

DIGITAL MAGAZINE OF THE WISCONSIN BADGERS

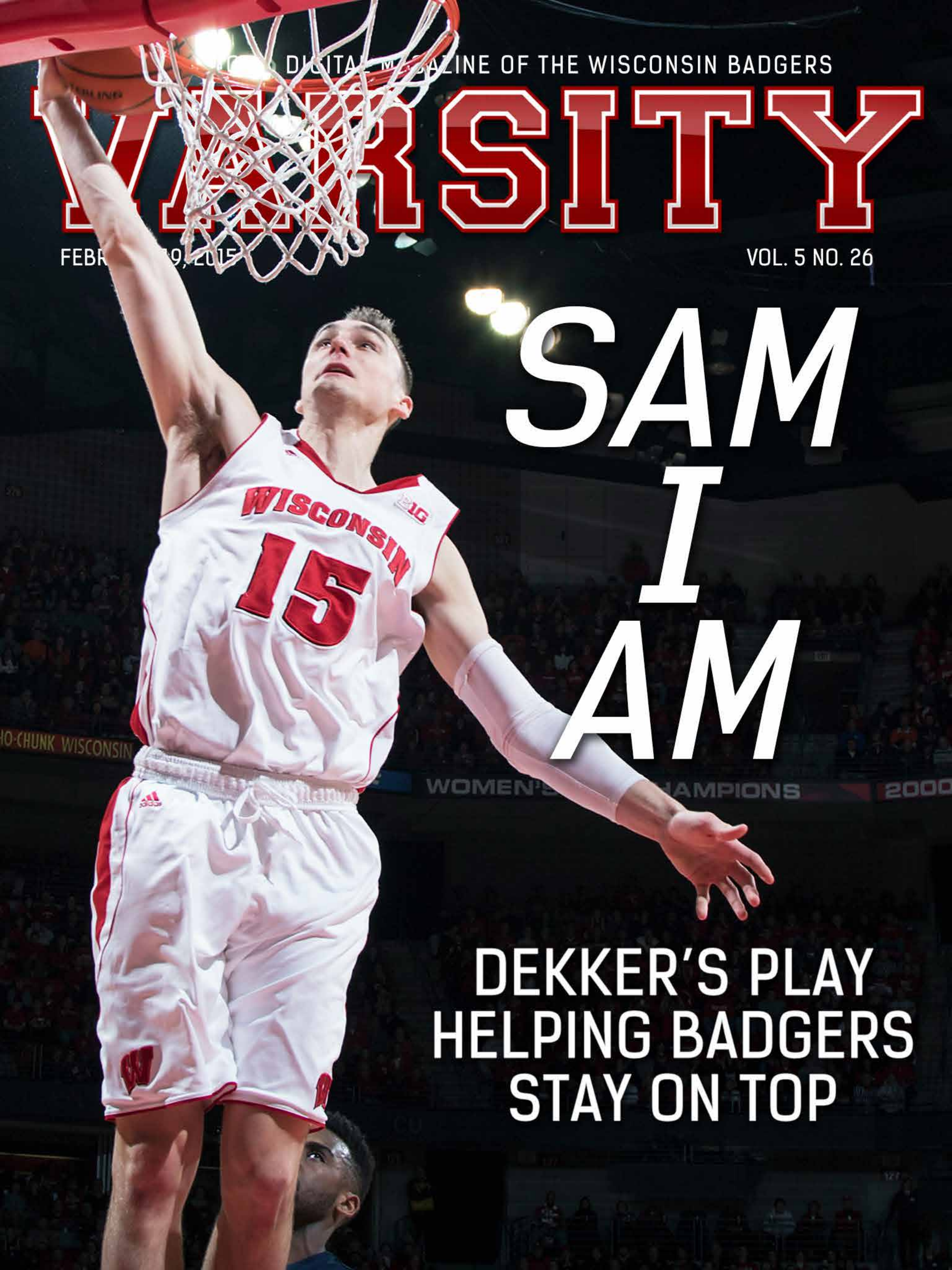
UNIVERSITY

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VOL. 5 NO. 26

SAM I AM

DEKKER'S PLAY
HELPING BADGERS
STAY ON TOP





JOHN FISHER / CAL SPORT MEDIA

COVER STORY

STAYING SAM

The Badgers' junior forward may be on a tear as of late, averaging 14.4 points over the last nine games, but his demeanor and attitude haven't changed.



WOMEN'S HOCKEY

LEAVING HER MARK

Brittany Ammerman's impact on the ice for the Badgers is nothing compared to the impact she's made — with the help of sport — in Kenya.

LUCAS AT LARGE

ON RYAN'S RADAR

Who is the most under-appreciated Badger? Bo Ryan says it's someone who hasn't even seen the floor, freshman Ethan Happ.



DAVID STLUKA

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BADGERING

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VARSIITY

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Happ's play puts him on Ryan's radar

During a wide-ranging interview on Big Ten Network, Wisconsin head coach Bo Ryan threw a curve ball at the interviewer, Dave Revsine, with his response to a question on which player was not getting the recognition that he may deserve. “Right now, it’s Ethan Happ,” replied Ryan, out of the blue and with intent to read Revsine’s mind. “And you’re going, ‘Wait a minute, I don’t have him on the roster.’”

Happ is most certainly there, No. 22 on the UW roster, a 6-foot-9, 230-pound freshman from Rock Ridge High School and Milan, Illinois, a small community on the Rock River near the Quad Cities. Happ, a first cousin of Major League pitcher J.A. Happ (now with the Seattle Mariners), was a two-time all-state selection for the Rock Ridge Rockets.

Although his credentials were in order — Happ averaged a double-double as a senior (33 points, 15 rebounds) — the Badgers are accomplished and experienced on the front line with Frank Kaminsky, Sam Dekker and Nigel Hayes. They also have a fifth-year senior (Duje Dukan) as their first “big” off the bench. Because it appeared minutes would be in short supply, Happ decided to redshirt this season.

Ryan doesn’t know what he would do without him, either, on the scout team that sim-

ulates the next opponent in practice for the starters and top three reserves. “He’s the guy who always has to play the big man from the other team and he does a heckuva job at that,” said Ryan, who took note of his exceptional wing-span and added, “He can play like a 7-footer or he can play like a 6-3 guard.”

On a rotating basis with the

other UW assistants, Gary Close has worked closely with the scouts and had nothing but high praise for Happ and how he has handled his daily jousts with Kaminsky. “Ethan has a lot of raw skills and he’s got a great motor,” said Close. “He’s a handful in there (the paint) and he’s developing a well-rounded game where he can score in a lot of different ways.”

In helping prepare Kaminsky by banging on the block, Happ has been expanding his own game. “I never really had a post game and on the scout team that’s basically what I play every day,” Happ said. “Probably the best thing that Frank has told me individually is, ‘You don’t need to have a set move in your head when you catch the ball. Don’t think, ‘This time, we’re going to do a jump hook.’”

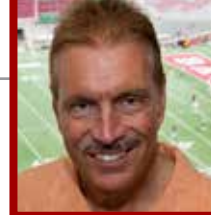
Instead, Kaminsky schooled him on reading and reacting to the defense and always having a counter. Happ has taken that approach to observing games from the bench. “Sometimes I think, ‘What would happen if I was out there?’” he said. “It’s a great way to learn; just by watching and learning what you could do because you can learn from the mistakes of players and what Coach (Ryan) is saying.”

Obviously it’s natural for a young player to wonder about many things, especially when redshirting. “No freshman wants

GARY CLOSE ON HAPP:
ETHAN HAS A LOT OF RAW SKILLS. HE’S A HANDFUL IN THERE AND HE’S DEVELOPING A WELL-ROUNDED GAME WHERE HE CAN SCORE IN A LOT OF DIFFERENT WAYS.



DAVID STLUKA



to come to school their first year and redshirt,” Happ admitted. “As a competitor, you’re thinking, ‘I’m not good enough this year to play.’ I know to many people that may seem like the case, but I have to put that in the back of my head and not think about it.”

Close knows the drill for a redshirt. “It’s always difficult,” he said of the transition, “and he sees the way the season has developed, and with the injuries (to Dekker and Traevon Jackson) that we’ve had, he probably could be getting minutes. But as I told him, ‘You can’t look back once you make the decision. Go with it and you can’t go wrong.’ In his fifth year, he’ll be a better player than he is now.”

Happ is already a better shooter because of Close’s acumen in breaking down the mechanics of a shot and tweaking accordingly when and where warranted. With Happ, he has concentrated mostly on the ball location and release point.

“It was pretty bad when I got here,” said Happ. “I felt I could make shots but it was really slow coming off (his hands). But right now I feel pretty confident with it.”

Off the floor, Happ is starting to feel more comfortable with the academic landscape. “It was tough coming from a small high school — my graduating class was 70 kids — where I knew all the teachers and they were my friends,” Happ said. “When I first

came to class here, there were 100 kids in your lecture and I thought, ‘Whoa, this is a lot different.’ But it’s something that I’ve been getting used to.”

That applies to redshirting in general. “I guess I would say it’s not as bad as I previously assumed,” he said. “I thought every practice would be torture not being with the first team. And there are times when the scout team can be rough because you don’t get to learn the offense and there aren’t a lot of privileges (benefits on fouls).

“But Josh (Gasser) has told me a bunch of times, ‘You just have to deal with it.’ So that’s what I’ve been doing.”

And he has been doing it well enough to catch Ryan’s eye. ■





Fun to watch two of the best right here

My message to Badger fans has stayed the same; we've been very sensitive to our season ticket-holders and we've tried to keep our ticket prices in line with the rest of the Big Ten.

We haven't raised them just to raise them. But with the increase in our annual services contributions to campus, a \$3.5 million increase, we had to do it in football.

Initially, we weren't going to raise prices even with the advent of the full cost of attendance scholarships and the additional meals that we're providing for all of our student-athletes.

We held off as long as we could but we've been forced to do it to be able to operate in the black. That said, we will continue to remain sensitive to our ticket-holders, particularly our students.

Costs keep increasing, but we're going to stay broad-based in our sports. We've made that commitment, especially in the Big Ten. Some other conferences haven't.

If you're funding only 16 sports, there's a lot of additional money that you can spend on whatever you choose. But our league average is 24 and we're at 23 and that's where we want to be.

Last weekend, it was announced that Bo Ryan was one of the finalists for the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. He's very deserving of that honor.

Bo has proven at every level that he's a winner, a consistent winner; and he has done it his way with players that are unselfish. This year's team is no exception; I've really enjoyed watching them play.

I expected them to be good; I think most people did after last year's Final Four. But they didn't miss a beat after losing their starting point guard (Traevon Jackson) to injury.

Instead, you have a backup (Bronson Koenig) who comes off the bench and he doesn't turn over the ball and he makes his 3's and you see him grow into the role.

I really like it when Zak (Showalter) comes in the game. Maybe it's the football coach in me but he brings so much energy and he's physical and I just love watching him compete.

When you think about it, our fans have had the luxury of enjoying two of the most elite athletes in the country in Melvin Gordon and Frank Kaminsky. They are among the best of the best.

Frank is pretty special. There aren't many 7-footers who can handle the ball and dribble and do all the things that he does.

He's tough to match-up with because he can score from all over.

Melvin and Frank have created a lot of positive interest in our programs with Melvin being a finalist for the Heisman and Frank being a candidate for Player of the Year in college basketball.

I can't say enough about the job that Thomas Brown did in coaching Melvin and our running backs. He kept them hungry and happy which is not easy when you're feeding the ball to two guys.

And I don't have any qualms with Thomas going back to his alma mater (Georgia). It's no different than Paul (Chryst) coming back here. I don't think he would have left Pitt for any other place.

Same with Thomas. While he was here, he did a good job for us; he recruited very well, and that's all you can ask. But he's going home. That means a lot to me.

It's why I love going to the weight room where I'll be sitting there talking with Ross (Kolodziej) and Jamil (Walker) and Billy (Nagy) or Rudy (Joe Rudolph) or Mickey (Turner) will come walking through.

Along with Paul, and some of our other former players who have joined his staff, these are the guys who understand how we built the program. That means everything to me. ■



Call to the Hall well deserved for Bo Ryan

Last March, when the Badgers defeated Arizona to earn a trip to the Final Four, the longtime and highly respected sportswriter, Dick “Hoops” Weiss, sent the following tweet: “will someone please put bo ryan in the naismith hall of fame — has 4 d III national champ rings.”

Maybe that will happen this spring. Last weekend, the Badgers coach was named one of 12 finalists for said Hall of Fame. Nine, including Ryan, are finalists for the first time, including Kentucky’s John Calipari, former NBA coach Bill Fitch, and star players such as Jo Jo White, Dikembe Mutumbo and WNBA star Lisa Leslie.

The Class of 2015 will be announced on April 6 in Indianapolis before the NCAA title game. It goes without saying what a thrill it would be to get the final hall call, but being a finalist is a big deal too. A very big deal. Especially for someone who loves the game, and its history, the way Ryan loves it.

Before last Sunday’s game, I asked Ryan the first thing that came to mind when he heard the news about being a finalist. As you might expect, he thought about everything and everybody but himself.

“A lot of flashback action,” said Ryan, who then added he had something else to do during the weekend. “Let’s see, we have a

game, at noon, on Sunday at the Kohl Center. That is where my mind needs to be.”

Naturally. With Ryan, it is always about “next,” right?

However, to be a finalist for the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, it certainly makes sense to take a moment or two and reflect on a brilliant career that, much to the delight of Badger fans, is still in progress and is still going strong.

The first person he called was his former high school and college coach, Ron Rainey, “the second spark I had in forming my love for the game of basketball, with my parents (Butch and Louise, who are deceased) being the first,” said Ryan.

“I shared some things with him that are hard to explain. He was a big part of this, and obviously (my wife) Kelly, the family, everyone who has supported me. The people who I’ve had the chance to coach, to work with.”

Ryan thought about Bruce Williams, the principal at Brookhaven Junior High School, in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, “who gave me my first job,” said Ryan. That job was being a history teacher and head basketball coach.

He thought about the late Bill Cofield, who twice hired Ryan, first as an assistant at Dominican College of Racine in 1973. Three years later, Cofield brought Ryan on board as an

assistant at the University of Wisconsin.

The list goes on. Of course, it includes the late George Chryst, who hired Ryan to lead the program at Platteville. That turned out rather well.

It is safe to say Pat Richter had a magic touch in the art of hiring coaches. He scored in a big way when he landed Ryan in the spring of 2001.

The fact, is, wherever Ryan has coached, his teams have performed well, both during and after their college days. So many players have gone on to successful careers, both in and out of basketball.

“I represent a lot of people’s hard work,” said Ryan. “So it really isn’t one person who would be honored. It never is. It is a collection of experiences and people who made the journey what it is and what is was.”

There are endless statistics to prove that Bo Ryan is Hall of Fame worthy. The national titles at Platteville. The Big Ten championships, the annual trips to the NCAA, the Final Four of 2014.

But the evidence goes well beyond the numbers. Ryan’s teams have won, and they have won the right way. It is good to see the rest of the basketball world is recognizing what fans around here have known for years.

Congratulations Bo. Now, back to “next,” which happens to be Minnesota. ■

WHAT'S THE BEST MOVIE YOU SAW THIS YEAR?



TAYLOR BERRY

Sophomore • Softball

“I'd go with the movie *Unbroken*. It's an inspiring movie that shows how much a person can endure if they have the willpower.”



BRIAN HAIL

Sophomore • Men's Soccer

“My favorite movie of the year has to be *Grand Budapest Hotel*. I'm a huge fan of the humor in Wes Anderson's movies. I'm also particularly drawn to the way he stages his shots. *Grand Budapest Hotel* was the best of his movies by far in my book.”



GABBY CURTIS

Freshman • Women's Golf

“The best movie I've seen this year was *Gone Girl*. It was super creepy and kind of made me not want to get married. A must see!”



BRONSON KOENIG

Soph. • Men's Basketball

“There were a lot of great movies this year, but I'll go with *Interstellar*. It was one of those movies that makes you think and messes with your mind. Matthew McConaughey was great in it.”

A senior from Fitchburg, Wisconsin, **Drew teDuits** has rewritten the Wisconsin record books during his time at Wisconsin. As a sophomore, teDuits became a Big Ten and NCAA champion in the 200-yard backstroke, which marked Wisconsin's first individual NCAA crown since 1959. He holds school records in both the 100- (45.99) and 200-yard backstroke (1:38.27) and, last season, was a member of the 400 medley relay team that broke the school record with a time of 3:09.76 at the 2014 Big Ten Championships. Also, his best 200 individual medley time (1:44.99) stands as the second-best in program history.

You're already an NCAA champion, so what were your goals coming into your senior season?

"Coming into this season, my goals for this year were really to just enjoy every moment and give it my all. As Coach (Whitney) Hite says, 'There are no guarantees in this sport and no perfect swims.' To me, that means you're really never going to have a perfect swim, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy giving everything you can trying, and that's what you need to embrace in order to be successful."

How are you feeling heading into championship season?

"More than anything, I'm extremely excited. Big Tens and NAAs are two of the most fun meets I have ever been to. The energy is just unreal and swimming is always top tier. I'm not just excited for myself, but also for the team. I think this

- SCROLL FOR MORE -

ALL ABOUT DREW

Year: Senior

Height: 6-5

Events: Back/IM

Hometown: Fitchburg, Wis.

High School: Madison Edgewood

QUICK Qs FOR DREW

Favorite TV show?

"Bob's Burgers."

Favorite app on your phone?

"Safari, I love being able to surf the web wherever I am."

Music of choice before a swim meet?

"The Killers, The Bravery, Foreigner and Foo Fighters."

Favorite season?

"Definitely fall. Perfect temperatures, beautiful leaves and, of course, Badger football."

I can't leave home without my...

"Phone. It can do just about anything, anywhere."



NATIVE SON

THOUGH HIS GAME HAS BLOSSOMED OF LATE, AND HIS NOTORIETY IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH, THOSE WHO KNOW SAM DEKKER BEST SAY HE'S STILL THE HUMBLE KID FROM SHEBOYGAN

BY MIKE LUCAS • UWBADGERS.COM

Between doing something for his mind (class) something for his body (treatment) and something for his game (practice), Sam Dekker carved out some time Monday to do something for himself.

He went to the gym and put up shots, something that he has done ever since he was a youngster tagging along with his dad, Todd Dekker, the former head coach at Sheboygan Lutheran High School.

“Started real young,” Sam Dekker said. “I’ve spent my whole life shooting and playing ball.”

“He’s a coach’s kid,” said older brother John Dekker. “He has been a gym rat since he was little.”

At 6-foot-9, 230 pounds, he’s not little anymore. Northwestern coach Chris Collins brought that up while rhapsodizing about the Badgers as a whole, calling them a “well-oiled machine” that is powered by a bunch of veteran guys who “love playing with each other.”

Collins, the longtime Duke assistant under Coach K, went on to cite Wisconsin’s physical toughness compared to his freshman-dominated team and said, “You look at their bodies; you look at Sam Dekker’s body versus (Scottie) Lindsey and (Vic) Law. There’s a difference.”

And he’s different, this Sam Dekker; long removed from his Sam-from-Sheboygan roots, or is he different?

“He’s the same kid that he was,” John Dekker insisted. “Just a lot more people know who he is.”

True enough. Dekker’s name is being mentioned today in the same breath with the iconic Dr. J, not because there are similarities in their style or execution, but because Dekker is one of the finalists for the inaugural Julius Erving Small Forward Award that will be presented to the top “3-man” in the nation. Earlier, Dekker showed up on the USBWA’s Oscar Robertson Trophy midseason watch list.



JOHN FISHER



JOHN FISHER

In this perfectly acceptable name-dropping context, Dekker hung out over the summer with a couple of contemporary NBA superstars, Kevin Durant and LeBron James. Not only did Dekker compete at their respective skill camps/academies, but he turned heads and drew high marks for his overall play. Looking back on the experience, he credited the competition for spurring his development this season.

“Those were two- and three-day camps and we’d be sore but we had to be ready to get up and go to work the next day because they weren’t going to take it easy on us,” Dekker said. “Earlier this year, I was going through some stuff; I wasn’t healthy, I was banged up and I was getting a little frustrated (with a nagging ankle injury).”

“I looked back on those camps and they told us, ‘You’re going to go through times in the season where you don’t feel good and that’s why you have to work on your body and get your mind healthy and things will come around.’ That really conditions you well and mentally gets you ready to go.”

“So I kept reminding myself, ‘Things are going to come around and you’re going to get back to playing the way that you can play.’ Over the last month and a half, I’ve gotten back to full strength; my mind is back and I’m bouncing back every day.”

Along with hitting a milestone by reaching the 1,000-point plateau, Dekker has been on the most productive roll of his three-year UW career by scoring in double figures in 16 of the last 17 games, including a career-high 22 points at Penn State Wednesday night. All of his numbers are up in Big Ten games: scoring (14.7), rebounding (6.1) and shooting percentage (.552).

What has been instructive is watching Dekker making hard cuts and moving without the ball, especially when the defense overplays and cheats on Frank Kaminsky, a willing tag-team partner. “We like to play off each other and that’s something that is pretty unique with all five of us,” Dekker said of a starting lineup that also features Nigel Hayes, Josh Gasser and Bronson

“HE’S THE SAME
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JUST A LOT MORE
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- JOHN DEKKER



JOHN FISHER

Koenig.

“In my eyes, Frank is the best player in the nation; I wouldn’t trade him for anyone,” Dekker went on. “He draws so many people and he’s so skilled. He knows where I’m going to be and if people are going to double him, that means there’s an opportunity for me to cut when people (defenders) turn their heads. You’ve got teammates who are going to find you; we have guys willing to do that.”

“I think it’s pretty tough when you have a 6-9 and 7-foot combination in the pick-and-roll, and that’s something we kind of like to do. That puts stress on the defense. How are you going to guard 6-9 and 7-foot when both are athletic and both can move? Me and Frank complement each other well.”

Another reason why Collins said, “They play basketball the way it’s supposed to be played.”

After Sunday’s game against Illinois — in which Dekker had some explosive moves to the basket and emphatic dunks — John and Todd Dekker talked about some of the changes that they’ve

noticed; changes that speak to the type of season that Sam Dekker is having.

“You can see the change in his body,” said John Dekker, who’s six years older than Sam and played D-III basketball at Lawrence University. “He has put on 30 pounds since he has been there to deal with the physicality of the Big Ten.”

There has been a noticeable change in his confidence, too, at least according to John Dekker. “I think the game has slowed down for him,” he said. “You can kind of see things come a little easier. Last year, he might have rushed into some moves and that’s when he got into trouble.”

Todd Dekker has seen the changes on and off the court with his son’s maturity which, coupled with getting bigger and stronger, has influenced how he has carried himself. “He got a little dinged up and that set him back,” he said of the ankle issues. “But he’s getting back to being Sam again.”

••••

Sam being Sam again? In Sheboygan, he has never been anybody but Sam.

“He really hasn’t changed from the person that he was before he got there (Wisconsin),” said John Dekker, a third grade teacher. “Some kids can kind of get the big head but when Sam is with us, he’s just a normal kid. If I text him on something about basketball, he really doesn’t respond. He likes us treating him like ... like he’s just Sam ... if you know what I mean.”

Todd Dekker, a sixth grade teacher, knows exactly what he means. “When he comes back to Sheboygan, he’s just Sam,” he said. “He’s excited about life; he lives life to the fullest. He has a great heart and he likes to have fun. But he likes helping people out, too. He’s a people person, he likes to please people.”

There’s a world of difference, of course, between Sheboygan and Madison. “Here,” Sam Dekker said, “you get attention because we’re basketball players and people are really excited to take pictures and have us sign autographs. When I go home, they’re also excited to see me, but it’s different.

“I don’t get home much but when I do, it’s more like, ‘We haven’t seen you in awhile, how are you doing? It’s the same old Sam.’ It’s always good to get back and see all the familiar faces. I’ve been lucky to be raised with such tight roots.”

There’s a wide-eyed curiosity to Sam Dekker. “I’ll speak my mind,” he said, “but I’m also open and ready to meet new people and see new things. I approach life that way. Each day, there’s a chance to get better and be a better person.”

It may help explain why he can be all over the map on Twitter, from the sublime to the ridiculous. “You see his interests in everything from country music to rap, to the Packers and Brewers,” John Dekker said. “That’s why he can fit in

“HE’S EXCITED ABOUT LIFE; HE LIVES LIFE TO THE FULLEST. HE HAS A GREAT HEART AND HE LIKES TO HAVE FUN. BUT HE LIKES HELPING PEOPLE OUT, TOO.”



JOHN FISHER

with so many people because he can relate to so many different kinds of things and he's genuine about it."

John and Sam Dekker communicate with each other almost every day. "We have a group chat with five of his buddies and me," Sam Dekker said. "We'll text on the side, too, random stuff about shoes, sports, video games, basketball, just about anything."

Sam Dekker was the best man in John Dekker's wedding.

"He's my brother," John said, "but I also consider him my best friend."

Sam Dekker returned the compliment.

"He's always approached everything with the

mentality, 'Let's get it done and do it the right way; don't take any shortcuts,'" he said. "That's something that has rubbed off on me."

Interjected Todd Dekker, "There was a time when Sam could never beat John."

Those days are pretty much over, though John bested Sam, one-on-one, once last summer.

"He'd be the first to tell you that I was blessed with a little more physical gifts, so I didn't have to work as hard on certain things," Sam said. "But to see how hard he worked with what he had really inspired me to use the gifts that I have to propel my game further."

Their battles as kids were memorable.

"Growing up," John Dekker recalled, "he always played with my friends, the older guys. And he got beat up a little bit, but it kind of made him what he is today."

"And I think they had fun beating me up, too," Sam Dekker added with a smirk. "They never let me win. I think that's why I like winning so much now."

Todd Dekker viewed their competitive fire and fraternal instincts through the eyes of a father.

"To have those two guys go into a gym and get after each other is a great thing for a dad to see," he said. "But they helped each other and they had each other's back. And they'd throw their sister in there, too. I'm very proud of all of them."

Hannah Dekker is three years older than Sam and lives and works in Milwaukee.

"She's so loyal and such a hard-working girl. She has one of the most outgo-

▼ PHOTOS: SAM AND JOHN DEKKER Swipe to change • Tap to pause/play

ing personalities I've ever been around," Sam Dekker said. "She was class president, student council president and always volunteering for different drives and stuff in high school. She just wants to help people. It has been cool throughout the years to watch her being so selfless. That's something I've always admired about her."

John Dekker, meanwhile, believes Sam gets his personality from their mother, Carol. "He's easy-going and she's just like that, too, just the nicest person. That's how he is," John said.

Asked about that assessment, Sam Dekker said, "I think that I have a little of her charm, kind of the flirty nature. She's always outgoing and smiling. I think I get the colorful personality side of it from her, the highs and lows. My dad is

a little more even keeled."

Conceding that he possesses some of his dad's other personality traits — "His quirkiness and corny jokes" — Sam Dekker also confided that he can be tougher than necessary on his mom sometimes. Like he was Sunday.

"I could sense she was getting a little upset," he said. "It's all good-natured ... she cares so

much and she wants everything to be perfect all the time and I have to cool her down and bring her back to earth and make her laugh and chuckle a little bit. We do it in good fun but

"HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GUARD 6-9 AND 7-FOOT WHEN BOTH ARE ATHLETIC AND BOTH CAN MOVE?" DEKKER ASKED. "ME AND FRANK COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER WELL."

sometimes I go too far."

So how did he handle the situation when he knew that he crossed the line?

"I had to give her a hug," he said with a faint smile.

Sam being Sam again. 



LEAVING A MARK

A photograph of a woman, Brittany Ammerman, wearing a white baseball cap with a red logo and a red t-shirt. She is smiling and shaking hands with a young girl in a school uniform. Other children are visible in the background, also smiling. The scene is outdoors, possibly at a school or community event.

BRITTANY AMMERMAN, AIDED BY ONE OF THE MOST DECORATED FEMALE ATHLETES IN U.S. HISTORY, IS CHANGING THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN AFRICA ... WITH THE HELP OF A SOCCER BALL

BY MIKE LUCAS • UWBADGERS.COM



And then she responded to someone that she had never met before, the emailer, Brittany Ammerman, a fifth-year senior on the Wisconsin women's hockey team. "I don't know what you need," Foudy wrote, "or how I can help but I will help. Here's my contact information. Get in touch with me."

This emotional reaction was not out of character for Foudy, who was a catalyst and captain on some memorable national teams that won two World Cups and two gold medals in the Olympics. Along with Mia Hamm and Brandi Chastain, she was one of the most recognizable faces of women's soccer.

"With our leadership academies, I'm always talking to young kids about the same things, 'You've got to ask for help. People want to help, but you have to ask for it,'" Foudy emphasized. "It's so hard for young girls to get that. They think, 'Oh, no, I don't want to ask for help.'"

Ammerman asked and Foudy answered. "We chatted by phone," Foudy said, "and I was so impressed by the fact that here's this senior, student ice hockey player in the middle of the season and she's willing to take this on and had the guts to basically cold call and say, 'Hey, can I get some help?'"

The more Foudy learned about Ammerman and her cause — the Nikumbuke Women's Soccer League in Kenya — the more she was convinced that Ammerman had a special story; one that meshed with her foundation's mission statement and belief, "Within every girl and woman, there is a leader."

In this context, the more Foudy thought about

When the director of the Julie Foudy Leadership Foundation came across the email, she was so touched by what she had seen in the attachment that she went directly to Foudy and advised her, "If you have a moment, check out this video."

There's not much that the 44-year-old Foudy hasn't seen as an athlete, analyst or activist. But this nine-minute YouTube clip struck a chord with the Hall of Fame soccer midfielder, ABC/ESPN reporter and commentator and longtime advocate of women's and children's rights.

"I clicked on the video," Foudy said, "and I was practically in tears watching it."

Her first impulse was, "Oh, my God, how I can help?"

it, the more she liked the message that Ammerman was sending because of the perspective that it offered. “There are so many negative stories about NCAA student-athletes and NCAA athletics,” she said, “we don’t highlight enough of the good.”

And this was almost too good to be true, Foudy admitted. “Here’s a kid who could have very easily said, ‘Look, it’s my senior year, an incredibly important season, my last season, and I’m one of the best players in the nation and I’m going to be all in and focused on only that,’” she said.

“Yet she has had the presence and perspective to say, ‘I have this really rare and unique opportunity to help others in a country that is clamoring for it and I’m going to sacrifice some of my time and energy and dedicate myself to this.’ That’s pretty powerful when you think about it.”

Foudy’s reoccurring sentiment is to the point and telling when she thinks about Ammerman and what she has accomplished, “I keep going, ‘Wow, impressive.’”

••••

Last summer, Ammerman returned to Wisconsin from the Jersey Shore — she’s from River Vale, New Jersey — and saw the video that she would later send to Foudy. The video was the work of Dr. Araceli Alonso, the founder of Health by Motorbike, a mobile health initiative for women that provides basic education, services and supplies to rural communities in Third World countries like Kenya.

In the spring of 2013, Ammerman was among a small group of UW students who spent a month in Kenya as a part of a team to promote wellness through Health by Motorbike. It was during this initial excursion to Africa with Alonso, a senior lecturer in women’s studies, that Ammerman got the ball rolling, literally, and quite by chance, with a soccer ball; an innocent purchase and instrument of change.

Buoyed by the reaction of the women who joyfully embraced the simple pleasure of the sport in its most rudimentary form, Ammerman returned to the states and reached out to family and friends in her inner circle to help raise nearly \$2,000 that went towards forming and outfit-

▼ TAP TO WATCH - Brittany Ammerman & the Nikumbuke Soccer League



ting teams in a couple of villages, Jirani and Mpakani; the starting point for the Nikumbuke Women's League.

Those fund-raising efforts included selling T-shirts that had the "Health by Motorbike" logo on the front and "Nikumbuke" on the back. Nikumbuke is the health post in Lunga Lunga, a coast province in southeast Kenya. Nikumbuke is also Swahili for "remember me." There was no way Ammerman could forget. How could she after what she had experienced up-close and personal? Then it got better.

"Seriously, it was the coolest thing I had ever seen in my life," she said after seeing the Alonso video from the first game played on June 14, 2014. "They were so happy to be playing. Every time one of the women would score, the entire village would run out and they would be singing and dancing.

"They would then have to clear them off the field to continue the game. It was cool because the women were competing so hard and it wasn't all about money or playing in front of fans, it was just to compete. I cried watching. I think everyone who has seen it has cried for the most part."

Now the real work started for Ammerman upon learning from Alonso that four additional villages and the Maasai tribe wanted to participate and start their own teams in the soccer



league. Ammerman estimated that it would take about \$1,000 per team for jerseys, shorts, socks and shoes, including the cost of getting everything to Kenya. "How am I going to do this?" she asked herself. Good question.

"I went back home and I was sitting around talking to my mom (Babette) and telling her, 'This is starting to get really big and I need some sort of corporate connection or something because I'm not going to be able to do this fundraising on my own,'" Ammerman related.

"Thinking about women's soccer in general, I remembered the 1999 World Cup team from the United States and how they had been my role models growing up. I went to Giants Stadium on my birthday to watch them play and from that moment on, I loved that team."

At Wisconsin, Ammerman had even written a research paper on that team and her reflections then and now. And three players came to mind: Fouady, Hamm and Christie Rampone. In late July, Ammerman went to Google and got the

contact information for each of their foundations. Hamm's agent replied first. They liked the idea and encouraged Ammerman to apply for a grant in September.

Ammerman also heard back from Rampone's agent. Thanks but no thanks. Super busy. "I

"It was cool because the women were competing so hard and it wasn't all about money or playing in front of fans, it was just to compete. I cried watching (the video). I think everyone who has seen it has cried for the most part."

▲ **SLIDESHOW:** Swipe to change • Tap to pause/play

don't think he even passed it along to her," Ammerman wagered. "Two days later, in my in-box, there was an email from Julie Foudy herself and the subject was 'WOW!' in caps with an exclamation point."

Foudy was in, and that led to a phone conversation.

"I tried to play it cool at first," Ammerman said. "But at the end of our first conversation, I told her, 'I'm just going to be honest. I have always been a huge fan of yours and you have been a role model.'" She went on to tell Foudy that she knew every line from the HBO documentary on that 1999 soccer team, "Dare to Dream." And she concluded, "This is kind of surreal to be talking to you."

As they got to know each other better, they just seemed to click. Despite all of her noteworthy achievements on and off the playing field, Foudy has a very disarming personality and presence, even on the phone, even if you've never met her before, making it feel like you've

really known her for years. And while she is a big deal, in light of those accomplishments, she doesn't come off sounding like one.

"We're both kind of crazy and outgoing and I think that's why we get along pretty well," Ammerman suggested. "We'll call each other and one of us will answer and it will be like, 'Hey, Crazy lady, how's it going?' Even in our emails, we'll go off on rants; stuff completely off the mark of what we're trying to do. It's just fun. She's awesome."

Foudy thinks likewise of Ammerman. "The other day I called her," said Foudy, who suddenly morphed into a golf analyst's voice; barely above a whisper, "and she said, 'Can I call you back, I'm in the middle of a Physics exam right now?' Oh, my gosh, yes, you can."

Her astonishment, of course, was over the fact that Ammerman would even ask if she could continue taking the exam as opposed to stopping and chatting. "My phone started going off and I looked and it was Julie and it was like, 'I've

got to answer,” Ammerman explained. “She almost died laughing.”

For the record, Ammerman got 100 on the exam. Foudy also gave her an “A” for time management while juggling academics, athletics and fundraising. How does she do it all?

“Everyone always asks me that,” said Ammerman. “It’s not work for me, so I think that’s why I’m able to juggle it. If I have to, I can get up two hours earlier in the morning. It’s not like I’m getting up and dreading what I’m about to do. I’ll happily wake up and work on it. To me, it’s not anything draining or exhausting. I love to do this stuff.”

“The soccer league is something I’m really passionate about. Hockey is something I’m really passionate about. My academics are something I’m really passionate about because I’m taking classes at the University of Wisconsin that are important to me and they’re also going to get me into medical school, which is my ultimate goal.”

Ammerman wants to be a surgeon. Foudy can relate. She got her undergraduate degree from Stanford. “And I got accepted in Stanford Med (1996) and was going but deferred for two years and then decided no one would trust me as a doctor,” she said, breaking into laughter. “I haven’t had that talk with her yet. I don’t want to discourage her. But I’ve lived it. I know how hard that is to do (pre-med). It’s a hard road.”

On the business end, one of the first things Foudy did

for Ammerman was introduce her to a friend from Nike who lives in Portland. He wound up getting his teenage daughters and their youth soccer teammates involved in a fundraiser at a restaurant with a percentage of the proceeds

going to the Nikumbuke Soccer League. “It was cool because we got younger girls involved,” Ammerman said.

Foudy then came up with the idea of a Twitter auction. This would turn out to be a home run. Foudy got

the national team involved with a signed jersey. Abby Wambach bid and threw in a pair of her game-worn cleats. ESPN sportscaster John Bucigross, an avid booster of college hockey, willingly participated and spiked the bidding. There

“IT WAS THE COOLEST THING I HAD EVER SEEN IN MY LIFE,” AMMERMAN SAID. “EVERY TIME ONE OF THE WOMEN WOULD SCORE, THE ENTIRE VILLAGE WOULD RUN OUT AND THEY WOULD BE SINGING AND DANCING.”





were tweets and retweets and more tweets and retweets.

It was a rousing success. The Twitter auction alone raised more than \$7,000 in an hour. In combination with the web site, and the other fundraising events, the grand total was almost \$30,000. “We got a lot more than I was expecting,” Ammerman said humbly. “It’s pretty crazy.”

Ammerman confessed that she needed to take a deep breath and a step back. “I didn’t foresee it becoming this huge,” she said, refocusing on the needs of Kenyan women more so than just the soccer league. “What I think is super cool, it’s the women who are asking or telling us what they want. We would never go over there and implement something that they don’t want themselves.”

What they want is soccer. “It doesn’t boggle my mind, it really is the world’s game,” Foudy said. “Women have always really gravitated to it. They just really haven’t been given a chance to play. We’re so lucky in the United States and we don’t think twice about it. But when we play in other countries, they look at you cross-eyed

when you say you’re a women’s professional soccer player.”

At the end of the UW hockey season, Ammerman is going back to Kenya.

“We’re going to implement two more teams, one is the Maasai tribe, and that’s a huge deal because they’ve always been stigmatized and separated from other villages just because of their nomadic life style,” Ammerman said. “What’s great about Health by Motorbike is that we’ve been able to build this cohesion between all the villages. The soccer brings all the tribes together.”

ESPN is working through the logistics of putting together a feature on the Nikumbuke Soccer League that could air during next summer’s World Cup. “If it gets approved, I think it would be phenomenal,” Foudy said. “It would be neat to see Brittany handing over the uniforms and the gear and seeing their reaction. To watch the games, now that would be really neat, I would love that.”

Foudy is planning on making the trip. There are elements to that video that she has never

gotten out of her mind. “You had all the women playing with the men watching and cheering them,” she said. “And there was this really cool dynamic that you could see in the joy in their faces. I’m just so glad that I watched the video and responded. She (Ammerman) has been this great inspiration to me. I tell people all the time, ‘Look at what this senior in college is doing.’”

What she is doing now — playing a leading role in the success of the Badgers — is something that she will not be doing much longer. When one door opens, another often shuts. And that’s the case with hockey. “I’m going to be done with hockey in March,” Ammerman said. “I got invited to USA Hockey this past July and I thought about it, but they wanted a long-term commitment.”


That didn’t interest her. “I always tell people that I’ve accomplished everything here besides going to the Olympics,” said Ammerman, who was a member of a NCAA championship team as a freshman. “I’m happy and content with the way my career has gone.”

FOUDY ON AMMERMAN:
“She has been this great inspiration to me. I tell people all the time, ‘Look at what this senior in college is doing.’”

Babette Ammerman used to remind her daughters, especially Brittany and Brooke, who also skated for the Badgers, that sports can be a worthy vehicle. “Sports are great and they’re going to give you so much but eventually they’re going to be over,” Brittany Ammerman remembered her saying.

“But there’s so much more to life than hockey and you’re going to want to give back as much as sports has given you,” she also remembered hearing from her mom. “I’ve always had that mindset. That’s why the soccer league is some-

thing I’ve been excelling with. I found something that I’m as passionate for as I am about hockey.

“In athletics, when your career ends, a lot of athletes have a tough time when they part from their sport and they try to find something that they’re as excited about to get up and do each day. I’ve learned what my next passion is and it’s not just the women’s soccer league but women’s health in general. It kind of confirmed what I want to do with the rest of my life.” Wow. Impressive. 



DAVID STILKA

Ryan a finalist for Naismith Hall of Fame

UW head coach one of 12 on the 2015 ballot

Hired as the head coach at the University of Wisconsin in 2001, Bo Ryan has since elevated the basketball program to heights previously unseen in Madison. In 2014, Ryan added another feat to an already illustrious resume, guiding the Badgers to their first Final Four since 2000 after winning 30 games for just the third time in school history.

For his distinguished coaching career — which includes four NCAA Division III national championships — Ryan was named a finalist to be considered for election in the Class of 2015 for the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Announced last Saturday during NBA All-Star Weekend, recognition as a Hall of Fame finalist would be a career highlight for anyone in the basketball world.

“I’m extremely humbled and honored just to be mentioned with the other names on the nominee list,” Ryan said. “The Hall of Fame holds so many revered legends of basketball and many of the individuals who originally sparked my love for the game.”

This year’s list includes six elite players, five outstanding coaches and one iconic referee as finalists to be considered for election in 2015.

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (24-2, 12-1)

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

RECENTLY

Feb. 3	#25 Indiana	W, 92-78
Feb. 7	Northwestern	W, 65-60
Feb. 10	at Nebraska	W, 65-55
Feb. 15	Illinois	W, 68-49
Feb. 18	at Penn State	W, 55-47

COMING UP

Feb. 21	Minnesota	11 a.m.
Feb. 24	at Maryland	6 p.m.
March 1	Michigan State	3 p.m.
March 5	at Minnesota	6 p.m.
March 8	at Ohio State	3:30 p.m.

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JACK MCLAUGHLIN

Badgers look for more at end of season

Wisconsin counting down regular season

Only four games remain in the regular season for Wisconsin, four games that could make a big difference on how the Badgers look back at the year.

“With the injuries that we had, and I look down the bench and you’ve got four people in street clothes, it doesn’t always make you feel too good,” UW head coach Bobbie Kelsey said. “But with the players that we do have that are playing, they’ve done a really good job of trying to step up and trying to do more for the team.”

“Going down the stretch here we do need more, if that’s possible ... we just need more balanced scoring and a lot of people playing defense as a unit. We are going to watch it and make sure that we take care of those areas that need to be shored up.”

The Badgers wrap up the home season this week, hosting No. 5-ranked and Big Ten-leading Maryland on Thursday. Wisconsin will honor its four seniors after Sunday’s game against Northwestern. UW then travels to No. 13 Iowa and Penn State before playing in the Big Ten tournament on March 4-8 at the Sears Centre Arena in Hoffman Estates, Illinois.

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (8-16, 4-10)

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

RECENTLY

Feb. 1	at Illinois	W, 73-62
Feb. 8	#16 Iowa	L, 75-87
Feb. 11	at Minnesota	L, 82-93
Feb. 15	at #22 Nebraska	L, 63-70

COMING UP

Feb. 19	#5 Maryland	8 p.m.
Feb. 22	Northwestern	3 p.m.
Feb. 26	at #13 Iowa	7 p.m.
Mar. 1	at Penn State	1 p.m.
Mar. 4-8	at Big Ten Tournament	

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Badgers' season runs through Michigan

Four of next five weekends involve the state

The University of Wisconsin is located in Madison, Wisconsin, but for the rest of the men's hockey season, the state of Michigan will be its home away from home — and its biggest rival.

Wisconsin plays three consecutive series against teams from its eastern neighbor — starting this weekend in Madison against Michigan State — and plays three of its next five weeks inside the state's borders.

Next week, UW hits the road to visit the University of Michigan for a Feb. 27-28 series with the Wolverines. The Badgers then open March with a trip to Michigan State on March 6-7, marking the second time this season it has seen an opponent twice in the span of three weeks.

After getting back to Madison for its regular-season finale against Ohio State on March 13-14, UW will again return to Michigan, this time to Detroit for the 2015 Big Ten Tournament. The tourney will take place at Joe Louis Arena, site of UW's 1990 NCAA championship victory, and in the same city as UW's 1977 NCAA title.

More immediately, for the third time this season, UW will en-

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (3-19-4, 1-9-2-2)

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

RECENTLY

Feb. 6	at Penn State	L, 5-2
Feb. 7	at Penn State	L, 4-1
Feb. 13	at Ohio State	L, 2-1
Feb. 14	at Ohio State	W, 3-2

COMING UP

Feb. 20	Michigan State	8 p.m.
Feb. 21	Michigan State	7 p.m.
Feb. 27	at Michigan	6:30 p.m.
Feb. 28	at Michigan	3 p.m.
March 6	at Michigan State	6 p.m.
March 7	at Michigan State	6 p.m.

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Wisconsin hits final homestretch of season

UW faces St. Cloud State in regular-season finale

Thirty-two regular season games are in the books for No. 4 Wisconsin. Now only two regular season games remain, as the Badgers welcome St. Cloud State to Madison for their final regular-season series.

The Badgers are coming off of a series split at Ohio State, as UW took the first game, 2-0, thanks to a pair of goals by senior captain Blayre Turnbull before falling to the Buckeyes on Saturday. Ohio State scored twice in the third period of the finale to take a 4-2 lead on UW but the Badgers didn't back down, scoring with an extra attacker to make it a 4-3 game with a minute to go before OSU managed to hold on down the stretch.

"I think we can't take any periods or shifts off," UW junior defenseman Courtney Burke said. "We have to work hard the whole game and can't get outworked by the other team. That happened a lot against Ohio State on the second night. Going forward, we can't relax at all."

"I liked the way we played the last eight or nine minutes when we got down 4-2," UW head coach Mark Johnson said. "We started to play with urgency, we started to play desperate, we started to play real well. We pulled our goalie, scored to make

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (23-5-4, 18-5-3)

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

RECENTLY

Feb. 6	#7 Minn. Duluth	T, 0-0
Feb. 7	#7 Minn. Duluth	W, 5-0
Feb. 13	Ohio State	5 p.m.
Feb. 14	Ohio State	3 p.m.

COMING UP

Feb. 20	St. Cloud State	2 p.m.
Feb. 22	St. Cloud State	Noon
Feb. 27	WCHA Playoff	7 p.m.
Feb. 28	WCHA Playoff	7 p.m.
March 1	WCHA Playoff*	7 p.m.

* If necessary

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:





Badgers glad to go bald for a good cause

Everyone wins as Badgers lose their locks

What appeared to be an avenue for self-expression actually turned out to be a measure of selflessness.

When his helmet was on last season, Wisconsin's Vince Biegel was best known for his high-energy play at outside linebacker, where he racked up a team-high 16.5 tackles for loss.

When the lid came off, it was his flowing mullet — a hairstyle that long ago fell out of fashion but was somehow pulled off by Biegel — that caught people's attention.

Biegel took the look to another level with specially-shaved sides that displayed everything from the Badgers' iconic Motion W to a Chevrolet "bow-tie" emblem in honor of his fellow linebackers that referred to themselves as the Chevy Bad Boys.

On Monday, all that individuality went out the window in favor of a show of solidarity as Biegel and several of his teammates lost their locks as part of the second-annual Badgers Go Bald event.

Inside the Badgers' locker room, pediatric cancer patients from American Family Children's Hospital manned the clippers to provide five players with new close-cropped looks. Another

2015 SCHEDULE

Home games in **bold**. Times TBD.

Sept. 5	vs. Alabama
Sept. 12	Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 19	Troy
Sept. 26	Hawai'i
Oct. 3	Iowa
Oct. 10	at Nebraska
Oct. 17	Purdue (Homecoming)
Oct. 24	at Illinois
Oct. 31	Rutgers
Nov. 7	at Maryland
Nov. 21	Northwestern
Nov. 28	at Minnesota

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-SCROLL FOR MORE-



Championship season begins for Badgers

Women at Big Ten championships this week

In the world of college swimming, everything comes down to championship season. Although the Wisconsin swimming and diving program has already impressed many by holding its own through a challenging regular-season schedule featuring some of the nation's top competition, it is at championship meets that the country's best are able to shine and prove who's elite.

The Wisconsin women get the first opportunity, beginning with the Big Ten championships this week in Columbus, Ohio.

Many eyes will be on senior Ivy Martin, who heads into her fourth and final college championship season. The Madison native looks to defend her Big Ten title in the 50-yard freestyle by winning the crown for the third-straight season. Martin also looks to defend her conference title in the 100 freestyle with a second-consecutive win in the event. After setting Big Ten records in both events last year, while also helping UW's 200 and 400 freestyle relay teams to event titles, Martin was named the 2014 Big Ten Swimmer of the Championships.

Thanks to her impressive swimming resume — which includes a spot on the 2014-15 USA Swimming National Team and an

WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

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

RECENTLY

Jan. 9	at USC	L, 115-142
Jan. 16-17	Indiana	L, 173-174
Jan. 16-17	Notre Dame	W, 244-109
Feb. 6	Milwaukee	W, 137-92
Feb. 7	Green Bay	W, 160-130

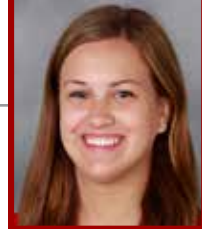
COMING UP

Feb. 18-21	Big Ten Championships <i>Columbus, Ohio</i>
Mar. 20-22	NCAA Championships <i>Greensboro, N.C.</i>

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



-SCROLL FOR MORE-



Oscar nominee 'Foxcatcher' has UW ties

Many Badgers connections to Schultz brothers

The movie *Foxcatcher* that has taken Hollywood — and the wrestling world — by storm has a number of connections to the Wisconsin wrestling program.

The film, which is nominated for five Academy Awards, tells the story of Dave Schultz, a seven-time world champion and Olympic medalist who won gold at the same time as his brother Mark in the 1984 Olympics. The film is based loosely on the events surrounding multimillionaire John du Pont's recruitment of the brothers to help coach U.S. wrestlers on his 800-acre Foxcatcher Farm.

Wisconsin wrestling head coach Barry Davis and volunteer assistant coach Mitch Hull were on several teams with Schultz and knew him well.

Schultz also coached with Andy Rein at UW from 1986-88 and left Wisconsin to go to the "Farm," featured in the movie as the Foxcatcher/DuPont Estate, to train to and coach.

"Schultz was, and is still, considered by many to be the greatest wrestling technician of this generation," Hull said.

While at UW, Schultz helped coach athletes like two-time All-American Jeff Jordan (uncle of current UW All-American

SCHEDULE (9-3, 7-2)

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

RECENTLY

Jan. 9	at N'western	W, 30-16
Jan. 11	Purdue	W, 22-13
Jan. 23	at Michigan	L, 24-12
Jan. 25	at Michigan St.	W, 34-6
Feb. 6	Rutgers	W, 19-18
Feb. 8	at Illinois	L, 20-15

COMING UP

Feb. 22	at Iowa State	2 p.m.
March 7	Big Ten Championships	
March 8	Big Ten Championships	

[> View complete schedule](#)

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-SCROLL FOR MORE-



DAVID STLUKA

Back at home: UW hosts Red & White Open

Badgers host final indoor regular season meet

In the final weekend of the indoor regular season, the Wisconsin track and field teams return home to host the Red & White Open at The Shell on Friday.

Both the men's and women's teams moved up in the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association rankings this week after posting some strong numbers at the Iowa State Classic. The women climbed eight spots to No. 10, marking their highest-ever ranking, while the men's squad moved up three spots to No. 15.

The success of the women's team, the highest-ranked squad in the Big Ten Conference, is something that excites Wisconsin Director of Track & Field Mick Byrne.

"I think it's exciting to see the progress," Byrne said. "We still think we're young. It's something that we talk a lot to our women about. When we combined programs, we knew there would be a trickledown effect in being around championship winning teams, which the men have been.

"Deanna Latham, Kelsey Card and Angela Boushea, all upperclassmen, bought into it and you could tell that they wanted to kind of set their own niche and be part of championship-type

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE

Home meets in **bold**.

LAST WEEK

Feb. 13-14 Iowa State Classic

COMING UP

Feb. 20 **Red & White Open**

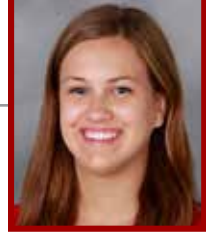
Feb. 20-21 Alex Wilson Invitational

Feb. 27-28 Big Ten Championships

March 13-14 NCAA Indoor Championships

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BOBBY GRASHEL

Badgers see growth and progress in Texas

UW won four of six in weekend tournament

An emphasis on small ball helped Wisconsin put a big number in the win column last weekend.

The Badgers went 4-2 at the Islander Invitational in Corpus Christi, Texas, recording doubleheader sweeps of both Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and South Dakota before falling twice to UAB.

“It’s always good to get wins,” Wisconsin head coach Yvette Healy said. “Any time you can get four wins in a weekend it’s exciting. We saw some good things.”

The Badgers lost to UAB in an 8-7 heartbreaker on Valentine’s Day and dropped a 3-2 decision to the Blazers a day later. The last contest was a walk-off win in the bottom of the seventh after junior Taylor-Paige Stewart had held the Blazers scoreless through five innings.

“Both of those games against UAB were definitely heartbreakers but that’s exactly what you want this time of year,” Healy said. “You want to challenge your team and have those tough situations and that’s why you fly all across the country to get all those early games in against quality competition.

“UAB does an outstanding job. They are a Super Regional

-SCROLL FOR MORE-

SCHEDULE (5-6, 0-0)

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

ISLANDER INVITATIONAL

Feb. 12	Texas A&M-CC	W, 4-2
Feb. 12	Texas A&M-CC	W, 5-4
Feb. 13	South Dakota	W, 6-1
Feb. 13	South Dakota	W, 4-1
Feb. 14	UAB	L, 8-7
Feb. 15	UAB	L, 3-2

ALEXIS PARK RESORT CLASSIC

Feb. 27	Idaho State	11 a.m.
Feb. 28	NMSU	11 a.m.
March 1	DePaul	11 a.m.

[> View complete schedule](#)

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FIRST-TIME CHAMPIONS

FEBRUARY 19, 1977: The men's hockey team clinched its first WCHA regular-season championship with a 6-4 win over Minnesota-Duluth at the Dane County Coliseum. The Badgers went on to win the WCHA playoffs and claim the NCAA title.

-MORE THIS WEEK-



ALL-TIME ANDERSON

FEBRUARY 20, 2008:

Jolene Anderson became UW's all-time leading scorer for men and women, surpassing Alando Tucker's 2,217 career points. Anderson ended her career with 2,312 points.



SPORTING BATS

FEBRUARY 22, 1996:

Wisconsin's inaugural softball team, under the direction of head coach Karen Gallagher, made its debut at the Arizona State Classic in Tempe, Arizona.



FASTEST FIFTY

FEBRUARY 19, 2009:

Freshman Beckie Thompson broke her own Big Ten record in the 50-yard freestyle with a swim of 22.09 seconds on her way to the conference title in the event.