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VARSITY

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COMING INTO FOCUS

*BADGERS SEE CLEARER PICTURE AT SEVERAL POSITIONS
AS SPRING PRACTICE COMES TO AN END*



COVER STORY

MEN IN THE MIDDLE

Once again, inside linebacker was a major question mark for the Badgers entering spring practice. Has Wisconsin found its answers in Leon Jacobs and T.J. Edwards?



BRIAN MASON

DEFENSE

TAKING THEIR TIME

With a staff that's nearly entirely new, Wisconsin's defensive coaches are putting in the time to put the best possible team on the field.

LUCAS AT LARGE

MULTIPLE McEVOY

Coaches say he has the skillset to contribute on both sides of the ball for UW, and that's exactly what Tanner McEvoy plans to do.



BRIAN MASON

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VARSIITY

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McEvoy multiplies impact on Badgers

Wisconsin secondary coach Daronte Jones was introduced to multi-taskers at the University of Hawaii, where Scott Harding was a second-team All-American punter, a punt returner and a slot receiver who started five games and caught 34 passes for 457 yards and three touchdowns last season. Harding was the exception to most rules; he was 28 years old and a veteran of Australian rules football.

“He had a very unique skill set,” Jones declared.

This spring, Jones has been introduced to Tanner McEvoy, a rare breed, a throwback to the one-platoon system, a two-way player, full-time safety and part-time wide receiver — for now. Oh, yes, he has a very unique skill set, too. Last year, he started the first five games at quarterback. “It is unique and pretty uncommon,” McEvoy said of his flexibility. “But it’s a lot of fun if you can get away with it.”

Georgia’s Champ Bailey, Michigan’s Charles Woodson, Utah Eric Weddle and Holy Cross’s Gordie Lockbaum achieved notoriety for their stellar play on both sides of the ball. Woodson’s versatility contributed to his Heisman Trophy.

Of more recent vintage, Stanford’s Owen Marecic, Washington’s Shaq Thompson, USC’s Adoree Jackson and UCLA’s Myles Jack have split time on

offense and defense.

UW athletic director Barry Alvarez knows a thing or two about McEvoy. “You want Tanner on your team,” he said. “You just have to figure out how to use him and best maximize his ability. I really thought he played well at safety in the bowl. He was the last line of defense and made some good solid stops.

“I’M GROWING ON AND OFF THE FIELD. THAT HAPPENS WITH ANYONE IN THIS TIME PERIOD OF THEIR LIFE. BUT I THINK I’VE FACED A LOT AND I’VE HANDLED IT PRETTY WELL.”



“He should also be able to do some things at receiver with that height, speed and athleticism.”

Jones’ scouting report on McEvoy, the receiver, followed along the same lines.

“He’s tall, he’s rangy and he has length,” he said. “On defense, he covers a lot of ground in the middle of the field. He may be a step away but his reach is so long he may still get a hand on the ball. Same on offense; his body and frame creates issues.

“Anyone who’s that big and has that type of athleticism gives you issues.”

McEvoy didn’t have any (issues) catching passes his first two seasons at Bergen Catholic in Oradell, New Jersey. As a junior, he had 35 catches for 550 yards and three scores. He also had 49 tackles and three interceptions at safety. Most recruiters were projecting him for wide receiver or tight end. That was before he switched to quarterback as a senior, a move resulting in a scholarship to South Carolina.

Reflecting on his prep experience as a receiver, McEvoy said, “I enjoyed that position a lot; we excelled at it and I did a pretty good job at it, too. We only had a few routes and we threw a lot of fades in high school; that’s what we did on the goal line. It’s starting to come back to me.



I just have to keep working on it. I can ask any of the receivers here what the play is about and they'll help me out."

Wisconsin's leading receiver, Alex Erickson, has been particularly helpful to McEvoy. "He'll watch me for the little things when I'm running routes — if my hands are moving, how I'm coming out of breaks, if I'm getting my head around — all little receiver tips," said McEvoy, who's also trying to process "what the play is and what route to run" on the fly this spring.

"I've got a lot to learn," he conceded.

On defense, by contrast, the 22-year-old McEvoy appears to be coming of age; he's starting to figure it out. "I've learned a

"YOU WANT TANNER ON YOUR TEAM," ALVAREZ SAID. "YOU JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE HIM AND BEST MAXIMIZE HIS ABILITY."

lot from each year I've played (safety) and I'm getting more and more comfortable with where I'm at," acknowledged the 6-foot-6, 222-pound fifth-year senior. "I'm more of a centerfielder. I'm trying to get interceptions and break up balls; kind of a quarterback in the secondary."

Some of his instincts are a by-product of his training as a QB.

"I look at things differently; the alignment of people, what they (receivers) are looking at

and what the quarterback is looking at," he said. "I'm watching the quarterback's steps and before he gets the ball out, I'm trying to think about what his progression would be if I was in his shoes and what I would do."

McEvoy has already crammed a lot into his two UW seasons. "It has been an interesting journey, but I wouldn't have changed it," he confided. "I've faced a lot of adversity; every year something different. So I'm growing on and off the field. That happens with anyone in this time period of their life. But I think I've faced a lot and I've handled it pretty well.

"I just have to keep handling it."

Whether that now takes the form of a catch or a pick. ■





Spring game gives fans good taste of fall

If you have young kids, Saturday's spring game is a good way to expose them to Wisconsin football by coming out to Camp Randall Stadium. It's a cheap entertainment option for all of our fans.

There are different ways to look at the game. If you want the offense to look good, you just sit in one defense and limit what they can do and then run your best plays against it.

You can do other things, and it's really up to Paul Chryst on what he wants to emphasize or accomplish. I'd like to see a few young players step up and make plays. Some will; they always do.

Right now, we have a real thin offensive line. We've gone through this before when we've had some guys hurt and maybe only six or seven healthy linemen. In this case, you just try to give them as many reps as you can and bring them along. All of them need to get stronger.

The weight program is one area where you can't cut corners. Just look at the people that we're playing against and how physical some of them are. If you're not strong, you don't have much of a chance.

We're young on the O-line, but we can still cover people up. Last year, Ohio State started with an inexperienced offensive line and struggled. By the end of the year, they were pretty darn good.

You can coach them harder

when you've got more eyes on them. I know Rudy (offensive coordinator Joe Rudolph) is a good coach and Josh Oglesby and Billy Nagy will do a nice job with him.

With five players taking reps at one time, they can give instant feedback and positive or negative reinforcement. They can correct immediately. That's just coaching; the more eyes, the better.

Some of Paul's practices have gone long and the young guys have to learn how to concentrate over a longer period. He's just trying to train them and teach mental toughness along the way.

Paul coaches for the right reasons, he always has. He respects football, he respects the game, he respects everything about it and he demands that out of his players.

They all recognize how legitimate he is. If you're someone who likes playing football, then you'd love playing for Paul. We'll have a lot of former players here this weekend who can attest to that.

I've never put too much emphasis on a spring game. A few years ago, we were trying to put players in different positions, the toughest possible, to see what we had. It wasn't a pretty game and I can remember some writers saying afterwards that we were a three-win team. That particular team went on to win

10 games that season.

Joel Stave has played a lot of football for us and you have enough film on him to know what he can do at quarterback. So you spent time on the things that he needs to work on.

You put him in a tough position and you try to get him better. That may not look good to somebody sitting in the stands, but they don't know what you're trying to get done with him.

This will be the fifth straight spring that all of the proceeds from ticket sales will go to a campus partner. It's a way to show our appreciation. This year, it's the Office of Undergraduate Advising.

We're going to draw between 10,000 and 20,000 for the game. That's what it's going to be. It has been that way every year since I've been here.

We've had new coaches, we've had new quarterbacks, we've had new tailbacks and that's how many people we're going to get. We're not going to get 60 or 70,000 like some other places.

That's just a fact that we live with and we don't lose any sleep over. But that shouldn't take away from the spring game and the enjoyment for those who do attend.

I know the players enjoy playing in front of a crowd and many of them will benefit from the exposure down the road. Saturday will be no exception. ■

WHO HAS THE MOST UNUSUAL TALENT ON YOUR TEAM?



TAYLOR MOREY
Junior • Volleyball

“The most unusual talent on the team would probably be **Lauren Carlini’s** ability to make the best grilled cheese sandwich around. Such a simple meal but she makes them to perfection. Lauren should consider opening a restaurant and selling them!”



NIGEL HAYES
Soph. • Men’s Basketball

“**Duje Dukan** has one of the most unusual talents on the team, because he knows like five different languages. Sometimes in the locker room he’ll respond to someone’s question or statement in another language. Just because he can.”



JULISA RICART
Junior • Women’s Rowing

“**Julia Glueck** can fit her whole fist in her mouth!”



CARL SCHNEIDER
Junior • Men’s Soccer

“I’d have to go with my teammate **Adam Lauko**, who can play the nose flute. He had surgery on his nasal passage, so he wanted to put his new nose to good use and decided to learn how to play the nose flute. Sometimes after wins, he plays it for us in the locker room. It’s surprisingly good!”





CHARLIE FOSS

WALT MIDDLETON

Charlie Foss, a junior from Appleton, Wisconsin, leads a group of five athletes into this week's Drake Relays, while the rest of the Badgers head to either Philadelphia for the Penn Relays or San Diego for the Triton Invitational. Foss specializes in the multi-events for the Badgers and placed fourth in the decathlon with 6,963 points at last year's Big Ten outdoor championships, helping Wisconsin secure its 44th conference crown.

How has your season gone?

"Overall, it has been a pretty solid year. I haven't quite put together an entire heptathlon or decathlon yet. But I have two more attempts in the decathlon during the regular season before NCAAs, if I make it there. Hopefully I can put one of these next two meets together so I can make a run at nationals, and if not, I just want to earn a personal-best score."

What makes the multi-events so difficult?

"I think the hardest part is the training. For the decathlon, there are 10 events, so it is hard to train for 10 different events and be solid at each one of them. So we try to limit what events we are bad at and we try to have average-to-good events across the board. If you can do that, you are going to put together a lot better score than if you have a couple good events and a couple of bad events. The training is one of the

- SCROLL FOR MORE -

ALL ABOUT CHARLIE

Year: Junior

Height: 6-3

Event: Heptathlon (indoor), decathlon (outdoor)

Hometown: Appleton, Wis.

QUICK Qs FOR CHARLIE

Favorite decathlon event?

"I like the 100 and the long jump pretty equally."

Favorite track venue?

"I really liked Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium at Ohio State when they hosted Big Tens my freshman year."

Last movie you saw?

"Edge of Tomorrow."

Favorite sport outside track?

"Football."

Favorite pre-meet meal?

"With the multis starting earlier in the morning, I like to have some type of eggs, toast, yogurt and some type of juice."

Favorite cereal?

"Lucky Charms."

Favorite video game growing up?

"Super Smash Bros. for N64."



SAME QUESTION, NEW ANSWERS

ONCE AGAIN THE BADGERS ARE TASKED WITH MAKING MAJOR REPLACEMENTS IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR DEFENSE, BUT ONE OF THE MEN BEING REPLACED HAS FAITH THAT INSIDE LINEBACKERS T.J. EDWARDS AND LEON JACOBS CAN FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS.

BY MIKE LUCAS // UWBADGERS.COM



DAVID STLUKA

A year ago, Marcus Trotter heard what they were saying; they were saying an inexperienced linebacker corps was the biggest question mark on the Wisconsin defense. “The hot topic,” Trotter recalled, “was, ‘How are they going to play without Chris Borland?’”

Not only were the Badgers adjusting to life after Borland — a first-team All-American and UW’s leading tackler (by 50 over anyone else) — but they were also replacing linebackers Conor O’Neill, Ethan Armstrong and Brendan Kelly, the third-, fourth- and seventh-leading tacklers, respectively.

There wasn’t much returning experience, either. Vince Biegel and Derek Landisch each had two starts during the 2013 season; Trotter and Joe Schobert had started one game apiece. “Even though we were inexperienced,” Trotter contended, “we knew that we were going to do well.”

What made him believe that was going to happen?

“We had a confident group of guys,” he said.

That definitely transferred to the field and their performance.

The inside tandem of Trotter and Landisch

ranked second and third in tackles behind safety Michael Caputo. Trotter was an emotional catalyst and very physical at the point of attack. Landisch was also tenacious in his role and a playmaker; he led the defense with nine quarterback sacks.

Whereas the Badgers will once again rely on their dynamic one-two punch coming off the edge — Biegel and Schobert combined for 30 TFLs and 10.5 sacks as game-changing outside linebackers — they will be even more unproven on the inside than they were the year before with Trotter and Landisch.

Leon Jacobs, a former high school running back, has been one starter during spring drills.

T.J. Edwards, a former high school quarterback, has been the other.

Despite being so raw, Trotter boldly predicted, “I think they’re going to shock a lot of people.”

In so many words, he has been saying the same thing to Edwards, who redshirted and played on the scout team last fall as a true freshman out of Lake Villa, Illinois. “I told him, ‘You’ll be a better linebacker than me once you learn the playbook and understand the schemes,’” Trotter related.

Jacobs, a junior-to-be from Santa Clarita, Cal-

ifornia, has also made an impression. “He’s a freak of nature,” Trotter said of chiseled 6-foot-2, 230-pounder. “I remember seeing him for the first time when he was 17 and he was bigger than me, and I was 22. He’s very athletic; he’s got a lot going for him.”

So does Marcus Trotter, of course. He has already been accepted for medical school at Indiana and Illinois. He’s leaning towards the latter. “I’m going to miss Madison so much,” he conceded. “But I have a lot of good memories and I’m beginning a new chapter in my life.”

The last chapter was a good read, especially because it included his twin brother, Michael. Last spring, in fact, Marcus and Michael Trotter were taking a lot of snaps together at inside linebacker. “The spring is where you learn the position,” Marcus said. “The fall is where you earn your spot.”

Edwards and Jacobs have both praised Marcus Trotter for being a positive influence on their development. In turn, he has enjoyed tracking their progress. “I’ve watched film on them this spring,” he said, “and I’m pumped for them; they’re going to do a lot better than what people think.”

It starts with the playbook. “You have to know what plays are called and exactly what your re-

sponsibility is,” Trotter said. “But it’s more than that. It’s understanding offensive schemes and tendencies. If you’re able to anticipate what the offense is doing, it makes you that much faster.”

He cited his own example. “I wasn’t the most gifted linebacker,” said Trotter, a former walk-on. “But I really understood schemes, why offenses would do what they do and why we’d run the defenses that we ran. It’s a long process, but once you get it down, it’s only going to make you play better.”

Ethan Armstrong has been reinforcing that thinking with the young linebackers. After graduation, he worked as an investment advisor before taking a call from UW defensive coordinator Dave Aranda, who wondered if he might be interested in serving as a graduate assistant coach.

“I had said, ‘Sure, why not?’” he remembered. “I definitely wanted to test the waters (of coaching). I feel like there’s a part of me that still wants to be involved in football. That (finance) will always be there; this won’t. This is an incredible staff to be a part of; I couldn’t be in a better situation.”

On what he has observed of Edwards and Jacobs thus far, Armstrong said, “There’s definitely a willingness to learn. You can tell that it





matters a lot to both of them. They're putting in a lot of extra time so there's definitely a maturity level there that you don't often see in young guys.

"They both have a lot of ability which is apparent and they're doing a lot of good things, so we're excited. The best advice I can give them is study as hard as you can. The better student of the game you are, the more confidence you are going to have, and the better you'll end up playing."

Change is always part of the equation; leaving some position groups deeper than others.

"But I think we have enough pieces," Armstrong said, "that we can be a very good team."

To this end, no one may manipulate the available pieces better than Aranda.

"Coach Aranda," Trotter said, "always puts the best players in the best position."

From Trotter's perspective, Aranda can protect, to a small degree, Edwards and Jacobs.

At least until they gain some valuable game experience and grow into their assignments.

"I have full confidence," Trotter said, "he (Aranda) will put in a system for them to succeed."

• • • •

ETHAN ARMSTRONG:

"The best advice I can give them is study as hard as you can. The better student of the game you are, the more confidence you are going to have, and the better you'll end up playing."

The first question that Aranda fielded after Sunday's practice was on Edwards, who by all accounts had a very productive scrimmage at Camp Randall Stadium. Edwards wears No. 53 and that number kept showing up around the ball. He made plays against the run and intercepted a pass.

"He has put some consistent days together," Aranda said. "There have always been flashes with T.J. The biggest improvement that he has made, he has reduced the negative plays, the plays where he knew that he should have been somewhere (and wasn't) and recognized right afterwards.

"There were a lot of those (early in the spring) but those have gone away. We'd like to be able



Freshman Nick Thomas has stood out in the spring despite the sharp learning curve he faces as an early enrollee.

to eliminate them all,” said Aranda with a wry grin. “He’s getting better. I’m excited about the progress that he’s making and I know that he’s feeling more confident.”

Aranda had a positive update on Jacobs, too.

“Leon is playing well and being more and more consistent,” he said. “There are multiple run fits where there are pulling guards and centers and where Leon has fit up correctly on all of them. Those were things in the past where he was a bit slow to see. Leon is really improving.

“That’s what we’re looking for. We’re so young (at inside linebacker). The thing is to try and get 11 guys playing together. And it’s tough to do when you’re young because everyone is working through their own issues. But they’re pushing through.”

Also in the mix has been freshman linebacker Nick Thomas, an 18-year-old early enrollee.

Thomas is still technically a high school kid

“The thing is to try and get 11 guys playing together,” Aranda said. **“And it’s tough to do when you’re young because everyone is working through their own issues. But they’re pushing through.”**

who should be getting ready for prom.

“I have to keep reminding myself that’s what he is,” Aranda said.

The reminder is necessary because he also said, “I see him as our No. 2 linebacker right now.”

Thomas split his four-year prep career between Concordia, Kansas, and IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, where he was coached the last two seasons by director Chris Weinke, the 2000 Heisman winner from Florida State. Weinke is now the quarterbacks coach with the St.

Louis Rams.

“It was better football, better competition and a high level of coaching,” Thomas said of his exposure at IMG Academy, the No. 1-ranked team in Florida at the end of the 2014 regular season. “It has been nice (enrolling early) just trying to learn and get ahead of my (recruiting) class.”

Trotter knows that there are inevitable growing pains for someone so young. “He’s a freshman and he’s going to make mistakes,” Trotter said. “But just go 100 miles per hour when you’re making them. That’s what I did my freshman year and I made a ton of mistakes.”

That much is expected by coaches who are focused on something else.

“They want to see his tenacity,” Trotter said, “and how hard he’s going to play.”

During Sunday’s scrimmage, the 225-pound Thomas made a couple of stops in the backfield.

“I just want to play sound football with what

I know so far,” Thomas said. “I’ve definitely gotten better (this spring). I think I have some raw talent and instincts. The only difference (at the college level) is the age of some of the guys I’m playing with; they’re grown men, 21- and 22-year-olds.”

He could have been referring to the physically-imposing, fully-grown Jacobs. Growing into a position has been the challenge at Wisconsin. He has played both inside and outside linebacker. What he hasn’t done is play a lot of competitive football.

Jacobs didn’t compete in the sport until his freshman year at Bishop Montgomery High in Torrance, California. And he was one-and-done. He didn’t play as a sophomore and junior so that he could concentrate on his first love: basketball. But he was eventually persuaded to go back out for football.

By then, his family had moved from the Long Beach area, where he grew up, to Canyon Country, a district within Santa Clarita in northwest Los Angeles County. Jacobs transferred to Golden Valley High School and starred as a punishing tailback his senior year. He was nicknamed “Leon the Phenom.”

LEON JACOBS ON STUDYING FILM:

“I really didn’t know what I was looking at. Now I see why a guy is in a certain spot and why when the tight end is lined up a certain way, he’s most likely going to motion back. I didn’t see that two years ago.”

As a true freshman, Jacobs lettered for the Badgers while seeing limited action in 13 games. Last season, he had more of an impact and finished with 28 tackles, the ninth-most on the defense. During the short time that he has been on campus, he has

tried to learn from his elders, his mentors.

There was no better teacher than Borland. “Chris taught me formations — being able to read them very quickly and why we should be lined up in certain gaps,” Jacobs said. “Derek (Landisch) was very physical and I watched



“THE SPRING IS WHERE YOU LEARN THE POSITION,” MARCUS SAID. “THE FALL IS WHERE YOU EARN YOUR SPOT.”

how he went about his work, and Marcus was diligent; great enthusiasm.”

Armstrong’s preparation rubbed off on Jacobs, too. “When I was a freshman, I was astonished by Ethan’s attention to detail,” said Jacobs. “He could pick up things so quickly in the meetings and I always wanted to be like that. Now we watch film on off days. It’s wonderful.”

Especially because Jacobs is getting so much more out of the film study.

“I really didn’t know what I was looking at (as a freshman),” he said. “It has been a really long two-year process but it has paid off. Now I see why a guy is in a certain spot and why when the tight end is lined up a certain way, he’s most likely going to motion back.

“I didn’t see that two years ago.”

Jacobs has been getting a majority of his reps at the Rover or weakside ’backer. “We have a lot more reps now,” he said of practices under new head coach Paul Chryst. “We’re doing more periods and that helps a lot because we’re playing more football and experience is a big deal.”

Besides coordinating the defense, Aranda tutors the inside linebackers. “During meetings, he’s teaching us not just our position, but everybody’s position,” Jacobs

said. “And that’s accelerating the learning process. I just have to be consistent every practice and limit my MA’s (missed assignments).”

Terrance Joseph Edwards can relate. “It’s definitely a learning process,” he said. “I’m still trying to prove myself on the field that I know what I’m doing. Last fall, on the scout team, going against the ones (on offense) every day helped a lot, for sure, in just getting me better at my craft.”

Edwards had never played linebacker before, though he played some safety. His transition to defense has been every bit as significant as Jacobs making the conversion from running back in that Edwards was a high school quarterback, a very good one, going 17-3 as the starter at Lakes Community High.

Some Mid-American Conference programs, like



BRIAN MASON

Toledo, projected Edwards for offense. Most recruiters saw him playing on the other side of the ball. “All of the coaches from the bigger schools told me, ‘You’re more of a defensive-type,’” he said. “I figured whatever they want me to do, I’m willing to do it.”

Edwards, who was injured and missed some games his senior year, originally committed to Western Michigan before he changed his mind and opted for Wisconsin. As far as giving up the quarterback dream, he said with a sigh, “I miss having the ball in my hands every play.”

Without missing a beat, he added, “Now hopefully I can make plays on defense.”


His previous quarterback training would seem to be helpful in that regard.

“As a quarterback, you have to watch a lot of film,” he said, “and a lot of guys in high school don’t watch film, so I was already kind of used

to it. I’ve always been a physical-type but the footwork is different (at linebacker). It’s definitely something I have to keep working on.”

Edwards has been grateful for all the tips that he has received from Jacobs, especially on his keys. Trotter also raised the bar for the position. “I studied him (last fall),” Edwards said. “He was able to make all the plays that he did and play fast because he knew what he was doing.”

That would probably bring a smile to Trotter’s face. “He (Edwards) has all the tools it takes to be a linebacker,” Trotter said. “He’s very athletic, very agile, very strong at the point of attack. Once he masters the playbook, he’s going to be a great linebacker. Same thing with Leon. I’m excited for them.”

Jacobs and Edwards would be hard-pressed to find a better role model, and they both know it. 



TAKING THE TIME



NO ONE IS COUNTING THE HOURS IN WISCONSIN'S DEFENSIVE MEETING ROOM, WHERE A REVAMPED STAFF IS ENTHUSIASTICALLY PUTTING IN THE WORK TO PUT THE BEST VERSION OF THE BADGERS ON THE FIELD.

BY MIKE LUCAS ■ UWBADGERS.COM

There may be a “big picture” in the meeting room. But there’s not a big clock. At least nobody is watching one. Instead, there’s a free exchange of ideas between three new assistants — Inoke Breckterfield, Tim Tibesar and Daronte Jones — and holdover defensive coordinator Dave Aranda.

“Multiple times,” Aranda said, “we will have meetings where I will say, ‘This may be only a half-hour’ and it’s two hours because everything has to be backed up; there’s a backstory to everything. It has been great. Every coach has a different perspective and they all see things so differently.”

An amused Aranda recounted on how discussions can break out into open forums because everybody has his own unique experience to share. So if they’re breaking down a specific defense or adjustment, he said, “It’s this because of this because of this because of the other thing ...”

It’s healthy because all angles are considered.

“That’s not only coming from my perspective,” Aranda said, “but it’s coming from Coach Breckterfield’s, Coach Jones’ and Coach Tibesar’s perspective. To be able to talk that way and openly bring in whatever is the best opinion, I think is special.”

In light of his creativity with the X’s and O’s, his penchant and passion for scheming, Aranda has been tagged as a “mad scientist” by his players. But there is a method behind it all. “What you’d like to be able to do is have everyone feel like they’re empowered,” he said.

Nobody is left out, either. “You want your players feeling, ‘I’m a technician, I’m a playmaker, I’m empowered to make a play,’” he said. “Or, you want your assistant coach having a say on this trips adjustment or this bunch adjustment and we’re able to get that now (in the meeting room).”

Aranda couldn’t be happier with the way everything has fallen into place with his defensive staff which includes two former UW play-

ers, Ethan Armstrong and Antonio Fenelus, as grad assistants. “I’ve learned a lot from our new guys,” he said, “and I’m looking forward to learning more as we go.”

Meanwhile, the newcomers have given high marks to Aranda.

“I’ve certainly enjoyed working with him,” said Tibesar, the outside linebackers coach.

“It’s a good chemistry inside the meeting room,” said Jones, the secondary coach.

“Dave does a great job leading,” said Breckterfield, the defensive line coach.

After Sunday’s practice, Breckterfield detailed Aranda’s leadership skills.

“Everything is concise and clear on what his expectations are,” Breckterfield said. “The kids, the young men, buy in and love to play for him. And he has been good to work for. When we meet, everything is prepared, everything is ready to go. Our job is to paint the picture he’s looking for.”

And it all comes together on the canvas, the playing field, according to Breckterfield.

“The picture is real clear,” he said, “and we have to make sure we get our guys doing that.”

• • • •

In 1997, Breckterfield was going into his junior season at Oregon State when a coaching change was made. Mike Riley took over the program and named Chryst as his offensive coordinator. Breckterfield went on to finish as the school’s all-time leader in tackles for loss and quarterback sacks.

Fifteen years later, Chryst got his own head coaching job at Pittsburgh and hired Breckterfield to coach his defensive line. As soon as Gary Andersen left Wisconsin for Oregon State, Chryst became the obvious choice for the Badgers and Breckterfield didn’t hesitate to join him in Madison.

“It was a no-brainer,” said Breckterfield, who will celebrate his 38th birthday during Saturday’s spring game at Camp Randall. “Paul loves the game, he loves his players and he does a great job of leading; how we practice, how we prepare. We were right on the cusp of turning the corner at Pitt.”

Breckterfield had a hand in developing defensive tackle Aaron Donald, one of the most accomplished players in Pittsburgh history. Don-





ald won the Outland and Nagurski trophies and the Lombardi and Bednarik awards. He was a first-round pick of the St. Louis Rams in the 2014 draft.

There are no “Donalds” on the Wisconsin D-line. But there may be some depth.

“I think I’ve got six guys that can contribute,” Breckterfield said.

Arthur Goldberg, who had six starts last season, has moved from nose guard to defensive end.

“It’s kind of good to see him do some things there,” Breckterfield pointed out.

“Alec James is doing some good things (at end); he’s flashing a little bit. Conor (Sheehy) is at the nose and he’s doing some good things. Chikwe (Obasih) has been solid.”

Obasih started seven games during his red-shirt freshman season; James had two starts.

The biggest loss up front has been Warren Her-

ring, a reliable run-stuffer and team leader.

Besides Sheehy, who lettered as a true freshman, Jeremy Patterson could be a factor at nose.

“When Patterson is on, he’s good,” Breckterfield said. “But it’s just about him being consistent.”

Jake Keefer, a fifth-year senior, inherits the role of Konrad Zagzebski, who also graduated.

James Adeyanju is another fifth-year senior competing for snaps at defensive end.

“Zander has flashed a little bit,” said Breckterfield, “and that’s

good to see. He’s hungry.”

Zander Neville is a redshirt freshman and walk-on from Waupaca.

“Billy Hirschfeld has come a long ways,” Breckterfield said. “He’s done a great job of growing.”

Hirschfeld is a redshirt freshman from Okauchee and Arrowhead High School. Along with Neu-

“We’re right there but we need to take it the next level and keep growing; they’ve got the summer and fall camp,” Breckterfield said. “I think they’re grinders, not just my group, but the team. They enjoy the process and they’re hard workers.”

ville and Garret Dooley, he's battling for a spot on the depth chart.

"We're right there but we need to take it the next level and keep growing; they've got the summer and fall camp," Breckterfield said of his position group as a whole. "I think they're grinders, not just my group, but the team. They enjoy the process and they're hard workers.

"It was good to see guys strain and fight their inner side and push through," he said of Sunday's scrimmage. "You're testing their mental toughness. You want to see guys compete. There will be times when you'll have to dig deep and grind. It was good seeing them trying to find themselves out here.

"I told my guys that it will show up on film who grinded and who wilted."

• • • •



Tim Tibesar didn't have a direct link to Chryst, not to Breckterfield's extent. They had crossed paths in recruiting and Tibesar did talk with Chryst about an opening on his Pitt staff. But before anything serious developed, Tibesar went to work for the Chicago Bears and head coach Marc Trestman.

Tibesar had a working relationship with Trestman; he was on his staff for three years with Montreal in the Canadian Football League. In 2011, Tibesar was promoted to the Alouettes' defensive coordinator and one of his hires was Daronte Jones, a graduate assistant at UCLA in 2010.

"I interviewed about nine guys one long week at the Senior Bowl," Tibesar recounted. "There was no doubt that he (Jones) was the top guy after we finished all the interviews. He came up and worked for us and did a great job with our secondary."

Besides growing up in Big Ten country — he's a native of St. Paul, Minnesota — the 42-year-old Tibesar was Purdue's defensive coordinator for one season (2012) and a defensive consultant at Northwestern last season. "I've tried to learn and bring something from every place I've been," Tibesar said.

Former Purdue head coach Danny Hope felt like Tibesar's frame of reference — the CFL, which features 12 players on a wider field with three downs to get a first down and unlimited motion — shaped Tibesar. "He's on the cutting edge of the science of defensive football," Hope said.

This spring, Tibesar saw enough of his edge-rushers — Schobert and Biegel — to know their value.

"Obviously, they've got a wealth of experience coming back; as much as anybody on our defense," said Tibesar, who was an All-American linebacker at North Dakota in 1996. "We're going to lean heavily on them to be our playmakers. That has been our goal for them in the spring.

"For them to just do their job isn't going to be enough. They've got to be the guys who make the plays, the tackles for losses, the pressure on

the quarterbacks, the sacks. They've got to be a force out there; they're returning starters and they have to step up their game to the next level."

Of all the new additions on Wisconsin's defensive staff, Jones might be the most well-versed on the 3-4 defense as preached by Aranda since Jones coached it last season under Hawaii defensive coordinator Kevin Clune, who worked with and for Aranda at Utah State.

"It's a very similar scheme and system," Jones said.

So why does he like the 3-4 so much?

"It's all about where the fourth rusher is coming from," he said.

It can be anybody at any time putting the pressure on the offense to identify him.

"You're not scheming the other coaches," he said.

Instead, you're putting the onus on the players to pick up the fourth rusher.

As it is, Jones has plenty of experience to draw from in the Wisconsin secondary.

"To be honest, I kind of expected what I'm getting out of Darius Hillary," he said.

Hillary, a fifth-year senior, has been a fixture on one corner.

"Sojourn, I would say, has been a pleasant surprise," Jones said.

Sojourn Shelton, a junior-to-be, has been making all the plays at the other corner.

"Caputo is the standard," Jones continued.

That would be the gold standard as a hybrid safety/linebacker.

"You kind of know what you're getting out of him," he said.

Tanner McEvoy is another key component.

"He's that X-factor," Jones said.

McEvoy made the switch from quarterback to safety for the Outback Bowl.

"In the past, he has been a package guy; a




BRIAN MASON

"We get our work done and we laugh a little bit," Jones said of the environment. **"It has been good."**

straight middle-of-the-field guy," said Jones, alluding to the special defensive package that was designed for McEvoy. "He has the ability now to be a more complete safety. And he has been working towards that."

Jones called him a "pleasant surprise" only because "he didn't have that much tape last year (on defense) so I didn't know what to expect." He could be saying the same about freshman Natrell Jamerson, who has made the conversion this spring from wide receiver to cornerback.

Everybody in the defensive meeting room has probably dealt with a McEvoy or Jamerson and the transition from offense to defense, which bodes well as they each make their personal transition. "We get our work done and we laugh a little bit," Jones said of the environment. "It has been good."

Time flies when nobody is watching the clock. 



GREG ANDERSON

Badgers working through different spring

Players focus on improving individual skills

It's been a different spring for the Wisconsin volleyball team. After the loss of seven seniors to graduation and two other players leaving the program — one due to injury and the other transferring — only five players remained on the roster for the spring season. That wasn't enough for any spring competitions, so the team has been working on individual improvement.

"This has been a unique spring," head coach Kelly Sheffield said. "We've been small in numbers in the gym this spring and because of that, we haven't been able to do much team play or scrimmages against other teams. What we have been able to do, however, is work on skill work."

"I absolutely love how this group has come into the gym every day with the intent on getting better. Every single day they've come in with purpose, and each one of them have also spent a lot of time going in the gym for extra reps on their own."

"They are taking that next step of having ownership of their own improvement and it makes it more fun to coach when players get to that stage in their careers."

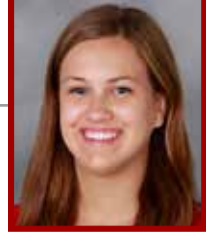
2015 SUMMER CAMPS

Badger I Camp	July 6-8
Badger II Camp	July 14-16
Overnight Team Camp	July 10-12
Team One-Day Camp	July 12
Middle School Day Camp	July 14-16
Little Badgers Half-Day Camp	July 14-16
Individual Setting, Hitting and Libero Camps	July 17 or 18

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-SCROLL FOR MORE-



JACK MCLAUGHLIN

KJ all day: Freshman making a big impact

Jenkins has come on the scene with a bang

People don't usually expect much of freshmen. It's the year that's used to tackle the learning curve. They're adjusting to a new way of life and a different way of playing the game. It's understandable when freshmen aren't at peak performance right off the bat.

But this hasn't been the case for Wisconsin softball's Kelsey Jenkins.

The Tucson, Arizona, native has had an explosive freshman year. Jenkins has already shattered the Wisconsin's single-season record with her 36 walks this season.

"When we recruited Kelsey, we really saw a lot in her," Wisconsin associate head coach Randy Schneider said. "She was kind of a five-tool type kid that had a ton of ability. But she was small and we knew that it probably take her a little while for her to get where she needs to be.

"She came in as a freshman and early on there was just that simple adjustment to a higher level of pitching and certainly getting adjusted to school and everything. She has certainly proven even at this point. I think she leads the Big Ten in on-base percentage and is posting some really incredible numbers

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (19-25, 3-11)

Home events in **bold**. All times CT.

RECENTLY

April 17	at Illinois	W, 11-7
April 18	at Illinois	L, 5-3
April 18	at Illinois	L, 12-8

COMING UP

April 24	Nebraska	5 p.m.
April 25	Nebraska	2 p.m.
April 26	Nebraska	12 p.m.
April 29	Minnesota	4:30 p.m.
	Minnesota	Time TBA
May 1	at Rutgers	2 p.m.
May 2	at Rutgers	Noon

[> View complete schedule](#)

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Three of a kind: Busy weekend awaits UW

Three meets are on the docket for the Badgers

Divide and conquer is the strategy this week for Wisconsin, as the Badgers will send athletes to three different meets across the nation.

A group of multi-event athletes and pole vaulters will stay in the Midwest to compete at the 106th running of the Drake Relays, which began Wednesday in Des Moines, Iowa, with the decathlon and heptathlon. UW runners will head east to Philadelphia to partake in the historic Penn Relays, which opens Thursday, while the throwers head west for the Triton Invitational in San Diego.

Splitting up to tackle three meets was common practice before the men's and women's programs were combined at UW, but this marks the first time this season the Badgers are attacking three different meets on the same weekend.

For the multi-event athletes, the Drake Relays offers another chance to get reps in prior to championship season, which begins May 15 with the Big Ten championships.

"Certainly with the multis, they're a pretty young group," UW Director of Track & Field Mick Byrne said. "Zach Ziemek is redshirting, so the rest of them are pretty young, with the excep-

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE

Home meets in **bold**.

RECENTLY

April 18 **LSU Alumni Gold**

COMING UP

April 23-25	Drake Relays
April 23-25	Penn Relays
April 23-25	Triton Invitational
May 2	Musco Twilight
May 8	Wisconsin Twilight
May 15-17	Big Ten Outdoor Championships

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TAMARA FLARUP

Badgers head to Big Ten championship

Youth leads team at The Fort in Indianapolis

Seeded No. 4 in the conference, the Wisconsin women's golf team finishes out the regular season at the 54-hole Big Ten Championship this Friday through Sunday on the par 72, 6,221-yard The Fort Golf Course in Indianapolis.

All 14 conference schools will be represented, with the top seeds going Northwestern, Ohio State and Purdue — all of which are ranked among the top 40 teams nationally. The Wildcats rank 13th overall. The Badgers are ranked 54th in the country.

Wisconsin enters the tournament with the second-best season scoring average in school history at 299.42, despite a roster filled with young players.

“Of the nine players we have on our roster, seven of them are freshmen and sophomores,” UW coach Todd Oehrlein said. “Every tournament in the fall we had at least one player in the top five that was playing her first collegiate event.”

Representing the Cardinal and White are sophomores Michelle Cheung and Brooke Ferrell, who look to extend their spring season success into the Big Ten championship. Ferrell and Cheung hold the best season averages on the team at 74.54 and 74.75, respectively. Cheung has led the Badgers twice this

SCHEDULE

Home events in **bold**. All times CT.

RECENTLY

- Feb. 8-10 UCF Challenge
- Feb. 22-23 Westbrook Spring Invt.
- Mar. 15-17 Wildcat Invitational
- April 13-14 Silverado Showdown

COMING UP

- April 24-26 **Big Ten Championships**
- May 7-9 **NCAA Regionals**

[> View complete schedule](#)

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-SCROLL FOR MORE-



UW looks to stay on upswing at Big Tens

Seniors hope to keep successful season going

The Wisconsin men's golf team heads to Indiana for the third consecutive weekend to close out the regular season at the Big Ten championship this Friday through Sunday in Newburgh, Indiana.

All 14 conference schools will compete in the 54-hole tournament hosted at the Victoria National Golf Course. The par 72, 6,221-yard course was ranked the 47th in "America's 100 Greatest Golf Courses."

"We're very excited," UW head coach Michael Burcin said. "I would expect us to be in the mix this week. I don't see any reason why not."

The Badgers will face three top-50 teams, including No. 4 Illinois, which won the Boilermaker Invitational last weekend while Wisconsin placed 10th. Also among the ranked are No. 45 Iowa and No. 50 Michigan.

Wisconsin is the 11th seed in the tournament.

The Badgers picked up a tournament title for the first time in nine years by winning the NYX Hoosier Invitational April 11-12, which Burcin hopes will give them momentum going into the Big Ten championship.

SCHEDULE

Home events in **bold**. All times CT.

RECENTLY

- Feb. 15-16 **Big Ten Match Play**
- March 9-10 **Palmetto Intercollegiate**
- Mar. 29-31 **Hootie at Bulls Bay**
- April 11-12 **NYX Hoosier Invitational**
- April 18-19 **Boilermaker Invitational**

COMING UP

- April 24-26 **Big Ten Championships**

[> View complete schedule](#)

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New approach paying dividends on water

Badgers validated in rankings by early results

The Badgers are light on racing dates this spring, opening April 11 in Columbus, Ohio, racing this Saturday in Kansas City, Kansas, and then playing host to racing at Devil's Lake on May 2, before jumping into the Big Ten and NCAA championships.

“Normally by this time we have raced two or three times,” head coach Bebe Bryans said. “This year because of when spring break was, we decided to stay closer to home, have fewer races and just really train.”

If early indications prove true, that strategy, dictated somewhat by the Wisconsin climate and the lateness of the Badgers' spring break, appears to be producing results on the water. The Badgers only have races against two-time defending NCAA champion Ohio State and Big Ten-newcomer Rutgers on their resume, but jumped 10 spots in last week's Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association/US Rowing Coaches Poll after their only racing of the season to date.

“I think the way they raced against Ohio State was the validation,” Bryans remarked. “The rankings are great, [but] the only ones that matter are the last ones and the ones that get us

SCHEDULE

Home events in **bold**.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| April 25 | Big Ten/Big 12 Chall.
<i>Kansas City, Kan.</i> |
| May 2 | Minn./Michigan St.
<i>Baraboo, Wis. (Devil's Lake)</i> |
| May 17 | Big Ten Championships
<i>Indianapolis</i> |
| May 29-31 | NCAA Championships
<i>Gold River, Calif.</i> |

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-SCROLL FOR MORE-



FIRST TIME CHAMPIONS

APRIL 28, 1996: The women's tennis team went 10-0 during the Big Ten Conference regular season and also claimed the Big Ten Tournament for the program's first league championship. Junior Melissa Zimpfer was named Big Ten Player of the Year.

-MORE THIS WEEK-



TWICE IS NICE

MAY 15, 1994:

Behind individual medalist Ben Walter, the men's golf team won the Big Ten championship in Ann Arbor, Michigan, claiming UW's second straight title.



MARK FOR MALINDA

APRIL 26, 2002:

Malinda Johnson tied for second at the Big Ten Women's Golf Championship with a 305, tying the best finish by a Badger in the Big Ten meet. She shot rounds of 72-77-77-79.



WORTH THE WAITE

MAY 3, 1991:

Senior Jack Waite was named Big Ten Athlete of the Year in men's tennis, the first and only winner for the Badgers. He was also a two-time Academic All-American.