT

Ravens' 2015 Draft Class Needs To Step Up

★ BO SMOLKA

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh has often said NFL players make their biggest jump from Year 1 to Year 2. The wide-eyed rookie look is gone, and second-year players have had time to fully adjust to the NFL lifestyle, requirements and rhythm of the pro season.

Harbaugh's point might be true in general, but there was no such jump last year for the Ravens' 2015 draft class.

This group showed little progress during its second year, and as the Ravens look to end a two-year playoff drought, the time is now for this draft class to produce.

The Ravens face critical needs at wide receiver, defensive line and outside linebacker. In 2015, they drafted players to address all three needs; but to this point, these players have not performed as the organization had hoped.

To review, this was the Ravens' 2015 draft class:

1ST ROUND, NO. 26 OVERALL:
WR Breshad Perriman

2ND ROUND, NO. 55 OVERALL:
TE Maxx Williams

3RD ROUND, NO. 90 OVERALL:
DT Carl Davis

4TH ROUND, NO. 122 OVERALL:
OLB Za'Darius Smith

4TH ROUND, NO. 125 OVERALL:
RB Buck Allen

4TH ROUND, NO. 136 OVERALL:
CB Tray Walker

5TH ROUND, NO. 171 OVERALL:
TE Nick Boyle

5TH ROUND, NO. 176 OVERALL:
G Robert Myers

6TH ROUND, NO. 204 OVERALL:
WR Darren Waller

The story of this draft class will always have a tragic subtext, as Walker died after a dirt bike accident in March 2016.

But in the immediate aftermath of the draft, the Ravens received glowing grades from draft experts.

"The Ravens needed new weapons in the passing game at both wide receiver and tight end, and they got them," wrote ESPN's Mel Kiper Jr., who gave the Ravens an A-minus grade at the time. "Breshad Perriman could have been off the board by No. 14, and I wouldn't have blinked. ... Carl Davis provides needed rotation depth on the D-line and again looks like good value. He was my No. 34

player on the Big Board, and Baltimore got him at No. 90."

Pete Prisco of CBSsports.com also gave the Ravens an A for the draft, writing, "Up and down the draft board, they landed good players."

Hindsight is 20-20, but here are some sobering facts about the Ravens' 2015 draft class:

- The first-round pick has made one start in two years
- The top three picks have all missed significant time to injury; Perriman and Davis each missed an entire season
- Through two seasons, this class has produced no established starters
- Two picks have had to serve NFL-mandated suspensions
- In two late-season games last season, four of the top five picks did not play a snap

The player who made the biggest jump from Year 1 to Year 2 was Perriman, but he had nowhere to go but up after missing his entire rookie season with a knee injury.

Perriman showed flashes at times, including an acrobatic, leaping catch against the Bills in the season opener for his first career reception. Yet he struggled with drops and route-running.

Perriman's downfield speed seems well suited for quarterback Joe Flacco's cannon arm, but that number wasn't called as often as many expected. More than once last season, first with departed Marc Trestman and then later with current offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg, Flacco pleaded for the team to get more aggressive with deep throws.

Perriman finished with 33 catches for 499 yards and three touchdowns.

Harbaugh, speaking from the owners meetings in Arizona in March, made clear the Ravens need more from Perriman this year, particularly with the retirement of Steve Smith Sr. and the loss of Kamar Aiken to the Colts via free agency.

"He's fast, fast, fast. He's big, big, big," Harbaugh said. "He can track a ball downfield and go up and make a play. ... We took him as the 26th pick in the draft. I also know he's very motivated, and he's working very hard to be the best he can be.

"He has to be out there making a difference for us. Period. End of story."

But at least Perriman played in all 16 games, which is more than can be said for anyone else in the 2015 draft class.

The 2013 draft class has been widely maligned for early-round whiffs (Matt Elam and Arthur Brown), but the Ravens netted

three starters later in that draft: nose tackle Brandon Williams in the third round, fullback Kyle Juszczyk in the fourth and tackle Rick Wagner in the fifth.

The 2015 class has yet to produce a regular starter.

Last season, the Ravens got virtually nothing from their second and third picks in the 2015 draft, as Williams and Davis were lost to injuries. Williams played in four games without a catch before going on injured reserve with a knee injury. Davis missed the entire season.

As a rookie, Williams made 32 catches for 268 yards -- both franchise records for a rookie tight end. He is still just 23 years old, but Williams has to carve out a spot in a crowded group that includes veterans Dennis Pitta and Benjamin Watson, Crockett Gillmore and two others from this draft class, Boyle and Waller.

Both Boyle and Waller lost part of last season to NFL-mandated suspensions: Boyle for 10 games for a second suspension -- the first cost him the final four games of his rookie season -- and Waller for four. Waller, converted from wide receiver last offseason, ranked second among tight ends last season with 10 catches (for 85 yards). Waller also ranked second in special teams tackles with six.

Boyle (6-foot-4, 260 pounds) is considered the best blocking tight end, and Harbaugh indicated he or Williams could be used in a hybrid-fullback type role if the team fails to replace Juszczyk.

Davis didn't play at all last season, going on injured reserve with an ankle injury in early September. He should be back bigger, older and stronger, and with a job wide open after the Ravens traded Timmy Jernigan to the Philadelphia Eagles.

Unlike Davis, Smith and Allen both played in 2016, but both regressed from Year 1 to Year 2.

Smith registered 5.5 sacks as a rookie in 2015 but finished with one last season. He was slowed at times by an ankle injury.

Allen, meanwhile, went from starting running back late in the Ravens' injury-marred 2015 season to fourth string last summer, falling behind Justin Forsett, Terrance West and rookie Kenneth Dixon on the depth chart. Allen saw only fleeting action in his second season, finishing with nine carries for 34 yards.

Even though the early returns have been abysmal, there is still time for this draft class to make an impact.

With Steve Smith gone, Perriman has a chance to establish himself as a No. 1 receiver. With Jernigan gone, Davis has a chance to win a starting job in the trenches. With Elvis Dumervil gone, Za'Darius Smith has a chance to be an impact pass rusher. With Dixon facing a four-game suspension, Allen has a chance to move back up the depth chart. With Juszczyk gone, Boyle or Williams has a chance to earn a job as a lead-blocking, pass-protecting H-back.

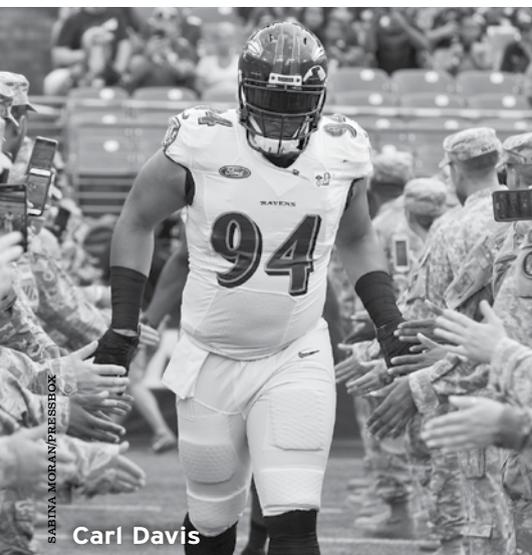
It's unclear whether any or all of these players will be up to the task, but the Ravens can ill afford another lost season from this class. ☒



Breshad Perriman



Maxx Williams



Carl Davis



Za'Darius Smith

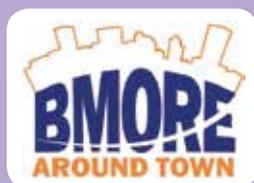
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2017 Mock NFL Draft

★ BY **KEN ZALIS**



With the NFL Draft approaching, here's a look at my third first-round mock for the 2017 NFL Draft. Below, you will find the needs for each team plus my projected pick.

1. CLEVELAND (1-15)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, WR, ILB, CB
PICK: Myles Garrett, DE, Texas A&M

2. SAN FRANCISCO (2-14)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, WR, G/C, OLB, CB
PICK: Solomon Thomas, DT, Stanford

3. CHICAGO (3-13)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, DE, OLB, CB
PICK: Marshon Lattimore, CB, Ohio State

4. JACKSONVILLE (3-13)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, RB, TE, G/C, OT
PICK: Leonard Fournette, RB, LSU

5. TENNESSEE --

FROM THE LOS ANGELES RAMS (4-12)
TEAM NEEDS: WR, DT, DE, CB

PICK: Malik Hooker, S, Ohio State

6. NEW YORK JETS (5-11)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, TE, OLB, CB
PICK: Mitch Trubisky, QB, North Carolina

7. LOS ANGELES CHARGERS (5-11)

TEAM NEEDS: G/C, OT, ILB, S
PICK: Jamal Adams, S, LSU

8. CAROLINA (6-10)

TEAM NEEDS: RB, G/C, OT, DE, CB
PICK: Christian McCaffrey, RB, Stanford

9. CINCINNATI (6-9-1)

TEAM NEEDS: OT, WR, DE, DT, ILB
PICK: Reuben Foster, ILB, Alabama

10. BUFFALO (7-9)

TEAM NEEDS: WR, OT, OLB, S, QB
PICK: Mike Williams, WR, Clemson

11. NEW ORLEANS (7-9)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, LB, DL, CB
PICK: Derek Barnett, DE/OLB, Tennessee

12. CLEVELAND --

FROM PHILADELPHIA (7-9)
TEAM NEEDS: QB, WR, ILB, CB
PICK: Deshaun Watson, QB, Clemson

13. ARIZONA (7-8-1)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, WR, G/C, CB
PICK: Pat Mahomes, QB, Texas Tech

14. PHILADELPHIA --

FROM MINNESOTA (8-8)
TEAM NEEDS: RB, WR, DT, CB
PICK: Jonathan Allen, DE, Alabama

15. INDIANAPOLIS (8-8)

TEAM NEEDS: RB, OT, ILB, OLB
PICK: Ryan Ramezyk, OT, Wisconsin

16. BALTIMORE (8-8)

TEAM NEEDS: WR, LB, DE, DE
PICK: Cam Robinson, OT, Alabama

17. WASHINGTON (8-7-1)

TEAM NEEDS: DT, ILB, OLB, CB, WR
PICK: Haason Reddick, LB, Temple

18. TENNESSEE (9-7)

TEAM NEEDS: WR, DT, DE, CB
PICK: Corey Davis, WR, Western Michigan

19. TAMPA BAY (9-7)

TEAM NEEDS: RB, G/C, OT, DT
PICK: Dalvin Cook, RB, Florida State

20. DENVER (9-7)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, G/C, OT, DE, DT
PICK: O.J. Howard, TE, Alabama

21. DETROIT (9-7)

TEAM NEEDS: G/C, DE, DT, ILB
PICK: Taco Charlton, DE, Michigan

22. MIAMI (10-6)

TEAM NEEDS: DE, DT, ILB, OLB
PICK: Charles Harris, DE/OLB, Missouri

23. NEW YORK GIANTS (11-5)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, RB, TE, G/C
PICK: Jarrad Davis, LB, Florida

24. OAKLAND (12-4)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, DE, ILB, CB
PICK: Kevin King, CB, Washington

25. HOUSTON (9-7)

TEAM NEEDS: QB, G/C, OT, DT
PICK: Garrett Bolles, OT, Utah

26. SEATTLE (10-5-1)

TEAM NEEDS: RB, G/C, OT, DT
PICK: Gareon Conley, CB, Ohio State

27. KANSAS CITY (12-4)

TEAM NEEDS: WR, G/C, DL, CB
PICK: DeShone Kizer, QB, Notre Dame

28. DALLAS (13-3)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, DE, DT, CB, WR
PICK: David Njoku, TE, Miami

29. GREEN BAY (10-6)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, G/C, OLB, CB, RB
PICK: Forrest Lamp, OG, Western Kentucky

30. PITTSBURGH (11-5)

TEAM NEEDS: TE, ILB, OLB, CB
PICK: Jabrill Peppers, OLB/S, Michigan

31. ATLANTA (11-5)

TEAM NEEDS: OT, DE, DT, OLB
PICK: Takkarist McKinley, OLB/DE, UCLA

32. NEW ORLEANS --

FROM NEW ENGLAND (14-2)
TEAM NEEDS: RB, WR, G/C, OLB, CB, TE
PICK: John Ross, WR, Washington ☒

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Kenneth Sumpter Jr. Named U.S. Army Impact Player Of The Month

★ WICK EISENBERG



enneth Sumpter Jr., a member of the basketball and football teams at Havre de Grace High School in Harford County, was named the U.S. Army Impact Player of the Month for March.

Sumpter, a senior, is the third recipient of the award from Harford County. He was nominated by Brian Eberhardt, who coaches basketball and football at Havre de Grace.

"All four years, he has been an example of what a student-athlete should be," Eberhardt said. "He's truly an ex-

tension of the coach on the floor. I've never seen him put down a teammate ever. He leads by example. Kenneth is always the first guy at practice and the last to leave."

Sumpter has made a major impact for both programs at Havre de Grace.

A guard, Sumpter was a four-year member of the Warriors' boys' varsity basketball team. He surpassed 1,000 career points during a 32-point, 12-rebound effort against Perryville Feb. 10. Sumpter averaged 23.7 points a game this season for Havre de Grace, which finished 18-7. He also set the school record for career 3-pointers made.

The Warriors reached the Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association 1A North regional final, where



Kenneth Sumpter Jr.

they lost, 81-77, in overtime to the eventual state champion, Fairmont Heights. Sumpter scored 31 points during his final high school basketball game.

Sumpter was equally productive for the football program as a wide receiver and safety. He hauled in the game-winning pass to down Perryville and retain the Susquehanna Bowl for Havre de Grace with less than a minute in the game. Havre de Grace reached the MPSSAA 1A state championship at Navy-Marine Corps Stadium Dec. 10. Though the team lost in the final to Fort Hill, Sumpter still excelled, catching a touchdown pass.

"It was a surreal feeling, getting to play in a college stadium. It was a really big test; I'd never been on a big stage like that before," Sumpter said. "I learned how important it was to stay poised, and I did my best to carry that to basketball season."

Sumpter's athletic talent has been matched by his prowess in the classroom.

He holds a 3.54 GPA while taking seven advanced-placement classes. Sumpter has not received worse than a B in any of his AP or honors classes and has been on the honor roll throughout his entire education. He tutors fellow students in algebra and also plays the trumpet for the symphonic concert and jazz bands.

Sumpter is also a recipient of the MPSSAA's Minds in Motion Award, which highlights student-athletes who hold at least a 3.25 GPA while playing a sport. He's been a member of the National Society of High School Scholars since 2015.

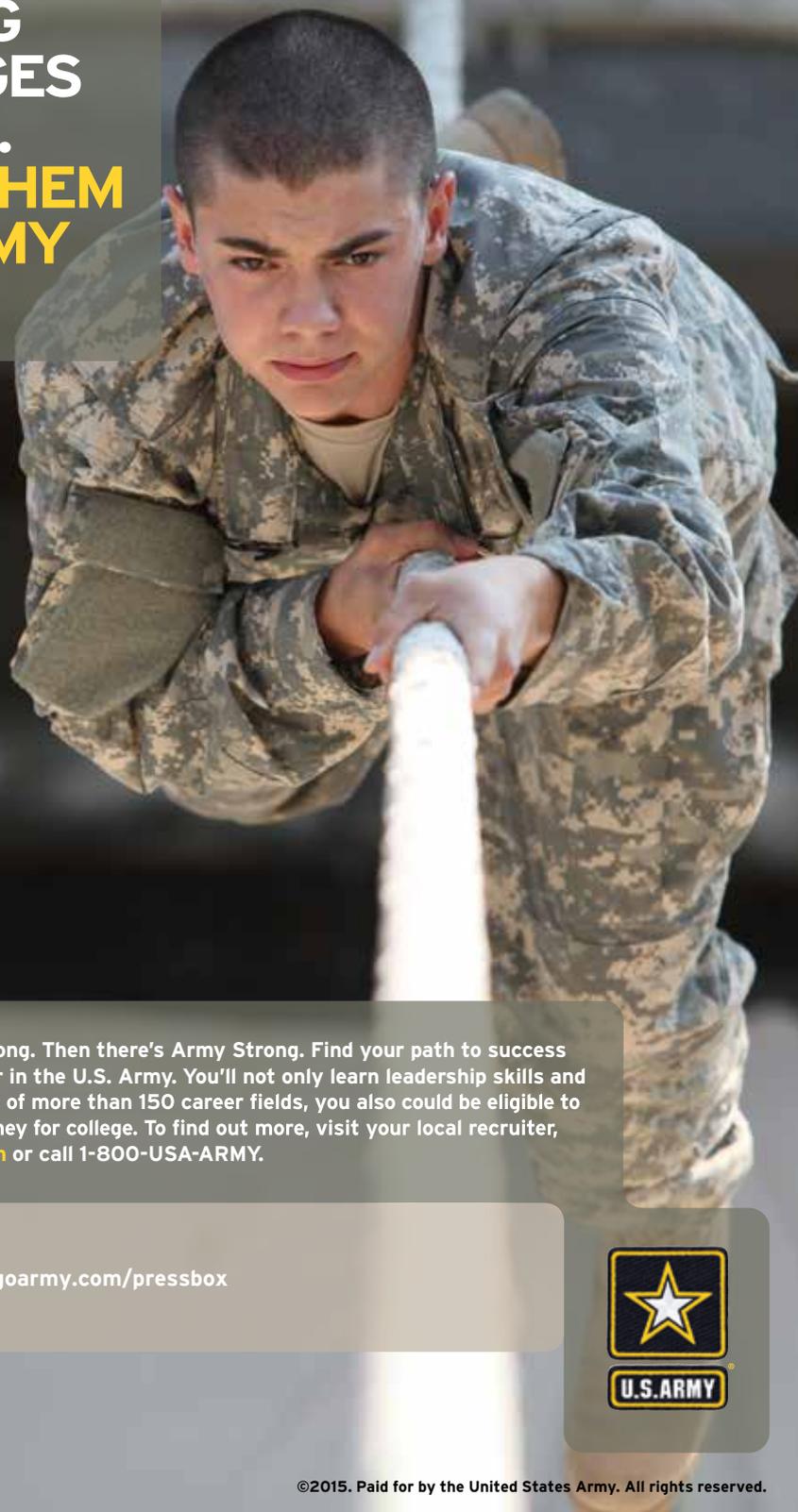
"It comes from my parents. They set a level of expectation that school is first, then sports," Sumpter said. "I kept that mentality throughout high school -- paying attention in class and getting good grades was just expected."

Sumpter is also active in his community. He sings in the choir, plays trumpet, acts as a junior usher and is also a mentor at the Mount Zion Baptist Church. Sumpter has helped put together food packages during the holidays and has also assisted the Harford House with the preparation of temporary housing for homeless families in transition.

"Helping out others gives me a satisfaction, knowing I'm making an impact in someone's life that could really use it," Sumpter said. "Putting together a food basket during the holidays for someone who is going through a tough time is just a great feeling -- seeing them smile is all I need."

Sumpter is in the process of figuring out where he wants to attend college next year. He plans to play basketball at the collegiate level and has received interest from multiple NCAA Division III schools, as well as a few Division II programs. ☑

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The Impact Player of the Month award is given to an individual who has impacted his or her team in a positive way, both on and off the field.

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No Sophomore Slump For Loyola's Pat Spencer

★ TODD KARPOVICH



Earlier this season, Loyola University attackman Pat Spencer took a pass from sophomore midfielder Alex McGovern and deftly scored a behind-the-back goal against Navy.

sive Player of the Week.

At the time, he was also ranked second nationally in assists and points per game.

Loyola head coach Charley Toomey likes to aggressively attack, and many teams have trouble keeping pace with the Greyhounds' quick transition. Spencer has been a main catalyst for the team's high-scoring offense and thrives in Toomey's system.

"That's our identity," Toomey said. "We want to be able to run. In order to run, you need to either pick up a ground ball on the defensive end or make a clean save. We're at our best playing in those unsettled situations."

In addition to Spencer, the Greyhounds have multiple players capable of setting the attack. However, Spencer remains the focal point of the offense. He has an uncanny ability to take advantage when a defenseman makes a mistake or doesn't slide quick enough to defend him. Spencer embraces the attention from opposing teams because it often allows his teammates to get open looks at the goal.

"It is always more fun to play aggressively because you get to play at your own pace and dictate how you want to play," Spencer said. "When you slow down, you give the defense a chance to settle in and maybe rest a little bit. It is a mix of ball movement and moving off ball, but you also have to be able to dodge and beat your

one-on-one matchup and getting a slide. It also starts on the defensive side, getting a stop and running in transition."

Spencer wasted little time leaving his mark on Loyola.

Last year, he tied Gary Hanley (1981) for the Greyhounds' single-season record with 89 points. Spencer also led the team with 52 assists, one shy of the single-season record set by Justin Ward in 2014. In addition, Spencer tied for the team lead with 37 goals.

For that performance, he was named a second-team USILA All-American. Spencer also became the first player to win the Patriot League Offensive Player and Rookie of the Year honors outright.

When asked whether there is any added pressure to follow up on his sensational freshman campaign, Spencer said: "Each year is a new year, and it's a new team. We have the same goals and same expectations for our success."

Nonetheless, Spencer is showing even more versatility this season. Some of the highlights:

- He broke the Patriot League single-game record with nine assists during a 16-9 victory against Holy Cross March 4.
- He scored five goals during an 18-5 victory against Lafayette in the Patriot League opener Feb. 25.
- He had a goal and four assists during an 11-7 victory against in-state rival Towson March 1.
- And he tallied three goals and four assists during an 18-7 win against league rival Navy March 18.

Despite the success, Spencer has remained solely focused on team-wide goals, including a Patriot League championship and another deep run in the NCAA Tournament.

"I didn't have individual goals, but our team goals were to be two games better than last year," Spencer said. "Individually, that meant doing what I needed to do in order to get better and accomplish that. My friends and family might look at numbers, but I don't pay close attention to them."

The Greyhounds advanced to the NCAA semifinals in 2016 and lost to eventual champion North Carolina. Toomey put together another tough nonconference schedule to keep his team battle-tested. In addition to the tough Patriot League schedule, Loyola has played Virginia, Duke, Johns Hopkins and Georgetown.

Spencer and his teammates have embraced the challenge.

"It definitely prepares us," Spencer said about the schedule. "It can be frustrating to us that it is at the beginning of the year, because we were not playing our best lacrosse. It does prepare us, though. We can go into film or into a practice session and look at what we need to improve on, what we need to refine to get better."

Prior to enrolling at Loyola, Spencer was a stellar student-athlete at Boys' Latin. As a senior, Spencer was named an Under Armour All-American and earned all-state honors from the Maryland State Lacrosse Coaches Association. He also played a key role in Boys' Latin's 2014 MIAA "A" conference title and championship. ☒

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Opportunity Knocks For Terps' Caleb Henderson, Jacquille Veii

★ LUKE JACKSON



he difference in the quarterback position was perhaps the biggest reason why the Maryland football team improved from three wins in 2015 to six wins in DJ Durkin's first season as head coach.

Terps quarterbacks threw 29 interceptions in 2015, but threw just nine in 2016 as the since-departed Perry Hills meshed well with offensive coordinator Walt Bell.

The quarterback tasked with taking Maryland's offense to another level may well turn out to be Caleb Henderson, a 6-foot-3, 230-pound rising junior out of Burke, Va. Henderson began his career at North Carolina, where he redshirted during the 2014 season and barely played in 2015 behind Marquise Williams, who had a terrific career in Chapel Hill, N.C.

Henderson transferred to Maryland last August for a better chance to play -- after Williams graduated, Henderson was still behind Mitch Trubisky, now expected to be a first-round draft choice in late April -- and to be closer to home. Henderson also knew Bell, who was the tight ends coach and recruiting coordinator at UNC in 2014. Henderson also had a bit of history with Maryland, which offered him a scholarship entering ninth grade.

Now, Henderson has a real shot to not just play but start. During the first spring practice open to the media March 30, Henderson took most of the reps at quarterback with the first unit, with rising sophomore Tyrrell Pigrome getting the rest of the snaps with the first team.

"I think it's awesome. I've made a lot of great friends here," Henderson said after practice March 30. "I live right over the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. So it's awesome being 40 minutes from home, being able to go home for dinner, see my mom, see my dad, stuff like that. It's awesome. I think it's an awesome opportunity. I love the school. I love the guys on the team. I love the coaches. It's a great opportunity that I have."

In the fall, Henderson will compete with rising sophomores Max Bortenschlager and Ryan Brand and incom-

ing freshman Kasim Hill in addition to Pigrome for the starting position. Pigrome, who possesses electrifying speed as one of the best athletes on the team, played in 11 games and started one last year, completing 37-of-71 passes for 322 yards. Bortenschlager, more of a traditional pocket passer, played in two games and started one, completing 16-of-33 passes for 209 yards.

Henderson, meanwhile, said he brings "a strong arm and mobility, too, for being 230 pounds." Rising senior wide receiver Jacquille Veii lauded Henderson's leadership, pointing out that Henderson has "that fire to him that he wants to win and compete."

Durkin's assessment of Henderson was similar to Veii's observations.

"I love [Henderson's] competitiveness. He's a fiery guy, he's into it, he's high energy and he's really talented," Durkin said. "Caleb, he can really run the ball as well as throw. He's got a strong arm and he's a big, thick body who runs really well. He's a good athlete. All those things in terms of talent, he checks all the boxes. He has familiarity with the similar scheme from where he came from, and I think that helps him, too. He's coming along really well."

Henderson and the rest of the quarterbacks will be asked to run Bell's high-tempo, spread offense, which is designed to get the ball to skill position players in space. It was a run-heavy offense last year, and could be again in 2017 with the weapons in the backfield Maryland has in rising junior Ty Johnson, rising sophomore Lorenzo Harrison and newcomer Anthony McFarland.

But the key to improving upon Maryland's offensive output from a year ago may be creating more explosive plays through the pass game. Henderson is excited about the Terps' potential on play action. "It's actually a big threat because we have multiple running backs that can take the ball and go," he said. And Maryland has the talent on the outside to stretch the field.

The Terps return top receiver D.J. Moore, a rising junior who caught 41 passes for a team-high 637 yards last year, but Teldrick Morgan, Levern Jacobs and DeAndre Lane have departed. Moore, Veii and rising senior Taivon Jacobs were

the receivers on the first unit during practice March 30.

VEII IN SECOND ACT AT MARYLAND

Veii, in particular, has taken a circuitous route to arrive at this point in his playing career. Veii, a 5-foot-9, 185-pound Gaithersburg, Md., native with big-time speed, is in his second stint in College Park, Md. He was originally recruited out of high school by former head coach Randy Edsall's staff and showed flashes of his talent as a freshman in 2013, primarily at running back.

Veii played running back and wide receiver in 2014, catching 16 balls for 230 yards and running for 105 yards, but was frustrated with the lack of a defined role. Veii explained he had to "do running back workouts and flip and do wide receiver workouts, because I didn't know what I was going to be doing."

"It was kind of tough mentally," Veii said.

But his time in College Park from 2013-14 wasn't necessarily a lost cause. He befriended Stefon Diggs, who played receiver for Maryland from 2012-14 and has spent the last two years with the Minnesota Vikings. Veii considers Diggs his mentor.

"Every time he's back from Minnesota, we're just always working out, working out, working out," Veii said. "He just shows me the work ethic I've got to have, just telling me to be a pro now, so if I get blessed with the opportunity to get there, it's easier. Now, I already know what to expect and how to handle myself."

Veii's next stop was Towson, where he played his junior year as a receiver in 2015. He caught 44 balls for 505 yards, both tops on the Tigers. Veii then transferred back to Maryland after the 2015 season, by which time the Terps had a brand new coaching staff. He had to sit out the 2016 season, but "you look at practices last year, he stood out," Durkin said of Veii. "He was a guy that certainly could've helped us a bunch last year."

Veii said he's taken strides with his route running since returning to Maryland, particularly with respect to his patience. He said he was "kind of sick to my stomach watching the film" at Towson "because I was rushing things and just trying to run away from guys" with his speed.

Now, he's ready to take advantage of his second opportunity with the Terps.

"Any time you come from not playing for a whole year, you're like a shark -- you start to smell blood in the water," Veii said. "You want to eat. I'm hungry, and that's what I want to do. I want to eat." ☒

The Terps will play their annual red-white spring game at Maryland Stadium at 12:30 p.m. April 22.



Caleb Henderson



Jacquille Veii

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Bill Nelson

Bill Nelson's Career At Johns Hopkins A Study In Excellence

★ STEVE JONES

On a late March morning, longtime Johns Hopkins head men's basketball coach Bill Nelson sat in his office and awaited the arrival of a recruit.

Unfortunately, that recruit won't get to play for Nelson. After 31 years at Johns Hopkins, Nelson has announced his retirement from the university, effective June 30. But the coach who built the Blue Jays men's basketball program into a national contender will leave a legacy of athletic and academic excellence.

"It's about all of the people you meet, not just the players," Nelson said. "I've been blessed to have some amazing men come through here, but it's also about the assistant coaches I've worked with and the staff here at Hopkins."

During his 37 years as a collegiate head coach, Nelson compiled a 606-365 record. He became the 18th coach in NCAA Division III history to reach the career 600-win mark Jan. 18, when his visiting Blue Jays edged Washington College, 75-71.

The 73-year old Nelson began his collegiate coaching career at Rochester Institute of Technology. He was an assistant at RIT before becoming the school's head coach prior to the 1980-81 campaign. Nelson left RIT in 1983 to take the head coaching position at Nazareth College, where he coached former NBA head coach and current broadcaster Jeff Van Gundy.

But Nelson enjoyed his greatest coaching success at Johns Hopkins. When he took the job prior to the 1986-87 season, Nelson inherited a program that had posted six winning records in 61 years. During the next 31 seasons, Nelson guided the Blue Jays to a 501-312 mark, 25 winning seasons, three Centennial Conference titles and 10 trips to the NCAA Division III Tournament. His 1989-90 and 2014-15 squads reached the NCAA Sweet 16. Nelson was twice named the Centennial Conference and National Association of Basketball Coaches' Mid-Atlantic Coach of the Year.

That's an impressive resume for a person who didn't envision a career in coaching after graduating from SUNY-Brockport in 1965.

"I always wanted to be a gym teacher," said Nelson, who taught physical education for two years at the elementary school level. "I loved my gym teachers and coaches in high school, and I wanted to follow that path."

But Nelson eventually moved from elementary school to high school, and then into collegiate coaching. At Johns Hopkins, Nelson's players thrived under his tutelage. Nel-

son coached George Bugarinovic, who earned the Jostens Trophy as the best all-around Division III basketball student-athlete in the nation following the 2014-15 campaign. Nelson's players earned Academic All-America honors seven times, including two-time selection Tim McCarty (2011, 2012). Nelson also produced 71 all-conference players during his tenure.

While Nelson coached his share of All-Americans, he also enjoyed working with players who weren't heavily recruited.

"I get the most satisfaction out of seeing what the players accomplish after they leave Hopkins," said Nelson, who resides in Ellicott City, Md. "But I love looking back on the guys who were not highly sought-after, and who, on their own merits, worked extra hard to develop into really good basketball players."

Nelson's players excelled in the classroom, too. Johns Hopkins produced seven CoSIDA Academic All-Americans and five NCAA post-graduate scholars during the Nelson years. Bugarinovic, who is now studying at Harvard Medical School, was the most recent recipient.

Enfield was one of Nelson's most accomplished student-athletes. Enfield, who played at Johns Hopkins from 1987-91, was the leading scorer in Johns Hopkins history. Enfield was also a two-time CoSIDA Academic All-American and received an NCAA post-graduate scholarship.

Enfield eventually followed his mentor into the

coaching profession. Now the head coach at the University of Southern California, Enfield led an underdog Florida Gulf Coast program to a berth in the NCAA Sweet 16 during the 2012-13 campaign and guided the USC Trojans to NCAA Tournament berths during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 seasons.

"When you met Coach Nelson, you were quick to realize that he was a genuine person who really cared about his players," said Enfield, who was a part of Nelson's first full recruiting class. "We believed in his vision. Academics always came first. Some of the players had to leave early or came late to practice, but he was always accommodating to our class schedules."

The Nelson coaching tree also includes his younger daughter. Katie Nelson played college basketball at the University of Massachusetts and broke into the coaching profession with the WNBA's Washington Mystics, Navy and New Hampshire before spending seven years as an assistant to Johns Hopkins head women's basketball coach Nancy Funk. She is now the head women's basketball coach at the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

Nelson and Funk both arrived at Johns Hopkins in 1986 and spent more than three decades on the sidelines at Johns Hopkins' Goldfarb Gym.

"Bill is the quintessential gentleman, an outstanding coach and an even better person," said Funk, who has guided the Blue Jay women's program to a 537-264 record during her Hopkins tenure. "Bill stayed here and thrived here because Hopkins was a great fit for him, personally and professionally. He leaves behind a legacy of hard work and success that I believe will be felt for generations to come at Hopkins. He impacted so many lives in such a positive way, and his kindness and concern for his student-athletes always showed."

While Nelson has developed longtime friendships with Funk and Enfield, he has also served as a mentor and sounding board to the newer members of the school's athletic department.

"What is most remarkable about Bill is the role model and mentor that he has been to other coaches on our staff," said Alanna Shanahan, Johns Hopkins' director of athletics since July 2016. "He is so meaningful to our department. He's very sincere and authentic in how he relates to people. Bill is a great listener who is very thoughtful. He doesn't rush to be heard."

Nelson has kept in touch with many of his former players with whom he shared life lessons.

"We've kept in contact, and I just saw him in Phoenix [at the NCAA Final Four]," Enfield said. "I saw how fairly he treated his players, and how he motivated them to reach their potential."

Following his retirement, Nelson will be free to spend more time with his family, who he credited for his happiness in the college basketball world.

"The loyalty and the support of my wife Margaret and my children, Laura and Katie, made it a lot easier for me," said Nelson, whose final Johns Hopkins team finished with a 16-10 record. "Your home life can make or break your profession, and their support allowed me to do this for a lot of years." ☑



Bill Nelson



COURTESY OF MOUNT ST. MARY'S ATHLETICS

2016-17 Mount St. Mary's men's basketball team

Fresh Off NCAA Tournament, Mount St. Mary's Looks To Stay Relevant

★ ERIC DETWEILER

Jamion Christian tried to ignore the commotion, at first. The Mount St. Mary's men's basketball head coach was mid-conversation when he entered an Emmittsburg, Md., restaurant for a lunch meeting last month. It took him a beat to realize the standing ovation was for him.

Christian -- the architect of a program fresh off 20 wins, Northeast Conference regular-season and tournament titles and a spirited NCAA scare of No. 1 overall seed Villanova -- froze in the moment. Should he start shaking hands? Maybe riff a quick speech? He settled for a wave and a smile.

"If we're going to do this a lot," Christian chuckled, "I've got to figure out a way to handle that situation better, because I just wasn't expecting it."

It's a good problem to have, of course. Christian and his Mountaineers have earned the extra attention, whether it's local, regional or national.

Mount St. Mary's stumbled to a 1-11 start against a torturous nonconference schedule but rebounded to finish 20-

16 and produce a history-making season.

The Mountaineers earned the right to host the NEC Tournament championship for the first time and claimed the title with a victory against St. Francis (Pa.) before an ESPN2 audience and a standing-room crowd at Knott Arena. They held off New Orleans, 67-66, March 14 in a play-in game that kicked off the NCAA Tournament and earned them a matchup with Villanova in Buffalo two days later.

Although a No. 16 seed has never beaten a No. 1, Christian's players told reporters they believed they could hang with the defending national champions. They promptly backed up that confidence, leading for the first 18 minutes before the Wildcats pulled away in the second half to win, 76-56.

Afterward, Villanova head coach Jay Wright said his club was outplayed. The disappointment in the Mount St. Mary's locker room said a lot about the job Christian has done since taking over at his alma mater in 2012.

"It's a special group of guys that I think just have an inner hunger," said Christian, who turns 35 April 18. "They believed we could win it all, and we didn't do that. So we still came up short of what we all believed we could do."

Yet, the positive vibes are unmistakable.

Mount St. Mary's led the NEC in attendance by a wide

margin at 2,269 fans per game, boosted by three packed home crowds during the conference tournament. They were rewarded with a court-storming after the Mountaineers rallied from an eight-point halftime deficit to beat St. Francis, 71-61, in the conference tournament title game and clinch a second NCAA berth in four years and fifth overall.

The program's last taste of March Madness in 2014 ended quickly with a First Four loss. This time, it was able to stay in the spotlight a bit longer and reap the rewards.

Guard Junior Robinson, the shortest player in the NCAA Tournament at 5-foot-5, trended on social media after posting a team-high 23 points during the win against New Orleans. The Mountaineers' plucky performance against mighty Villanova got the web buzzing again.

During the NCAA run, Mount St. Mary's reported an average of 64,200 Twitter impressions per day, up from 4,100 during the same period last year. The 5,203,227 hits on the official athletic website that week were nearly four million more than 2016.

Behind the scenes, athletic officials are already working to make sure newfound interest translates into increased season-ticket sales and donations to the Mount Club.

"It absolutely has a tremendous effect on all aspects of the university," athletic director Lynne Robinson said. "It helps to galvanize way beyond just sports fans."

Christian would rather the focus stay on his players, but his youthful enthusiasm, fun-to-watch system dubbed "Mayhem" and fearless approach to scheduling (West Virginia, Iowa State, Minnesota, Michigan and Arkansas were early-season opponents) garnered a slew of positive press.

Recently, Christian was mentioned as a candidate for a handful of open jobs elsewhere, including Georgetown. At least for now, the coach is content to stay in the Catoclin Mountains and keep building.

The future seems bright. The Mountaineers are set to bring all five starters back, including leading scorer Elijah Long (John Carroll).

Christian has done well recruiting in the region with six Maryland natives on this year's roster. Another banner in Knott Arena and fresh March memories should help his sales pitch going forward.

The challenge now is to keep folks talking about the Mountaineers.

"We've kind of put our place on the map, but we've done that before in our past," Christian said. "The key now is being consistent year-in-and-year-out and being able to put ourselves in that category, so that people don't just see us as a program that pops up once in a while, they see us as a really consistent competitor that's really trying to move forward and really be excellent." ☑

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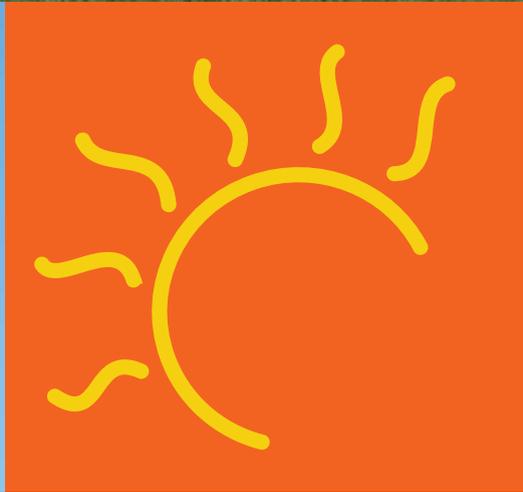
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THEY SAID IT ON GLENN CLARK radio



Adam Jones



Brandon Carr



Charles Harris



Bino Ranson

"That catch is going to go down as one of the greatest catches ever, I think. I knew Adam from afar, because I managed against him, but I didn't really know him that well other than just a pleasant, 'Hello.' He was one of the guys that stood out. He was unbelievable. When it comes to beating the other team, he's got a terrific attitude about playing the game and competing. Of course he's a great athlete, but this guy was a solid leader. I think he was kind of the guy that really picked us up and led our team and was really into it. I couldn't be happier for him or prouder of him."

- Team USA World Baseball Classic manager Jim Leyland March 27 on Orioles center fielder Adam Jones

"I believe it starts with the defense. I came from an organization (the Dallas Cowboys) where we had a lot of star power on offense, but just this last year, our defense stepped up to the

plate and stood strong and helped us out in a lot of football games. The Baltimore Ravens [are] a team, for many years, since I fell in love [with] watching the guys on defense, they've always had that reputation of being dominant on the defensive side - just that dark side. The secondary and the defense last year - up until the injuries came in - they were one of the top [defenses] in the league, and I feel like we're not too far off from that."

- New Ravens cornerback Brandon Carr March 24 on why he believes he can win a Super Bowl in Baltimore

"It will be amazing, really an honor. At Mizou, we're known for the defense. To go to an organization with that established mentality, I'll expect the players on that team to have the mentality as well. I'll fit right in with them."

- Former Missouri defensive end/projected early-round pick Charles Harris March 17 on the possibility of being selected by the Ravens

"It means a lot, because it's Maryland, and we believe that all the best players should stay at home. If we can get the best players year-in and year-out, then the program is going to continue to have success. [The] pipeline means a lot, because I'm a Baltimore guy, and I have a lot of passion for the University of Maryland. You look around at different places, state [schools] that keep their top players home are usually successful."

- Maryland assistant basketball coach Bino Ranson March 15 on landing Mount St. Joseph prospect Darryl Morsell and trying to keep Baltimore talent local

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THE REALITY CHECK

What Will Ravens Do In The First Round Of The Draft?

★ GLENN CLARK



he answer is "I honestly have no idea."

The question? "What will the Ravens do with the 16th overall pick in the NFL Draft?"

A year ago, there were only a handful of even reasonable possibilities when the Ravens selected sixth overall in the first round. With Eugene Monroe's future significantly in doubt, it wasn't hard to imagine the team would address left tackle, particularly if high-level defensive talents Joey Bosa and Jalen Ramsey were already off the board. The Ravens took Notre Dame offensive tackle Ronnie Stanley.

This year is far different. This year when player names are called April 27 in Philadelphia, it feels like the team could go one of any number of directions with their 16th pick in the first round. But I'm going to try to walk through all the possibilities in just a few inches of column space.

1. (Very likely) If Western Michigan wide receiver Corey Davis or Clemson wide receiver Mike Williams are still available at No. 16, the Ravens ignore their brutal history with first-round receivers and roll the dice once more.

While Washington wide receiver John Ross has also been lumped into the first-round conversation, his skill set does not seem to match the Ravens' needs. It's also worth pointing out that at the team's pre-draft news conference April 5, assistant general manager Eric DeCosta was quick to lump USC wide receiver JuJu Smith Schuster in the first-round category as well. Perhaps he could be in the mix if the Ravens trade back in the first round, or he could be a consideration in the second.

2. (Fairly likely) The Ravens have already fallen in love with one of the many potential first-round pass rush options and are prepared to line them up across from linebacker Terrell Suggs the moment commissioner Roger Goodell announces the name.

It is difficult to determine which of the edge rushers behind Texas A&M's Myles Garrett would be the right fit for the Ravens. Options early on include Stanford's Solomon Thomas, Tennessee's Derek Barnett, Michigan's Taco Charlton, Missouri's Charles Harris and UCLA's Takkarist McKinley. Which of those players is best suited for a stand-up role in a 3-4 defense? That determination could go a long way into figuring out which player the Ravens might take if multiple rushers are still sitting at 16.

3. (Somewhat likely) The Ravens already know Alex Lewis isn't going to be the team's right tackle next season. Knowing this isn't a deep draft for tackles, they pull the trigger on Wisconsin's Ryan Ranczyk, Utah's Garrett Bolles or Alabama's Cam Robinson in the first round.

But if the Ravens either know Lewis will be the team's right tackle or believe he is capable of winning the role between now and Week One, they won't spend the 16th choice on a tackle.

4. (Reasonably likely) Despite adding free-agent Brandon Carr, the Ravens remember Jimmy Smith isn't particularly reliable and add another corner with their first choice.

No position is more difficult to figure out than corner at this point. The consensus is Ohio State's Marshon Lattimore will be the first off the board, but the rest of the group is murky. Washington's Sidney Jones seemed to be the likely second corner off the board before he suffered a torn Achilles during his pro day. Alabama's Marlon Humphrey, LSU's Tre'Davious White and Washington's Kevin King seem to be the other possibilities to go in the first round.

5. (Only likely enough to warrant a short note) Despite the backs they already have, LSU's Leonard Fournette or Florida State's Dalvin Cook is there at 16 and the Ravens can't help themselves.

While it isn't a "need" at this point, it certainly couldn't hurt.

6. (Not particularly likely) Somehow Alabama's Reuben Foster is still there when the Ravens pick at 16 and general manager Ozzie Newsome calls his name quicker than you can say "Roll Tide."

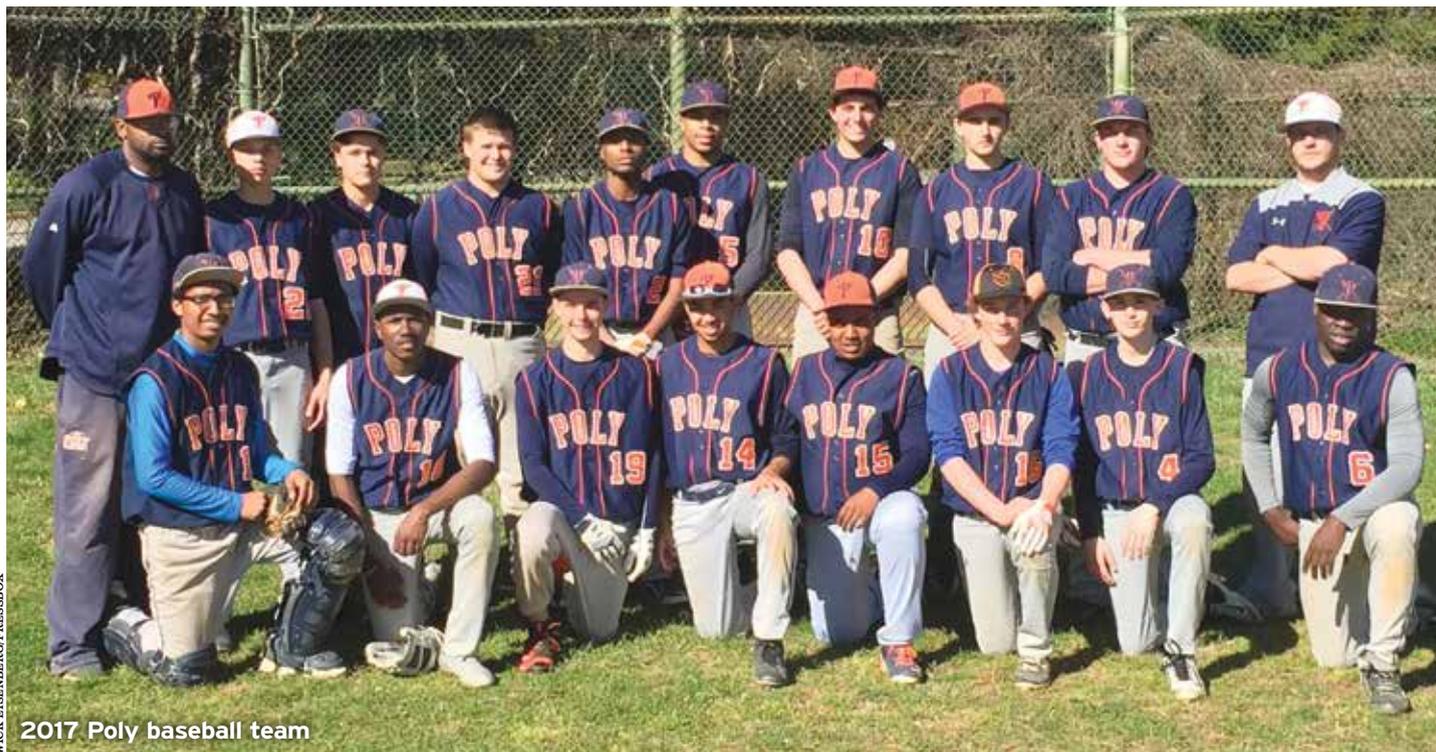
The Ravens do still need another inside linebacker to replace the retired Zachary Orr. While it would seem more likely the role could be filled from within the organization or via a later-round pick, Foster is the type of talent that could change that.

7. (Not likely at all) Repeat all of No. 6 but replace the name "Reuben Foster" with the name "O.J. Howard."

Going into the draft, the Ravens have more tight ends on their roster than the Bengals have players who have been or will be suspended for getting into a fight on theirs. But if the receivers don't pan out, and Newsome (who would know) believes Alabama tight end Howard can be a powerful offensive weapon, it isn't impossible.

And 8. (More likely than you want to admit) We all sit down April 27 to watch anxiously, and they just trade out of the first round again anyway. ☒

VARSITY REPORT



2017 Poly baseball team

WICK EISENBERG/PRESSBOX

Poly Baseball Looking To Change Baltimore City's Baseball Culture

★ WICK EISENBERG

Grey Goodwin has been around Baltimore City baseball for a long time. Goodwin played at Lake Clifton High School, graduating in 1995. He continued his playing career as a pitcher at University of Maryland Eastern Shore before getting into coaching at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 2001. Goodwin became the Engineers' head coach in 2005.

Throughout the years, Goodwin has heard the same thing from skeptics -- baseball is a forgotten sport in Baltimore City Public Schools and the programs will never catch up to those in surrounding counties.

Goodwin's outlook permeates his entire team.

"As a city team, county teams always seem to look down on us as lower caliber or not worthy to play against them," junior first baseman Michael Heck said.

Doubters will quickly point to the overall brand of baseball as being inferior. Many Baltimore City teams are comprised of players who just started playing baseball and are learning the fundamentals.

It makes for more than a couple lopsided contests and also makes it tough for Poly to prepare to compete against top teams in certain aspects of the game.

"Playing in the city, we don't play on the best fields," senior third and first

baseman Eric Noffsinger said. "It's not rare for there to be a big hole in center-field you need to watch for and not to twist your ankle in the outfield. There's so many different things we have to deal with because of the situation we're in, but that doesn't mean we can't play at a high level."

Outside of Baltimore City, the Poly program is clawing and scratching to earn every inch of respect it can get from its opponents; but in league play, the Engineers are thriving.

Poly has become a consistent force during Goodwin's tenure. Goodwin has won more than 200 games as manager, and the Engineers have claimed nine City championships. The team has been particularly dominant in recent seasons, winning two of the last three Baltimore City titles.

"Coach Goodwin always has higher expectations for us than we even believe in ourselves. He believes in us more than we do," senior center fielder Robert Mack said. "Coach Goodwin always talks about winning titles, whether if it's city championships, like we already have accomplished, or state titles."

It's a passion Goodwin has not just for his Poly program but for the entirety of Baltimore City.

The baseball coaches of Baltimore City had extensive talks before the season, which were led by Goodwin and Lake Clifton's head coach Todd Henning. The focus of those conversations was about trying to generate more ex-

citement surrounding the game.

The end result was a number of free clinics offered to any players in the city, where all the coaches would help with any aspect of the game, ranging from pitching to hitting and fielding. The alliance also agreed to bring back postseason accolades.

"This year, we're going to have an all-academic team as well as an all-star game," Goodwin said. "We'll have a post-season first and second team -- all those things have kind of gone by the wayside over the years. We have to get that back."

When the postseason awards are announced, there's a strong chance Poly will have more than a few players recognized.

Because Poly regularly has players who enter high school with baseball experience, it's allowed the group to spend less time focused on learning fundamentals and more on player development. In the summer and fall, Goodwin coaches teams that include many of his high school players. Plus, they participate in weight lifting and other aspects of training throughout the year.

"Those kids that want to dedicate themselves to baseball," Goodwin said, "they get better and better every year. When that happens, the team gets better, and when other players see that, they want to do it, too. We have had kids buy in to the approach of nonstop work."

The Engineers have also been blessed to have some truly talented ballplayers come through the baseball program, two

of which have been the Heck brothers, Thomas and Michael.

Thomas Heck, who graduated from Poly last year, had a terrific high school career that saw him blossom into a standout big-game pitcher for the Engineers. He was on the mound when Poly topped Digital Harbor, 7-2, for the Baltimore City championship last spring, and he also got the ball in the Engineers' Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association state playoff game against Franklin.

Michael Heck, who is hitting better than .300 for his career, is expected to be one of Poly's top hitters and fielders this season after having an excellent sophomore campaign.

"Thomas embraced the leadership role," Goodwin said. "Michael is still growing into it because he's a junior, but they both affected the team positively in different ways. The kids really respond to the Heck brothers. They all like to follow great players, and both of them are."

Poly has beaten teams from surrounding counties during Goodwin's time in charge, but it's been awhile since the Engineers have found a way to do it in the MPSSAA state playoffs.

Last year was particularly heartbreaking, as the Engineers led Franklin (Baltimore County), 1-0, heading into the final inning. Poly was within one out of putting the game away before Franklin rallied and pulled away for a 3-1 victory.

The result has given Poly an added edge heading into this season.

"The biggest thing is we know what we're capable of," senior third baseman Nicklaus Powell said. "It's about us getting ourselves the confidence to get us that far. What really sets us apart is we have a target on our back from winning so many city championships. We have to work harder every year."

Looking ahead to this season, replacing Thomas Heck's efforts will play a big part in Poly's fate. The Engineers have a proven pitcher in junior Isaac Spokes, but beyond him, the rest of the pitching staff lacks experience at the varsity level, though Goodwin has faith in his young arms.

The team's expectations in league play are no different than they would be any other year. Poly believes another Baltimore City crown is well within its grasp.

It's when the Engineers play teams from outside the city during the playoffs that the team will truly measure itself.

"To beat them in the playoffs would be the ultimate push to show that Poly, even though it's a great program in the eyes of the city, means business," Michael Heck said.

While a playoff win against a county opponent would do wonders for Poly's baseball program, Goodwin's ultimate goal is to accomplish what no Baltimore City team has ever done.

"A state title has eluded me since I've been here, but we're getting closer to that," Goodwin said. "We believe we can do it, and as long we believe it, that's all that matters. A lot of people think a city team will never do it. We like it when people tell us what we can't do." ☑

THE RIVALRY: BOYS' LATIN vs. ST. PAUL'S

★ Todd Karpovich

High school lacrosse players

Jack Brocato and Michael Ubriaco are lifelong friends on opposite sides of a deep-rooted lacrosse rivalry that began long before they were born.

On May 16, Brocato and his St. Paul's team will look to contain Ubriaco and Boys' Latin in the 100th game between the illustrious programs. The St. Paul's-Boys' Latin game brings together generations of families and friends, sometimes even pitting brother against brother or forcing a parent to share allegiances.

"Playing on opposing teams has always been a part of our friendship," said Brocato, a junior attackman. "Either playing against each other during the school year or even playing against each other in summer ball. Michael and I have been on many different teams, but it was very different from the St. Paul's-Boys' Latin rivalry. I believe we both take this rivalry very seriously, respecting the tradition of it, and we're always hoping our team comes out with the win."

The Boys' Latin Lakers lead the all-time series 51-47-1, according to research by Mac Kennedy, director of alumni relations at Boys' Latin and official historian of Lakers lacrosse. The teams have met in a conference championship

game four times, with the St. Paul's Crusaders winning three of those matchups -- twice by a single goal.

When this year's game is complete, players on both sides will inevitably remember the game for the rest of their lives. However, the competition won't affect the friendships.

"Jack and I have been playing on rival club teams basically for our entire lives," said Ubriaco, a junior long-stick midfielder. "Whether it's during the MIAA season or during the club season. However, playing on rival teams has not once affected our friendship. We have always made time to talk after our games, but our conversations are usually never about the game we had just played in."

That tight bond among the players is what makes the rivalry between St. Paul's and Boys' Latin so special.

St. Paul's head coach Rick Brocato, who will be coaching his son Jack in the 100th renewal of the Crusader-Lakers series, has seen the rivalry from both sides.

"These guys are all great friends," Rick Brocato said. "They've done things together in rec ball, club ball and other sports. They've gone to the pool together. They've rode bikes together. They've been buddies off the field first. Now, when they suit up against one another between those lines, they're rivals. They get after it. But when the game ends, they're calling each other up and hanging around and goofing around with each other. I

think that's what makes it special."

This year's matchup is especially poignant for Rick Brocato, who announced prior to the season that he was stepping down from that job. He was once an assistant to the legendary Bob Shriver at Boys' Latin, and on April 8, Brocato became the program's all-time wins leader (233) when St. Paul's upended Broxville, N.Y., 8-6.



COURTESY OF BOYS' LATIN ALUMNI OFFICE

Homecoming 2010

THE 100th GAME

TUESDAY, MAY 16

St. Paul's and Boys' Latin congratulate each other on their 100th lacrosse game – a rivalry that dates to 1933.



Shriver, who retired in 2015, was a central figure in the rivalry. Both teams seemed to feed off his energy. Shriver relishes the game between the two programs, which have produced some of the greatest lacrosse players in the country.

"My favorite game would probably be any one we win," said Shriver, who went 507-140 during 36 years with six league championships. "We've only played St. Paul's, to the best of my knowledge, four times in the title game since moving to Lake Avenue, and lost in 1979, 1992 and 2010. We won in 2014, and that was certainly a memorable game because we finished undefeated that year and were the consensus best team in the U.S."

Don Zimmerman was a star midfielder at St. Paul's before he later took over the lacrosse programs at Johns Hopkins and UMBC. He went 3-0 against the Lakers from 1969-1971. Zimmerman's son, Jake, was later a captain for Boys' Latin.

"A lot of guys played three sports, so not only did you see the guys on the lacrosse field, you saw them on the basketball court, the soccer field or the football field," said Zimmerman, who began his collegiate career at Randolph-Macon before transferring to Johns Hopkins. "We all hung out together. Everyone kind of knew everyone, so that made the rivalry more intense. But there was always total respect among the teams."

Mitch Whiteley, who coached St. Paul's prior to Brocato and now serves as his assistant, had some epic battles with the Lakers. He said the friendships between the players off the field make the rivalry so special. Whiteley's son, Tim, was a two-time high school All-American for the Crusaders and later starred at Virginia.

"There were often times we ended up in the playoffs against each other, or the final game of the year would determine

seedings for the playoffs," Whiteley said. "It's just that natural rivalry that we've had for a long time. Certainly, with Bob Shriver getting all fired up, he would motivate everybody."

Michael Watson, a former attackman for St. Paul's, was widely regarded as one of the best lacrosse players in the United States throughout his career. He led the Crusaders to a pair of conference crowns and played on five championship teams at St. Paul's on four different varsity sports.

After graduating from St. Paul's, Watson was a four-time All-American at Virginia and was named one of the 50 greatest lacrosse players in ACC history. He later played professionally in Major League Lacrosse.

"I think the schools are similar in size and tradition," Watson said. "We had lots of friends at BL in our social group, and there was a healthy mutual respect."

Boys' Latin head coach Brian Farrell was also part of the rivalry as a player for the Lakers. Rick Brocato was an assistant at Boys' Latin when Farrell was a star defenseman. The game will be bittersweet with Brocato stepping down.

"Coach Brocato is a great mentor and great teacher of the game," said Farrell, who played collegiately at Maryland where he was a two-time captain. "He is one of the kindest men you will ever be around. He has coached so many great kids and done such a great job with that program. You always have such great respect for their preparation every game. Rick is truly a great coach."

Gene Ubriaco, who is Michael's father, had some of his biggest games against St. Paul's and was a high school All-American in 1989. It's a tradition he has always valued.

"The significance of the game and what it represents to the BL community is really what stands out every year," Gene Ubriaco said. "The hype leading up to the game, the defining moments that become part of the BL lore for years to come, the players who had their moments of glory in the BL-SP game always come to mind." ☒

A FAVORITE MOMENT: Former Players Relish The St. Paul's-Boys' Latin Rivalry

By Todd Karpovich

The 1989 Boys' Latin lacrosse team was warming up when St. Paul's made the traditional march down the rolling hills of its sprawling Brooklandville, Md., campus toward the stadium.

This time, though, something was different about the Crusaders, catching the eye of almost the entire Lakers roster.

Not only was St. Paul's wearing brand new yellow uniforms, but each shirt had a "Beat BL" patch emblazoned on the left shoulder. The bravado caused a stir among Boys' Latin and its legendary coach, Bob Shriver, who responded with comments that "can't be published" in this article.

The result? A 12-6 victory for the Lakers and another lifelong memory for the players.

"Coach Shriver went crazy and so did our team," said Ryan Smith, a former Boys' Latin midfielder who later played at the University of Pennsylvania. "We wound up giving them a pretty sound beating that day. It's something my former teammates and I still talk about occasionally. I'll bet they burned those jerseys after the game."

Thus, the game was another exciting chapter in the greatest rivalry of high school lacrosse.

The memory also stands out for former Boys' Latin attackman Kevin Lutz, because at the time, teams only had a home and away jersey -- the idea of an alternate uniform was unthinkable. He agreed the site of "Beat BL" sparked something among the players, and they responded with a dominant performance.

"We didn't need any more motivation for this game but that put us over the top," said Lutz, who led the

Lakers in scoring as a junior and senior. "We were not happy, and we won handily in that game."

Gene Ubriaco, who scored five goals on the day and is currently an assistant coach at BL, added: "It was on a Saturday, so the crowd was huge and most of the other schools were there watching, so it was a really cool environment. It remains one of the stories that still gets talked about during the BL/SP week."

Judd Maslack was an attackman for St. Paul's and on the wrong side of that 1989 game.

"We were pumped up walking down the hill to the game," he said. "That defeat was deflating, but the emotions of the day underscore the intense rivalry."

Despite that disappointment, Maslack cherishes his time playing against Boys' Latin.

"It is definitely the biggest and best rivalry in town," Maslack said. "And since being in school for the last 25 years, I have always had a lot of respect for BL and always rooted for them -- except when they play SP."

The rivalry between the two programs even transcends the Baltimore area. After graduating from Loyola, Lutz remembers working on Wall Street, and he brought some friends back to Baltimore for a weekend. His pals had never seen a live lacrosse game, so Lutz took them to the annual Boys' Latin-St. Paul's tilt.

Lutz's buddies were mesmerized at the sight of more than 5,000 fans at the game. The following day, Lutz

took them to a local college game with a pair of teams ranked in the top 10 nationally and about 1,000 people showed up.

"My friends couldn't get over how two small private boys' high schools in Maryland could draw that crowd versus two Division I, nationally ranked colleges at a game just a few miles away the next day -- on a Saturday," Lutz said. "I just said: 'It's Boys' Latin and St. Paul's. We don't like to lose to one another.' It's like a high school Michigan-Ohio State or a Duke-North Carolina. Even if one or the other is having a bad year, it's going to be a good game and we want to win."

At the end of the day, and despite the gamesmanship, Stewart Ridgely, who graduated from St. Paul's in 1986 and played goalie at Virginia, remembers how the friendships made the game so visceral.

"The St. Paul's-Boys' Latin lacrosse rivalry is so special due to the storied histories of the programs, but equally important are the friendships that exist between the players/alumni that share a pride in their respective school and a mutual respect for the competition," Ridgely said. "For the student-athlete, this rivalry can begin as early as the middle school years and carry on throughout life. It is wonderful tradition of competition that is sure to produce many more exciting games."

Stan Ross, a two-time All-Metro defenseman for the Lakers, was also part of the "yellow jersey" game in 1989. Ross remembers Ubriaco taking over the game, going "coast to coast" to score a goal.

"The rivalry between BL and SP is huge," Ross said. "It didn't matter the sport, it didn't matter the place, it was always a game you had marked on your calendar. It had major bragging rights. It was one the most intense, exciting rivalries that I have been associated with." ☒

For complete interviews with St. Paul's Rick Brocato and Boys' Latin's Brian Farrell, check out PressBoxOnline.com/lacrosse

COMMUNITY BEAT



★ WALKS/RACES

APRIL 22 -- PORT TO FORT 6K

Rally the troops, enlist your family, challenge your friends or run individually through a scenic, Fort McHenry 6K course to support the 21st annual Believe In Tomorrow Children's Foundation fundraiser. The race will start at Coke Field, 2400 Fort Ave., and take place from 8:30 a.m.-noon. For more information, visit port2fort.org.

APRIL 23 -- REACHOUT AND RUN 5K

The race will raise funds for HopeWell Cancer Foundation programs to support those affected by cancer. It will be held at Goucher College from 8:30-11:30 a.m. For more information, visit facebook.com/events/201281747003399/.

APRIL 23 -- RED HOT RUN

Proceeds from the race will benefit Roland Park Country School's Endowment for Faculty Compensation to ensure it is able to attract and retain exceptional teachers and provide student financial assistance for our talented and diverse student community. For more information, visit rpcs.org.

APRIL 29 -- BLACK TIE & TAILS GALA

Bring a friend; bring your pup. Support the animals at the Baltimore Humane Society by joining us for this can't-miss black-tie gala event. The evening will feature an elegant seated dinner, open bar, live music, dancing, raffles, silent auction and live auction run. Tickets are \$149 per person (well-behaved animals attend for free!). All funds raised from Black Tie & Tails support the care of animals at our no-kill shelter.

APRIL 29 -- ROAR FOR KIDS 5K

Support the kids at the Kennedy Krieger Institute at the 5K road race or the low-mileage fun walk. Lots of music, food and fun will follow all day at Oregon Ridge Park. To register, visit ROARforKids.KennedyKrieger.org.

APRIL 30 -- BRIGANCE BRIGADE 5.7K

Celebrate ALS Awareness Month and the 10th anniversary of founder O.J. Brigance's ALS diagnosis at the fourth annual charity event. Races will honor former Baltimore Ravens special teams captain O.J. Brigance's jersey number (57) -- a timed 5.7K run, a 1.57-mile family run/walk and a Kid's Fun Run for youth ages 8 and younger. A Celebration Village with food, beverages, music and a Kid's Fun Zone will follow the races. For more information, visit brigancebrigade.org/brigance-brigade-foundation-5.7k.

APRIL 30 -- ADAM THOMPSON 5K

Race to honor the memory of Adam Thompson, a first-year Harford Community College student who was killed in an automobile accident in 2011. Proceeds from the race will benefit scholarships supporting students attending Harford Community College. The race starts at 8 a.m., and participants may run as individuals or organize themselves as part

of a team. Online registration is available in advance at harford.edu/adam. For more information, call 443-412-2449.

APRIL 30 -- FLASHBACK 5K

The Junior League of Baltimore Flashback 5K race will raise funds for the Junior League of Baltimore's community projects that focus on healthy families and healthy communities. The race will be held at Foundry Row in Owings Mills from 9 a.m.-noon, followed by a post-race festival that includes a vendor fair, music and a costume contest. Participants are encouraged to run in their favorite 1980s- or 1990s-inspired workout gear. To register, visit raceentry.com/races/5th-annual-flashback-5k/2017/.

APRIL 30 -- GREATER BALTIMORE KIDNEY WALK

Nearly 6,000 people are expected to attend the Greater Baltimore Kidney Walk at Camden Yards. The walk highlights the need for organ donation and the prevention of kidney disease. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. at UMBC, 1000 Hilltop Circle, Lot No. 22. For more information, visit kidneymd.org or call 410-494-8545.

MAY 7 -- AIDS WALK & RUN

Walkers, runners, volunteers and supporters will come together to show their support for the HIV/AIDS community of Baltimore during the AIDS Walk & Run at the Maryland Zoo. The run will benefit Chase Brexton Health Services, a nonprofit, community-based health organization that provides dependable, high-quality, comprehensive and accessible healthcare to those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. For more information and to register, visit baltimoreaidswalk.org.

MAY 7 -- STRIDE AND THRIVE 5K

Race proceeds help fund innovative gynecologic cancer research and support women, their families and the survivorship programs at Johns Hopkins. The 5K and one-mile fun run begin at 8:30 a.m. at Goucher College. To register, please visit charmcityrun.com/hopkins.

MAY 7 -- BILLY KORROW MEMORIAL 5K

The race and walk begins at 8:30 a.m. at Loyola High School, 500 Chestnut Ave. in Towson. All proceeds will benefit the Billy Korrow Scholarship Fund. Visit charmcityrun.com or call Chris at 443-841-3496.

MAY 13 -- WOMAN'S DISTANCE 5K

Join the Baltimore Road Runners Club on a flat, scenic course around Hammerman Area Beach starting at 9:30 a.m. To register, visit raceit.com. For more information, visit brcc.com or call Robin at 410-215-4399.

MAY 20 -- OLD BAY 5K

Hosted by McCormick & Co., the inaugural Old Bay 5K Flavor of Giving will benefit the American Heart Association, Y of Central Maryland and United Way. The race starts at 9 a.m. at 215 Schilling Circle in Hunt Valley. To register, visit eventbrite.com/e/old-bay-5k-flavor-of-giving-registration-31651941810.

MAY 21 -- KEEP PUNCHING 5K

Knock out brain cancer and support this worthwhile 5K, one-miler and kids races; opening ceremony is scheduled for 8 a.m. at Goucher College. To register, visit keep punching5k.com.



★ BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

BLUE DEVIL UMPIRE ASSOCIATION

New baseball umpires are needed to officiate in Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick counties. No experience is necessary. Email Bob Frank at lawyerfrank@comcast.net or call 410-493-7011, or contact Larry Silverman at Bluedevilumps@comcast.net or call 410-484-2118.

FAST PITCH

U14 and U16 Dynasty Prime fast-pitch softball teams are looking for committed players and families for the upcoming spring/summer season. Games are played in local and national tournaments and showcases. Players participate in year-round workouts and practice at Prime Sportsplex in Glen Arm. Visit Dpdynasty.com or email Coach Denny at dpdsoftball@gmail.com.

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. May 13. For more details, call Leo at 443-416-6447.

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.

COCKEYSVILLE RECREATION

For updates about baseball registration for the Cockeysville Recreation Center, visit cockeysvillereccouncil.org or call 410-887-7734.

MUSEUM OF NEGRO LEAGUES BASEBALL

Visit the Hubert V. Simmons Museum of Negro Leagues Baseball at the Owings Mills Metro Centre. 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. For more information, visit smnlbinc.org.

MASON-DIXON UMPIRES ASSOCIATION

The MDUA is looking for new high school baseball umpires in Baltimore. No experience is necessary. Email James Byrd at jbyrd0062@comcast.net or call 410-294-5257.

SLOW-PITCH SOFTBALL

The Baltimore County Lutherville-Timonium Rec Council has opened 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. For more information, email tjharrington51@netscape.net or call 443-847-1072.

CRAB CLAW CLASSIC

Represent the state of Maryland in the 15th annual Crab Claw Classic at Joe Cannon Stadium in Hanover Aug. 4. Register online at diamondrecruiting.com or call director Louie Holcomb at 410-812-5120.



★ SOCCER/RUGBY

CELTIC SOCCER CLUB

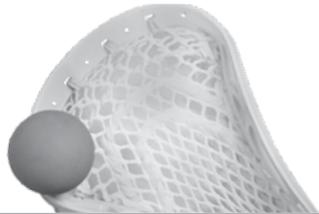
Tryouts for the Celtic Soccer Club are for boys ages 6-18 and girls 6-12. Registration and additional information are available at baltimoreceltic.com.

MIGHTY KICKS PUP LEAGUE

The Pup League provides year-round soccer training for boys and girls of all abilities ages 2-7. It's designed to build motor skills, self-confidence and basic techniques. Ongoing programs are available around Baltimore. For more information, visit mightykicksbaltimore.com.

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 baltimorechesapeakerugby@gmail.com or visit baltimorerugby.net.



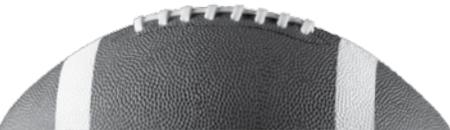
★ LACROSSE/SQUASH

BALTIMORE CITY YOUTH LACROSSE

The Baltimore Youth Lacrosse League is registering for the spring 2017 season. This in-house league is open to all kids ages 4-13 and practices two days a week with games on weekends. For more information, call 443-863-8377, email baltimoreyouthlax@gmail.com or visit baltimoreyouthlax.com.

SQUASH

SquashWise provides incentives for middle school students to excel academically, athletically and socially, as well as the opportunity to 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.



★ FOOTBALL

MAY 9 -- ERIC DECOSTA SPORTS BOOSTERS DINNER

Have dinner with the Sports Boosters of Maryland and Ravens assistant general manager Eric DeCosta starting at 6:30 p.m. The organization's mission is to promote the advancement and enjoyment of amateur as well as professional sports for youths and adults alike while providing related educational and charitable services. To purchase tickets, visit sportsboosters.com/.

JOIN THE RAVENS' BAND

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

BALTIMORE TERPS YOUTH

Games are open to all players ages 4-14, regardless of weight or skill level. The games provide a platform for participants to play the proper position for their body size while also ensuring their success as they move on to high school and beyond. To register, visit baltimoreterps.com or call 443-863-TERP.

RAVENS PLAY 60

The Ravens "Play 60" Grant provides funding of up to \$5,000 to qualifying nonprofit organizations that create and/or continue programs or projects promoting physical fitness and nutrition education. The foundation is committed to improving, encouraging and enabling the healthy development of youth in the Baltimore area, as well as other parts of the state of Maryland. The grant program continues the foundation's commitment to increasing physical activity among area youth and seeks to encourage healthy youth activities. Apply at baltimoreravens.com/play60grant by May 31.

OTHER ACTIVITIES**APRIL 29 -- MARYLAND HUNT CUP**

Bring a lunch and the family and spend the day at the Maryland Hunt Cup to see first-class equestrians complete the four-mile course at Worthington Farms in Hunt Valley starting at 4 p.m. For details, visit marylandhuntcup.com.

APRIL 30 -- JR. HUNT CUP

Gates open at 11 a.m.; race begins at noon at Shawan Downs, 1401 Shawan Road in Cockeysville. For more information, visit shawandowns.com/.

APRIL 22 -- GRAND NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE

Join the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for a true Maryland tradition, the 115th running of the Grand National Steeplechase. Enjoy a beautiful day in Baltimore County's horse country with a classic picnic buffet, signature "Southside" cocktails, live music and the best view of the Grand National Steeplechase course. For tickets, visit grandnational.eventscff.org/.

APRIL 22 -- DUCKPIN BOWLING BASKET BINGO

The Stoneleigh National Duckpin Youth Association league has openings for ages 3-21 to join their league at Stoneleigh Lanes in Towson. Many of the coaches are pro bowlers who donate their time to work to improve their bowling skills and teach the kids good sportsmanship. Join their annual fundraiser to support tournament and operating expenses starting at 7 p.m.; doors open at 6 p.m. For more information, email Diane Shaw at duckpinmom@gmail.com or call 410-499-6657.

JUNE 5 -- STEVE QUICK MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Steve Quick, a former golf and football star at St. Mary's of Annapolis High School, passed away at the age of 29 from diabetic complications, and proceeds from this event will go to the family of Chris Bobbick, who was a Department of Homeland Security employee killed along with his parents on a family trip to Disney World. His wife and young daughter were both paralyzed during the accident. Check-in is scheduled for 8 a.m. at Eisenhower Golf Course, 1576 Generals Highway in Crownsville. To register, call Thomas Phelps at 910-583-9917.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Central Maryland Ultimate Association promotes youth ultimate Frisbee leagues in the Baltimore area. Go to cmuadisc.org/youth/ for information about spring leagues in Pikesville, Towson and Anne Arundel County.

BABE RUTH MUSEUM

The improved Babe Ruth Birthplace Museum has reopened 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 baberuthmuseum.org/donate or call 410-727-1539, ext. 3012.

HOMESCHOOL SPORTS

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

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 mdcommish@comcast.net or call Mike Connors at 410-653-7307.

DUCKPIN BOWLING

There are openings for youth duckpin-bowling leagues for ages 3-21 at various duckpin centers in Baltimore. Most programs run Saturday mornings and include bowling, shoe rental and coaching. For more information, visit ndya.org, call Stacy Karten at 410-356-0936 or "Like" duckpin bowling at facebook.com/theduckpinnews.

OFFICIALS WANTED

Do you love roller derby? Do you love whistles? Do you love stats? Then you may be ready to join the ranks of Charm City Roller Girls' officiating crew, who are looking for skating and non-skating officials of all skill levels. No experience necessary. For more information, email referees@charmcityrollergirls.com.

BALTIMORE FITNESS ACADEMY

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

BICYCLE REPAIR

As 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. For details, visit velocipedebikeproject.org.

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GAMING

Raiders' Relocation Shifts Tide For Legalized Gambling

★ BILL ORDINE

To borrow an expression from a long-ago football coach, the occurrence of pro sports franchises relocating is "rare but not unusual."

During the 21st century alone, seven teams from the four major sports leagues relocated permanently (or as permanent as it gets). And that does not include the NFL's future move of the Raiders from Oakland to Las Vegas, which should happen in 2020 depending on the Vegas stadium construction timeline.

However, it is the Raider relocation that will leave its mark on sports like none other in nearly 60 years. Arguably, it was the Dodgers and Giants moving from Brooklyn and New York to Los Angeles and San Francisco, respectively, in 1958 that sparked the spread of pro sports west of the Mississippi, even though the NFL already had two teams on the West Coast.

And just as the flight of the Dodgers and Giants westward launched an inevitable pro sports migration (league expansions included), the Raiders' relocation will affect another inexorable progression in sports -- this one being toward broader legalization of sports gambling in America.

To be clear, there is no immediate direct connection between the two, meaning the Raiders' move and whether fans will be able to pop into the nearest casino, or even tap their smartphones, to place a sports bet in the near future. Even so, it will certainly be viewed as a watershed moment, even more so than

the NHL's Vegas Golden Knights beginning play in an area that's just a short stroll from The Strip in October.

First, let's take a look at what the NFL's decision to allow the Raiders to relocate will not do. It will not affect the most recent legal challenge to the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA), the 1992 federal law that gave Nevada a monopoly on single-game sports betting and allowed limited sports wagering in three other states while barring sports gambling everywhere else.

For several years, New Jersey has laid siege to PASPA in various courts with no success. It is now taking its fight to the U.S. Supreme Court, largely basing its argument on the notion that PASPA infringes on states' rights, in this case the right to regulate or even choose to not regulate gambling within its own borders.

New Jersey has lost every court battle it has waged targeting PASPA with the five major sports organizations in America -- NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL and NCAA -- on the other side.

In appealing to the Supreme Court, New Jersey first must convince the high court to even hear the case. That will play out during the spring and summer. If Jersey clears that hurdle, then the justices will hear arguments and, eventually, make a ruling. If the appeal runs the full course, the decision won't come until next year.

Ryan Rodenberg, a professor of sports law analytics at Florida State University, filed an amicus brief in support of the Supreme Court hearing the case. Among the points Rodenberg makes in his brief is that prior to passage of PASPA in 1992, the Department of Justice actually opposed the law, in part because it gave

regulatory authority (something that's usually in the hands of government) to sports leagues.

However, with the current New Jersey appeal focused narrowly on constitutional issues, Rodenberg said, "It is unlikely that the Raiders' move to Las Vegas will have any meaningful impact on the current lawsuit pending at the U.S. Supreme Court."

While it's always difficult to handicap how the Supreme Court will rule, hardly anyone thinks this case is the end of the road, and looking ahead, Rodenberg added, "The shift in NFL policy will almost certainly come up in the early stages of the next lawsuit involving PASPA's partial ban on legalized sports betting."

The evolution of the sports industry's view of sports wagering is measured these days in various comments made by league executives.

NBA commissioner Adam Silver's famous op-ed in the *New York Times* in 2014 flatly stated, "the laws on sports betting should be changed."

On the eve of the current baseball season, MLB commissioner Rob Manfred said on ESPN's Mike & Mike radio show that MLB is in the midst of educating team ownerships so baseball "is ready to join in what I think is going to be a dialogue about how sports gambling regulation in the United States should be changed."

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell has been less enthusiastic about the prospect of legalized sports betting, but then he made a startling comment regarding the Raiders once league owners approved the team's relocation, 31-1, in March.

The issue was whether the league would oppose wagering specifically on the Raiders after they moved to Las Vegas. Goodell said the league was not considering such an embargo "in large part because you have the regulatory environment there, which actually could be beneficial in this case."

Uh, did everyone hear that?

The commissioner of the NFL actually said legal sports wagering -- and attendant regulation -- could be beneficial. Beneficial for what? Well, obviously ensuring the games are on the square.

In conceding that point, the NFL

commissioner echoed exactly what proponents of legalizing sports wagering have said all along. Regulation brings more scrutiny and helps protect the integrity of the games.

You can bet on this: Goodell's "beneficial" comment is the sort of utterance that will find its way into court filings and in congressional or state legislature testimonies when sports wagering is considered.

Of course, Goodell wouldn't have even been in the position of having to reconcile allowing wagering on an NFL team headquartered in Las Vegas absent the Raiders' move.

"Look at the English Premier League, they have betting operations in the immediate vicinity of some of the most hallowed pitches in the world," said Andy Dolich, who has been an executive for teams in all four major sports, including 15 years with the Oakland Athletics and a turn as COO of the San Francisco 49ers. Plus, fans are demanding more engagement, he said.

"As long as legislators and the leagues are confident that they have the internal controls to protect the games," said Dolich, who now runs a sports consultancy, Dolich & Associates, in Los Altos, Calif., "the legalization of betting is inevitable."

Perhaps, but Goodell and at least some NFL owners are still officially opposed to broadening sports gambling, and the argument remains the same as it has been for decades -- legalized gambling poses a risk to the integrity of the game. And that's where the Raider relocation becomes pivotal.

The U.S. Supreme Court could uphold PASPA and say what many courts have said about other laws that were flawed but not necessarily unconstitutional: Congress created the problem, and Congress should fix it.

And when that happens, and the discussion of sports wagering shifts from the judicial to the legislative, the reality of the Las Vegas Raiders will have the NFL's logic-defying "integrity of the game" objection taking its place alongside the drop-kick and leather helmets. ☒

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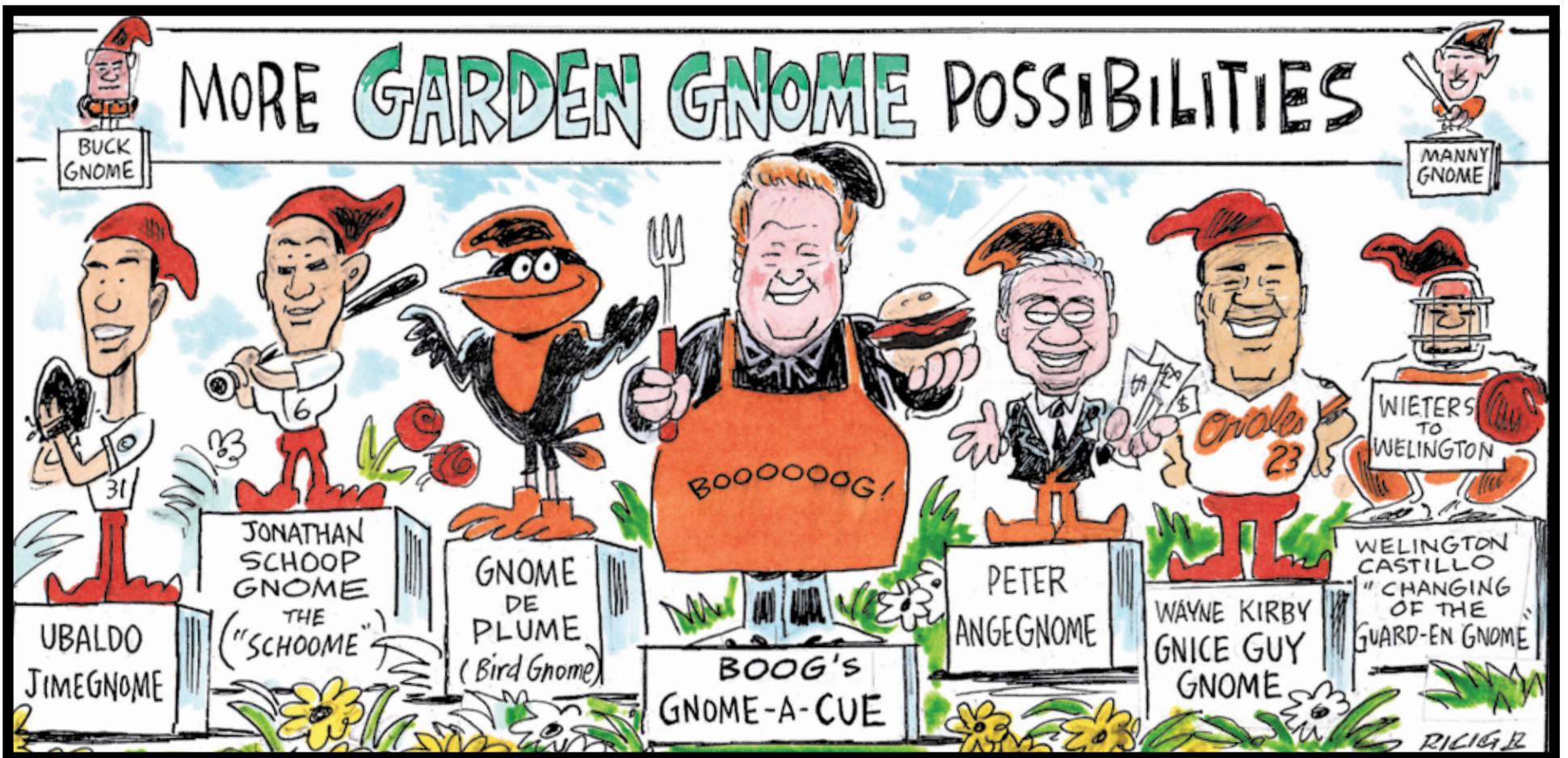
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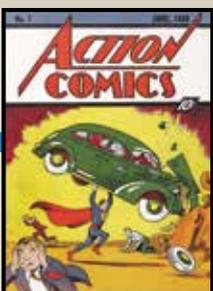


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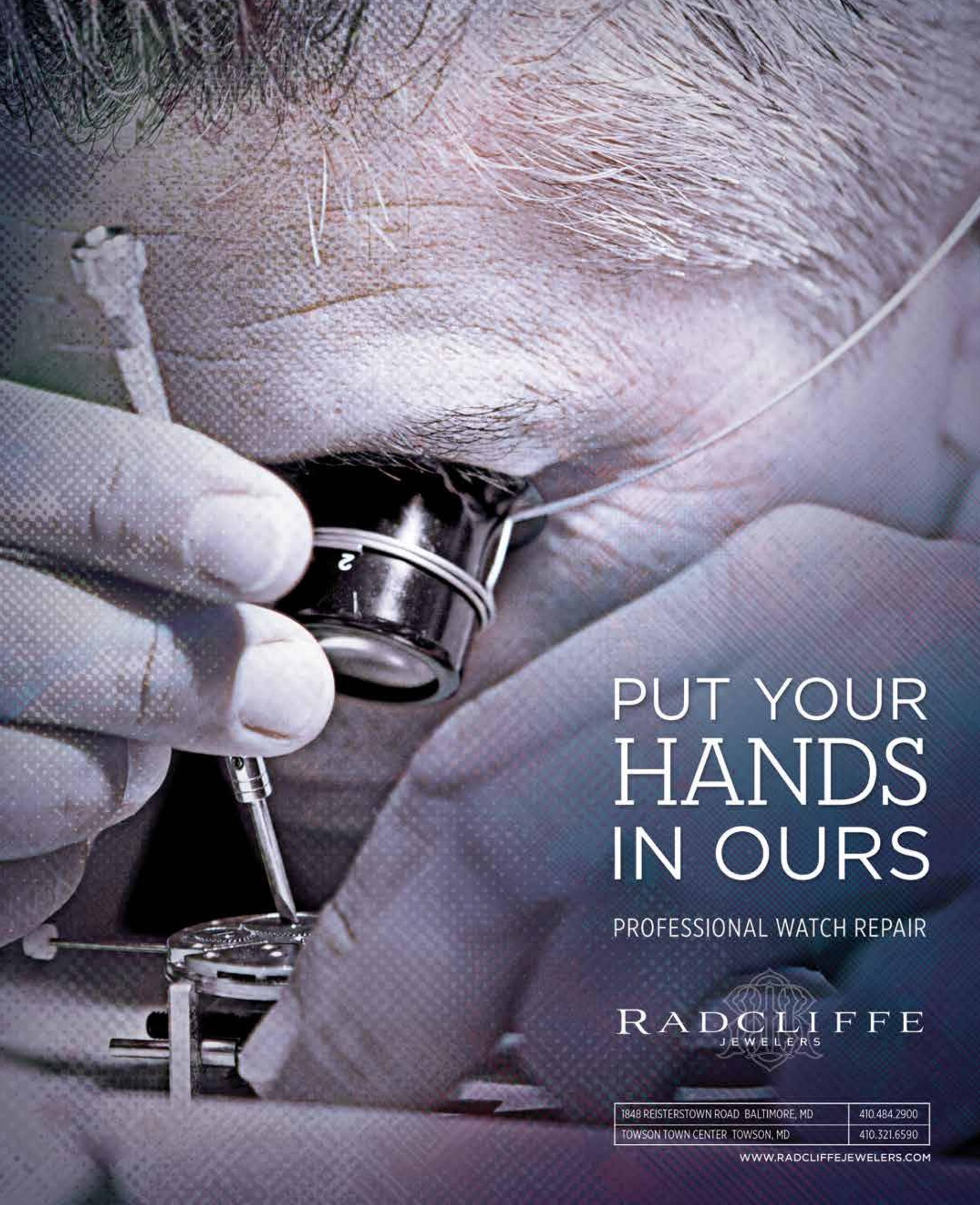


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