Blizzard QB Max Meylor has made the most of his moment to shine

BY MALLORY ALLEN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

ASHWAUBENON - It was Saturday, May 13, just after 3:30 p.m.

The Green Bay Blizzard were hosting the San Diego Strike Force at the Resch Center in Ashwaubenon for their annual "Faith & Family Day."

Five minutes and 59 seconds remained in the first

Then came the words no Blizzard fan wanted to hear about their team's starting quarterback.

"Oh no..." said playby-play announcer Joey Bonadonna, worry laden in his voice. "Ja'rome Johnson is down. He's in serious pain, holding his knee."

Johnson an electric, explosive dual-threat rookie QB who had made a quick name for himself through the first six weeks of the 2023 Indoor Football League (IFL) season limped off the field in obvious distress, clutching his right knee.

Although the circumstances certainly weren't ideal, back-up Quarterback Max Meylor knew he'd been given his opportunity to prove what he could do — and he was determined to make the most of it.

Wisconsin made

25-year-old Meylor was raised by his parents, Joen and Dave, in Mount Horeb, a small town about 20 miles southwest of Madison as the younger brother of two sisters, Maddie and Olivia.

"I started flag football in third grade and moved to tackle in fourth grade. That's when I started playing quarterback. It just came easy to me," Meylor said. "My dad never pressured me to play, but I grew up watching football and just loved it."

He attended Lindenwood University in Missouri from 2016-2018 as a dual-sport athlete, competing for both the football and basketball teams.

Meylor then transferred to the UW-Whitewater, where he graduated in 2022 with a degree in Occupational Safety and Health.

While at UW-Whitewater, he led the Warhawks to several conference titles, as well as an appearance in the 2019 Division



Meylor takes a snap during his first Indoor Football Leage start versus the lowa Barnstormers on May 20.

III Football Championship game and the 2021 playoff semi-finals.

Mevlor said the connection that he shares with Blizzard Offensive Coordinator Matt Behrendt who won three national championships as a quarterback at UW-Whitewater – is "really special."

"Coach Behrendt is a well-known guy there, so I knew all about him, of course — he's on the walls everywhere in our [Whitewater] locker room," Meylor said. "I've always really respected him. He's a winner and he does things right. I'm happy to be a part of this team with him."

Behrendt sang similar praise for Meylor, saying, "It's definitely great to see a fellow Warhawk succeed at the next level. It's easy to tell why Max was so successful in college and why it's translating to the pros. He's just super coachable and loves to get

Getting his shot

Meylor and Johnson battled through training camp for the QB1 spot, and both saw time during Green Bay's season opener against the Frisco Fighters on March 19.

But ultimately it was Johnson who earned the starting job, and for the next five games, Meylor saw no action.

"It was pretty tough mentally, just to stay locked in," he said of being forced to sit on the sideline rather than competing on the field.

"But I knew that if I got my shot to play, I'd have to be prepared, and if I didn't have the right mindset at practice every day, I wouldn't be. I just had to believe in myself and trust that I'd be ready to perform and show everyone what I could do if the time came."

Low and behold, Meylor's time came on May 13, when Johnson was hit hard by two Strike Force linemen and suffered an MCL tear midway through the first quarter.

Mevlor said he recalls the moment vividly. "I was in the back of our bench area messing with the iPad, watching film from the game, when I heard a couple guys yell to me, 'Max! Grab vour helmet!'

I just remember thinking, 'Oh my God, here we go.""

Despite the immense pressure suddenly thrown on him, Meylor was calm and collected as he jogged over to Behrendt and the offensive huddle.

"I just had to get a couple throws in. I knew I had practiced every day for months, waiting for my moment to come, and I was ready to go out there and win that game for my team."

Meylor tossed two TDs and rushed for another en route to a 61-50 victory over San Diego.

With Johnson placed on short-term injured reserve (IR) and sidelined for the foreseeable future, the now 3-4 Blizzard were entering a new era with Max Meylor at the helm.

As he prepared to make his first start the next weekend versus the Iowa Barnstormers, Meylor acknowledged the weight he felt knowing that the trajectory of Green Bay's season was resting largely on his shoulders.

"It was nerve-wracking for sure," he said. "But at the same time, I was just so excited to play. I'd wait-

ed a long time to make my first start and really showcase what I can do. It was a lot of fun to be out on the field with my teammates and get a win in front of an awesome Green Bay Blizzard crowd."

Proving himself

Since Meylor took over as quarterback in mid-May, the Blizzard have won four of their last six games — including three key conference victories — and are in contention for an Eastern Conference playoff bid.

In his time under center, Meylor has scorched the opposing defenses both in the air and on the ground, notching 1,196 all-purpose yards and 30 total touchdowns (19 passing and 11 rushing) with only two turnovers.

"Our offense has not missed a beat with Max at the reins. It's not easy at all to replace a guy like Ja'rome [Johnson], with everything he can do and how explosive he is. But Max has been preparing for this all year long," Behrendt said. "The way he goes about practice and how he's continuously

growing and adjusting to this game as a quarterback is great to see. We know how lucky we are to have two really good QBs that

can command the offense." Meylor has been just as valuable for the Blizzard out in the Green Bay community as he is on the field, already attending more than a dozen appearances at schools, youth football camps and other local events so far this season.

"Doing appearances means a lot to me. I truly enjoy them. Just watching the kids get so excited to see us is incredible. It's cool to have the chance to brighten their days and change their lives," Meylor said. "The schools and organizations we work with give our team so much support, so I love being able to do the same thing in return."

Regardless of how the Blizzard season ends, and which quarterback starts once Johnson is healthy again, Meylor has more than proved his talent and skill at the professional level, and he's looking forward to whatever the future has in store for him.

WSN Cup Notre Dame Academy becomes a 2023

BY TORI WITTENBROCK SPORTS REPORTER

GREEN BAY - Notre Dame Academy has recently been named one of three Wisconsin Sports Network (WSN) Cup Winners for the 2022-23 sea-

The award has been proudly received by a myriad of teams from all over the state of Wisconsin for the past 15 years.

This year marks NDA's first Cup in a while, their last win being a decade ago in the 2012-13 season. This is also the school's fourth WSN Cup overall for the Medium School Division.

2022-23 athletic The season has been big for NDA, winning three state championships. The Tritons won state titles for

boys cross country at the end of the fall season, also performing well in boys soccer (runner-ups) and girls cross country (third place) for a total of 351 points overall. The winter season also

showed exceptional athletic performances from the school with two additional state titles. Girls basketball and boys hockey won state for a total of 239.1 points on the season.

NDA's spring season was a bit of a battle for the Tritons, earning 167 points, finishing eighth overall in the standings. However, the boys tennis team made an appearance at state and boys track finished sixth.

The school finished ahead of a range of other athletically talented teams for the Medium School Division title. Edgewood, Whitefish Bay, West Salem and McFarland were close behind in the final standings

"Notre Dame Academy and our school community is very honored and proud of earning this achievement." said NDA Athletic Director Matthew Koenig. "Our athletes and coaches work extremely hard throughout the year

to be the best they can be and they should all take pride in this accomplishment.'

Koenig said that this award is a big accomplishment for the school as a whole, and getting here has been a tremendous group effort.

"This is an overall department award and all 500 of our athletes played a part in this honor."

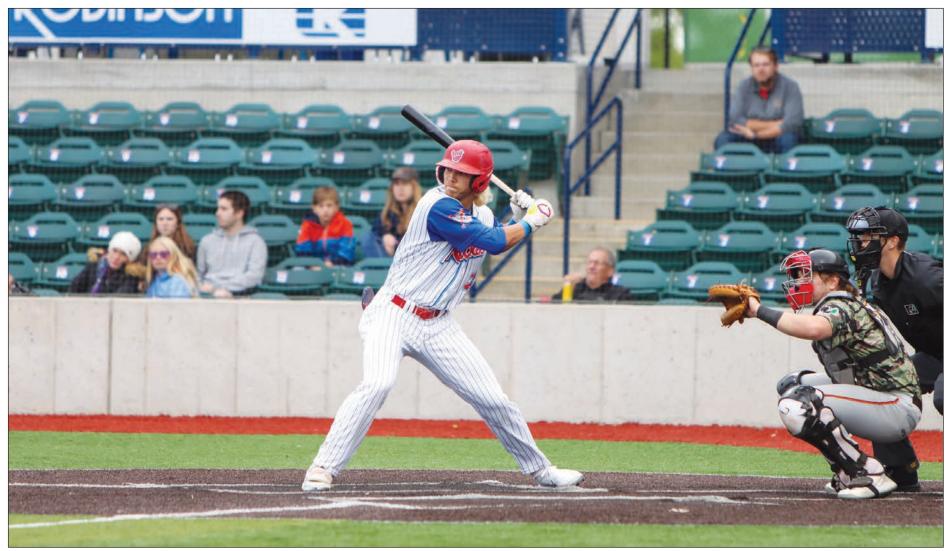
Green Bay Youth Rugby in action



Green Bay Youth Rugby's youngest players hit the field at Ledgeview's Willow Creek Park on June 21. The soon-to-be first and second graders practiced some rugby basics through games and drills before putting their new skills to the test in a scrimmage. Thea VanNieuwenhoven (with ball) evades opponents Jet Winters and Hayvin Fakhouri as she pushes towards the end of the field in Janelle Fisher photos



Everly Gray takes a pass from teammate Jet Winters (in green) with Delta Strawn and Philip Pullin (in orange) hot on their heels.



Kyle West at bat in a game for the Green Bay Rockers.

Submitted photo

Kyle West continues to lead Green Bay through first half

BY GUS BAYLOW **CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

ASHWAUBENON Four star infielder/outfielder Kyle West (West Virginia), hadn't played in front of a crowd of near 2,000 people in his college career prior to joining the Rockers this summer, after starting out his career at the University of Charleston.

That all changed, however, after the first Firework Friday of the season at Capital Credit Union Park on June 2, where in front of 1.603 people, West recorded his fourth consecutive multi-hit game at the time and finished 2-5 with a run scored and RBI against the Wausau Woodchucks.

Even if it was a bigger crowd than what he's used to, the adjustment became very minimal for the DII All-American, as he fed off the jubilant fans to fuel his hot start at the plate and lead the Rockers offensively once again.

"To be able to experience the fireworks with my guys is like a surreal moment," West said. "I've always grown up with it being the same game no matter what. You just have to stay consistent and not ride the emotional roller coaster."

Playing on the biggest stage is nothing new for West, however, as his roots of excelling at the highest level go back to his two-year career with the Golden Eagles, posting a .374 career batting average in 100 games played, with 30 homers and 102 RBIs to put himself as one of the best DII players not just in the

Mountain East Conference where he played, but in all the country.

As West continued to showcase his talents at an All-American level at Charleston, West knew he could elevate his game to the next step in the summer and pressed his coaches about wanting to get that pro-ball experience while still in school.

That's when he found the Northwoods League and the Green Bay Rockers, who he had heard about through several connections with his college coaches, and after looking up the facilities and atmosphere of Rockers games, West became all-in with trying to lead Green Bay to enormous success in 2023.

"All I heard about was how sick the facilities were, and they didn't lie," what they have going here. It's great and so far it's probably the best that I played in throughout the Northwoods League.

Along with playing with the Rockers this summer, West has received numerous opportunities to move up in the college ranks after recently announcing his decision to enter the transfer portal.

Despite several schools across the country reaching out to the Hedgesville, W. Va. native, one school was on his mind throughout the entire process, with that team being the one he idealized growing up during his entire childhood.

When he sat down with the West Virginia baseball program, he quickly realized the opportunity

he had in front of him and wasted no time in terms of deciding, knowing that a life-long dream was about to come true.

"I thought it would have been a perfect opportunity to join and get the experience that I was wanting to get out of high school, but two years later," West said, "it really drives home what it means to play in front of your home state and in front of the people who support you and I think it's going to be an incredible experience being able to play for the state that I grew up and was born

Getting to play for a team in West Virginia that had one of its best seasons in recent years excites West, but for now, all he's focused on is bringing the Rockers West said. "If anything, more success as they they underestimated remain one of the top teams in the Northwoods League 20 games in.

Having the opportunity to play every night has allowed West to improve each game for Green Bay, and now as the Rockers enter the heart of their 2023 season, getting as many chances as possible to get better continues to be most important for the future Mountaineer in Kyle West.

"The best part about this is you will play every night," West said. "I think the most accomplished feeling would be to play 95% of the games and to not feel worn out by the end of it because it goes to show how well you take care of yourself and your body."

There is certainly no doubt that West will only continue to excel as he continues to get more most excited about headplaying time, and as he prepares for the rest of this summer, staying locked in and finishing strong are what West is

ing into the rest of this season.

"My goal looking forward is to be able to finish the main stretch of this season strong and to finish the way I started," West said. "That would be having good health and good spirits and continue

Get to know your **Green Bay Rockers**

Name: JoJo Jackson Position: Right Field Jersey Number: 23 Number of seasons with Rockers: First

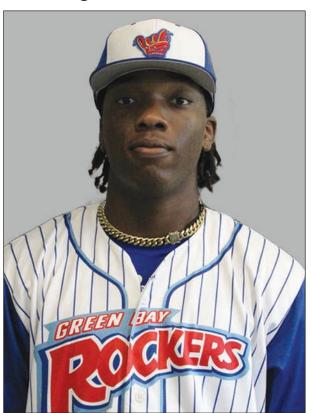
Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

School: Georgia State University

Career Highlight: In the conference tournament, when we were playing Georgia Southern one of our rivals — I hit the go-ahead-bomb in the first inning.

What is your favorite baseball memory? I have many good baseball memories with teammates, but my favorite baseball memory is when I had my little nephew go out and throw the first pitch in one of my high school games.

Who has been the biggest influence in your baseball career? I would say it's really been my mom and my dad because over the years they have put so much time and effort into me day-in and day-out. My dad usually works with me on the more physical side of things like working out and training, and my mom helps me out with the mental side of things. She taught me that baseball is a game of failure and vou need that mental stability and peace in order to continue in this game because you've got to



Jackson

be willing to be happy with the wins and the losses.

What is your favorite way to celebrate after a big win? A nice meal and something sweet.

How do you like to spend your free time? I either like watching movies or going to hit. I'm a real simple guy.

What is your favorite restaurant in Green Bay? I'd say 1919. I've had

a few good meals from there.

What is your favorite TV show? For my favorite TV show right now, I'd have to say *Barry*.

What is your go-to **pregame snack?** It has to be Skittles — the purple pack.

Who is your favorite singer/band? Young Nudy! He's a rapper out of East Atlanta.



De Pere High School senior Claire Bjorge, with ball, missed all of her junior season due to a torn ACL in her right knee. Bjorge is healthy and back to playing full-time.

Almost one year removed from knee injury, Bjorge returns to game action

BY RICH PALZEWIC CONTRIBUTING WRITER

DE PERE - It took almost a full year, but Claire Bjorge is back doing what she loves — playing basket-

After tearing the ACL in her right knee on July 21 of last year, the De Pere High School girls' basketball senior recently took part in her first game action in almost a year at a summer league game on June 12.

"I thought I'd be a lot more scared to play, but I trust the knee — it's going great," she said. "I figured I'd be timid and not as aggressive, but I seem to be more aggressive now — it's a little weird."

Bjorge said she'll never forget that fateful day when she tore her ACL.

"I was in Minneapolis at

it happened," Bjorge, who missed all of her junior season at De Pere, said. "I drove into the lane and did a Euro step into a jump stop — my knee buckled and gave out."

Initially, Bjorge said the trainer onsite didn't think it was anything serious.

"I was hoping for the best," she said. "I saw someone the next day, and that trainer thought it was a hamstring tear and I'd be out for a week. After that, I was warming up for another game, and it gave out again when I changed directions."

Bjorge said upon returning home, she received the bad news via an MRI.

"I was told it was a full tear of the ACL and a partial tear of the MCL," she said. "It wasn't a hamstring

an AAU tournament when issue. It was hard to soak it in and accept it. Luckily, everyone around me was super supportive."

Missing her junior season

Bjorge burst onto the high school basketball scene as a freshman for the Redbirds, where she averaged 10.7 points per game.

During De Pere's state run during her sophomore campaign, Bjorge pumped in 15.7 points per outing.

"It was hard knowing I'd have to sit out my entire junior year," she said. "I couldn't do much for about six weeks (after the surgery), but then I slowly started lifting weights and rehabbing. (The rehab) got more intense as the days went on. I followed my Bellin program and did that to the best of my ability."

Once the season started, Bjorge said it was even harder to watch her teammates play.

"When practice started, all I could do was cheer for them," she said. "Late in the season, I participated more - did some free throws and non-contact things. Once I started improving, I thought maybe I could squeeze in playing (a game), but it just wasn't smart — I wasn't ready at all. I had no intention of playing as the season wound down."

Finally cleared

Bjorge said she began practicing with her AAU team, the Purple Aces, in

"I still couldn't do 5-on-5 stuff, but I slowly progressed from 1-on-1 to 5-on-5 as time went along," she said. "It was going well, but I didn't play in an early season scrimmage in Minneapolis — just to be safe."

Bjorge said she plans to continue with her AAU team and keep getting stronger.

"Before I tore my ACL, I didn't think lifting was that important," she said. "After the injury, it's changed my mindset on that. My dad harps on me to lift, and now I realize how important it is to keep things strong. I stretch before games better,

Bjorge said she's "very much looking forward to her senior season."

"I can't wait — our team is looking really good," she

College recruiting

Bjorge said before her injury, her recruiting process

was ramping up. "Recruiting took a pause after the injury," she said. "It scares you because you don't know what coaches are going to think or if they will completely ghost you. Most of them who were recruiting me before the injury have been positive and understanding — it's been good to get back into the recruiting part. I hope to commit before August."

Bjorge has Division I offers from Evansville and North Dakota and Division II offers from Maryville and Minnesota-Duluth.

"I used to think I wanted to go to a bigger school, but I don't care as much anymore about what division it is — I just want what's best for me and my future," she

BISCHEL

from page 40

the Wisconsin Woodchucks in the Northwoods League.

He also served as the pitching coach for three seasons at Northwest Missouri State and was an assistant coach at John Carroll University in Ohio and SNC.

Bischel was an academic all-conference first baseman and pitcher at St. Norbert (2000-03) and earned all-conference honors and served as the team captain as a senior.

Overall, Bischel has a 314-156 record (.668) as an NCAA coach, including

nine winning seasons and eight conference championships (four at Central Michigan, four at North-

"Jordan Bischel is the perfect fit to lead the University of Cincinnati baseball program, and we are thrilled to welcome him and his family to UC," UC Director of Athletics John Cunningham said in a statement. "As a head coach, he has won conference championships and consistently guided his teams to the postseason. He's a proven program builder and winner who has found success at every

level. He is a leader who will demand the best on and off the field of our student-athletes. We couldn't be happier to have him as our head coach "

In five seasons as head coach at CMU, Bischel sported a 102-32 MAC record and posted three consecutive 40-win full seasons.

"It's an incredible honor, humbling and a great opportunity to be the baseball coach at the University of Cincinnati," Bischel said at his introductory press conference on June 21. "We (my family) wanted to stay in the Midwest. My job is being a baseball coach, and

this is a baseball city. In the Big 12, if you're competing for a conference championship, you're competing na-

According to UC's athletic department website, Bischel signed a six-year contract to become the 33rd head coach in program history.

"I'm not going to have a rule book of 110 things my players have to do, but I do have one rule — 'Do the right thing," Bischel said. "In my 11 years as a head coach, I've learned if you do the right thing, other things will follow — the winning will take care of itself.'

He said Bearcats baseball will be similar to what he tried to install at CMU.

"Our pitchers are going to attack hitters and throw strikes and we'll play sound defense," Bischel said. "Baseball can be boring — they finally put the pitch clocks in — and three hours of watching strikeouts and walks isn't a lot of fun for me. We'll play fast fastball."

Bischel said a manager he used to coach against gave him the ultimate compliment — something he said he hopes to continue

"He said to me, 'Your

team was the most difficult team to prepare for the entire season," he said. "We want other teams to hate playing us because of how we get after you. We want to play with energy, enthusiasm and excitement. If you come to a game next year and we aren't the most energetic team you see all season, you can come directly to my office, and we'll get that fixed. My teams have sometimes been compared to softball teams with how energetic we are."

Bischel said he always thinks about things he can do better.

Nicolet PRESENTS Senior Spotlight

Michael McIntee, Notre Dame Academy Hockey

Parents: Merrilee and Mike McIntee Instagram:
@michael.mcintee Twitter:
@MichaelMcIntee4
Position: Defense

During Michael's time with the team, they went undefeated for the third time in state history and won state.

How did you get started playing hockey?

I first became familiar with hockey when I was six years old and decided to go to the learn to skate program for free. After doing those a few times, I joined the learn to play hockey program and once I got a hang of everything I joined youth hockey. I first started playing for the Manitowoc Breakers and played one year of mites before I started playing up a birth year to challenge myself more.

What is it like being the captain of your team? What do your responsibilities look like?

Being captain of the team this year was a fulfilling but challenging experience. I learned that it is essential to understand that every player on the team will look up to you through the good and the bad of a practice, game, workout, etc. Creating a stoic persona helped to mitigate these waivers in confidence and helped us tremendously to be consistent. Responsibilities as captain include, playing a vital role in leading your team on and off the ice, creating a positive team culture and ensuring effective communication among the players and coaching staff.

Is there a coach you have had that has made a significant impact on your hockey career?

A coach that left a very positive impact on me was Cory McCracken. He helped me advance not only as a hockey player but also as a person. He taught me the importance of discipline, leadership and respect. In the hockey world he is extremely well respected and has helped many players get to the highest levels of the game. One lesson he notably taught me was that success is created through



Mointee

a daily process. You need to constantly improve day after day to get where you want to be.

What are you looking forward to about playing junior hockey next year?

I am looking forward to having more freedom with

my time and to continue to improve and showcase my skills. I am also looking forward to meeting new people and expanding my network. I will also be doing an online business on the side with my free time.

What is the most important relationship

you have made through hockey?

The most important relationship I have made has been with my teammates. They have been some of my best friends throughout the years and our relationships will last a lifetime. I have gone through my lowest lows and highest highs with them. It is more of a brotherhood.

Who is your biggest supporter?

My biggest supporters are my mom and dad. They offered me encouragement and belief which helped to build confidence and resilience. Also, they provided practical assistance like driving me to practice and games along with spending thousands of dollars to keep me on the best teams. Having parents as the biggest supporters is a valuable asset, and their love is forever cherished.

Do you play any other sports outside of hockey?

No, I only like to do casual sports like fish and golf. I also began fly fishing.

What is your favorite TV show to binge watch in your free time?

I honestly don't watch TV shows anymore, but when I did I loved watching The Office.

Who is your favorite musical artist?

My favorite artist is Kanye West because of his creativity and persistence. He proved that creativity is more important than competitiveness by changing music forever.

What do you plan to do for a career?

I would like to be a pilot or provide value within business and be an entrepreneur. Although, there is so much opportunity online to make money and the market changes so frequently that it is too soon to decide that.

What is your favorite place to travel to?

My favorite place to visit is Fort Myers, Fla., because my sister lives there. She will always bring me to the best local restaurants and shops.



Byczek defends the goal for the Ice Bears, making a big save for her team.

BYCZEK

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Because her involvement in hockey has been so competitive, Byczek has dedicated all of her athletic attention to it as her sole sport, although she has previous experience running track as well.

This past season was Byczek's final with the Ice Bears. The eighteen-year-old recently graduated from Bay Port High School, and said she is ready to move forward with her life.

"I have decided that I want to focus on my degree and career, so I will not be playing in college, unfortunately," said Byczek. Her plans are to attend Northern Michigan University in the fall, pursuing a degree in Accounting.

However, Byczek still has plans to continue to be involved in the hockey community.

"I am looking forward

to being able to teach the skills that I have learned throughout the years to other players," said Byczek of her plans to impart her knowledge and experience of the sport onto others.

"I plan to always stay on the ice as much as I can. I want to start coaching and working with some younger skaters — especially girls. I think it's important for younger girls that play hockey to also have female coaches to learn from and look up to."

Byczek has learned a lot of important lessons throughout her time on the rink. Despite never having any physical injuries, she said she has learned the importance of overcoming mental slumps.

"I am fortunate that I have never gotten any injuries. At times though I have had confidence issues on the ice. It is hard to get through those bumps,

but as years passed I feel I got more comfortable and confident in myself."

This season, the Ice Bears finished their regular season with a record of 20-3 and an overall record of 24-3 after going undefeated in the state tournament.

Byczek was a large part of this season's performance with a .955 save percentage. Byczek allowed just 20 goals on the season, saving 420 of the 440 shots on goal that she faced. She had 12 shutouts on the season, one of which came in the state tournament. Byczek totaled 1,364 minutes on the ice this season in 24 games played.

Byczek also received the honor of being named Girl Hockey Player of the Year as a part of the Northeast Wisconsin High School Sports Awards.

"It means a lot to be named female player of the year. It's a great accomplishment for me and



Byczek poses with her hockey gear as she prepares for her senior season. Submitted photos

I feel it is a reflection of the work the Ice Bears put in this season. I never could have gotten this title without my teammates and all of the coaches I worked with this year," said Byczek.

Byczek's coach, Joe Gerarden, also had a lot to say about how welldeserved this award was, given her work ethic and innate talent.

"It was an absolute pleasure coaching Anna this season. Her consistent work ethic and ability really helped with our team's success," said Gerarden. "Off the ice she was a scholar athlete, worked with our youth and has great leadership

qualities." Outside

Outside of her athletic talent, Gerarden also spoke positively about her presence as a person.

"She always has a calm presence and stays humble. The award is well-deserved and we couldn't be more proud of her representation of the Ice Bears," said Gerarden.

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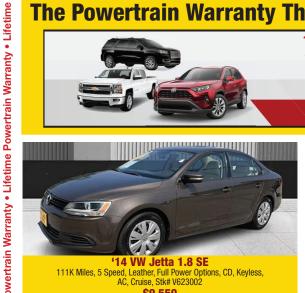


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ı	*15 Chevy Equinox LT 113K Miles, Auto, Power Windows, Locks & Mirrors, Bluetooth, Remote Start, Traction Control, CD, AC, Cruise, Keyless, Alloys, Stk# V523032511,990
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Byczek, in goal, defends the net in an important game for her team this season.

BY TORI WITTENBROCK SPORTS REPORTER

GREEN BAY – Anna Byczek is approaching the end of her hockey-playing days, but not before finishing up her season as a goalie with the Ice Bears with a stellar performance.

Byczek has worked long and hard — for the vast majority of

her life — to perfect her skills on the ice.

"I have been skating since I was three years old, but transferred from figure skating to hockey around eight years old. I decided I wanted to switch when my neighbors put in an ice rink next door one winter, and we played hockey almost every day that we could," said Byczek.

Throughout all her years of playing hockey, Byczek said that one of the most important experiences she had is the relationships she has gained from the sport.

"My favorite part about playing hockey is the relationships I have built over the years. I have played for many different teams at all levels and have made so many friends and learned from some

great coaches," said Byczek.

"When my family first moved here, I had to build completely new relationships and didn't know a single person. Everyone on the Ice bears was so welcoming to me and the coaching staff was amazing. I made a lot of great friends this past year."

Although Byczek has been playing hockey for years, she said that

it still comes as a shock to some

Submitted photo

people when they learn she plays such a male-dominated sport.

"Many people are pretty shocked when I tell them I play hockey. When I played boys last year, many people wouldn't even

realize I was a female at first,"

said Byczek.

See BYCZEK page 38



Jordan Bischel, right, stands with University of Cincinnati (UC) Director of Athletics John Cunningham. Bischel, a 1999 Notre Dame Academy graduate, was recently named the head baseball coach at UC.

University of Cincinnati Athletics photo

Former Green Bay Bullfrogs manager lands at University of Cincinnati

BY RICH PALZEWIC SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

GREEN BAY – Former Green Bay Bullfrogs Manager Jordan Bischel has been a winner every place he's coached, so his latest move shouldn't come as a sur-

prise.

Bischel, a 1999 Notre Dame
Academy graduate who played
collegiately at St. Norbert College

(SNC), recently accepted the head baseball job at the University of Cincinnati (UC).

The Bearcats, who finished 24-33 last season as members of the

American Athletic Conference, will begin play in the Big 12 Conference this summer.

Bischel's latest move comes on the heels of a successful five-season run as head coach at Central Michigan University (CMU).

Bischel led the Chippewas to four Mid-American Conference (MAC) championships — two regular season and two tournament — and three NCAA regionals.

CMU went 177-80 (.689) during his tenure.

Before his hires at UC and CMU, Bischel spent four seasons at Division II Northwood University in Midland, Michigan, where he turned that program around.

He helped lead the team to a 137-76 overall record and was named the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in both 2017 and 2018.

He also had success at Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, where the team was a combined 74-45 under his leadership in two seasons.

Bischel also managed the Bullfrogs — now known as the Rockers — for four seasons (2009-12) and spent another season managing

See BISCHEL page 37



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