

★ THE PLATTEVILLE JOURNAL ★

SPORTS



Six Braves named first-team All-SRW
Senior Payton Johnsen headlines Belmont all-conference softball selections
Page 11A

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2023

WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FINALS RODEO

Platteville duo qualifies for NHSFR

Vesperman defends state title in steer wrestling and wins Reserve All-Around Cowboy; Heer qualifies for nationals in three events

by Jason Nihles
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RICHLAND CENTER — Recent Platteville graduates Jesse Vesperman and Wyatt Heer are heading back to the National High School Finals Rodeo later this summer.

The Hillmen duo qualified for the NHSFR by capping top-four finishes in multiple events this season at the Wisconsin High School Finals Rodeo two weekends ago at the Richland County Fairgrounds.

Vesperman competed in six events at the state finals, qualified for nationals in four and finished as the Reserve All-Around Cowboy with 459 points. He was second to only Fort Atkinson's JB Bound (521 points). Vesperman was the Wisconsin All-Around Cowboy a year ago as a junior.

The Platteville cowboy defended his state title in steer wrestling as the season-long champion in the event after he was the only cowboy to catch all three of his steers over the weekend at the state finals.

Vesperman finished second in trap shooting on the season with 144 points, after shooting 72 of 75 clay targets during state championship competition, Thursday, June 8.

He also qualified for nationals with third place finishes in the small bore rifle competition, and the tie-down roping competition.

Vesperman finished sixth in the boys cutting event — an event he competed in for the first time this year at the state finals — scoring 10 crucial points that helped him edge Justin Gukenberger (457) by just two points for the Reserve All-Around Cowboy title. He also teamed with Waunakee's Clare Burcalow to place 13th in the team roping event.

Vesperman, who made the difficult decision to sit out his freshman year of rodeo to save money for a horse, made another hard decision last year to forego his senior year of football at PHS so he could attend regional rodeo shooting events in the fall.

It's safe to save both decisions have more than paid off.

Vesperman, who as a NHSFR qualifier in four events a year ago, and a national qualifier in the trap shooting competition two years ago, will finish his high school career as a three-time state champion (two-time steer wrestling, once in trap shooting), a two-time runner-up in trap shooting, an All-Around Cowboy inner (2022), a Reserve All-Around Cowboy (2023) and a nine-event NHSFR rodeo.

"It feels pretty good," said Vesperman, who will continue his



Platteville's Jesse Vesperman won the state title in steer wrestling, qualified for nationals with a second-place finish in trap shooting and third place finishes in small bore rifle shooting and tie-down calf roping, and was named the Reserve All-Around Cowboy at the Wisconsin High School Finals Rodeo in Richland Center two weekends ago.

rodeo and educational career in the fall at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, Iowa. "I am excited for another chance to go to Wyoming."

This year, Vesperman will be joined by friend and teammate Wyatt Heer.

After qualifying for nationals two years ago as a sophomore in team roping, Heer just missed out on a return trip to the NHSFR after placing fifth in Wisconsin in both team roping and tie-down roping last year as a junior. The top four finishers in each event qualify for the NHSFR each year.

This year Heer is a three-event national qualifier, after placing second in the boys cutting (33.5), second in tie-down roping (202.5) and fourth in team roping with partner Trent Parr on Mondovi.

The NHSFR will be held July 16-22 in Gillette, Wyo. After competing together one final time as prep Cowboys in July as part of Team Wisconsin, Vesperman and Heer will team up again in the fall as Heer will also continue his education and rodeo career at ICC.

"I haven't really thought too much about college rodeo yet," said Vesperman. "I am just concentrating on the national finals right now."

Before Gillette and Fort Dodge,

see NHSFR page 11A ▶



Platteville's Wyatt Heer will be returning to the National High School Finals Rodeo in July after placing second in tie-down calf roping, third in boys cutting and fourth in team roping at Richland Center two weekends ago.

ALL-SIX RIVERS WEST BASEBALL TEAM

Chieftains garner top honors, eight All-SRW picks

Leibfried named SRW Coach of the Year, Kruser tabbed league's Player of the Year

by Jason Nihles
sports@theplattevillejournal.com

The back-to-back Six Rivers West champion Potosi/Cassville baseball team dominated this year's postseason conference awards.

The Chieftains (18-9, 11-2 SRC) swept the league's top two awards and earned eight all-conference awards.

Tony Leibfried was named the SRW Coach of the Year and senior third baseman Logan Kruser was named the SRW Player of the Year after leading the co-op to a second-straight conference title and a D4 regional championship.

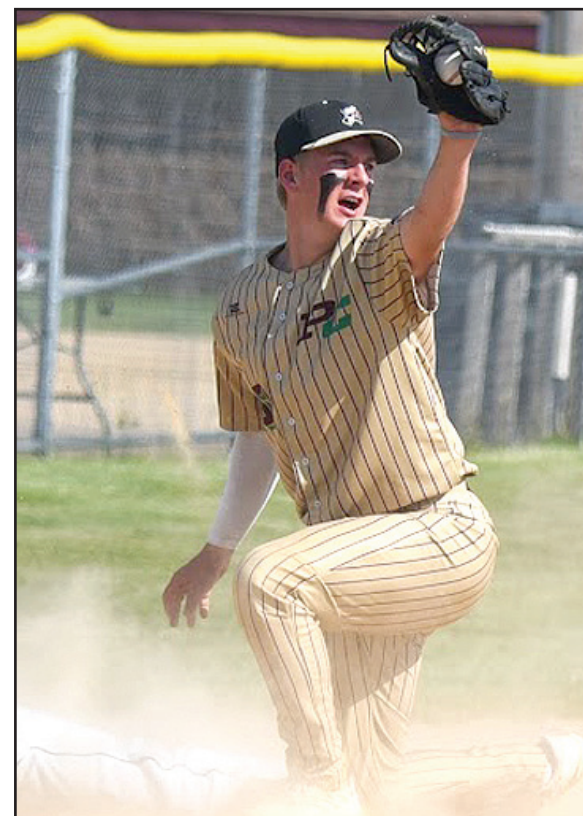
Leibfried was also named the SRW Coach of the Year in 2022 when the Chieftains finished 17-7, 11-2.

Kruser earned the league's top player honor after batting a team-high .411 (37-for-11) with seven doubles, three triple, 18 RBI and 22 runs and four stolen bases. He also went 0-1 with three saves, a 5.63 ERA and 16 strikeouts in 13²/₃ innings as a relief pitcher.

Junior pitcher Eli Adams, (5-5, 1.98 ERA, 90 K, 56.2 IP; .297, 22 H, 2 HR, 17 RBI, 19 R, 11 SB), senior outfielder/pitcher Preston Steiner (.338, 23 H, 4 2B, 2 HR, 13 RBI, 27 R, 16 SB; 6-1, 1.43 ERA, 62 K, 49 IP) and senior shortstop Sam Udelhofen (.337, 31 H, 5 2B, 13 RBI, 26 R, 18 SB) joined Kruser on the 15-player All-SRW first team.



TONY LEIBFRIED
Potosi/Cassville
Six Rivers West Coach of the Year



LOGAN KRUSER
Potosi/Cassville, Sr., IF
SRW Player of the Year/First Team All-SRW

see SRW page 9A ▶

BASKETBALL

17th annual SRC All-Star Basketball Games Friday at Barneveld

Potosi and Belmont basketball athletes will represent the Six Rivers West at the this year's 17th annual Six Rivers All-Star Basketball games Friday night at Barneveld.

All admission donations will be donated to the UW Children's Hospital in Madison.

The girls East vs. West All-Star game will tip-off at 6 p.m. followed by the co-ed 3-point shooting contest.

This year, the boys game will have a new format. Boys from both divisions will be teamed together and split into two teams — not by division — and will play each other at 8 p.m.

Get out to Barneveld High School Friday to watch some very talented basketball players compete in their final prep game while supporting a great cause.

RUNNING



Edward Jones to host Platteville Firecracker 5K

Edward Jones Platteville Bob Hundhausen, Brad Mootz, Alaina Reeves and Ben Reeves will host the Edward Jones's Firecracker 5K Tuesday, July 4 as part of the 4th of July Celebration in Platteville.

The event will feature two races designed for runners of all ages and experience levels.

Proceeds will be used to support the City of Platteville Fireworks Fund and the Friends of the Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums.

The event will kick off at 8:30 a.m. with the Kids' Dash (free for ages 12 and under), where participants will run or walk a lap around the Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums at 8:30 a.m.

The Firecracker 5K will begin at 9 a.m., taking participants on a route from the museum to Mound View Park & Campground, along the Roundtree Branch Trail, and ending back at the museum.

Pre-registration for the 5K is \$15 (includes a T-shirt) and will be available until Monday, July 3 at 3 p.m.

Interested runners can pre-register online at <https://runsignup.com/Race/WI/Platteville/EdwardJonesFirecracker5k>.

Day-of registration will also be available for \$20 beginning at 7:30 a.m. at 405 E. Main St. on the morning of the race, but T-shirts will only be available while supplies last. The Kids' Dash is free, and registration may be done either in advance or the morning of the race. Please arrive early to register/check-in and to receive your shirt and bib number.

Immediately following the race, the top three men and women overall, and the winner in each age division will be recognized. Age divisions are 14U, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and 70+.

Following the race, present your bib at the Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums to receive a complimentary train ride.

SOCCER CAMP

Calvary Baptist Church has a free soccer camp that meets at 6:30 p.m. on every Monday in June and July (except July 3).

More than 100 children ages 4-12 have participated in three weeks of camp. Registrations are still open at cbplatteville.com, open to the public.

ALL-SIX RIVERS WEST SOFTBALL TEAM



PAYTON JOHNSEN
Belmont, Sr., P
First Team All-SRW



RYLEE ROGERS
Belmont, Sr., C
First Team All-SRW



MIA HODGSON
Belmont, Sr., 2B
First Team All-SRW

Braves, Chieftains combine for 11 All-SRW selections

Six Rivers West runner-up Belmont earned six of the 15 spots on the All-SRW softball team by a vote of the league coaches.

Senior pitcher **Payton Johnsen** (21-6, 1.37 ERA, 86 K, 117 1/3 IP, 368, 14 H, 9 RBI), senior catcher **Rylee Rogers** (.372, 32 H, 5 2B, 2 HR, 19 RBI, 30 R, 10 SB), senior second baseman **Mia Hodgson** (.407, 35 H, 6 2B, HR, 22 RBI; 5-2, 2 SV, 2.28 ERA, 51 K, 55 1/3 IP) junior shortstop **Reese Runde** (.407, 35 H, 16 2B, HR, 19 RBI, 33 R, 10 SB), and junior outfielders **Bailey Mester** (.359, 33 H, 6 2B, 16 RBI, 21 R, 9 SB) and **Lainey Riechers** (.367, 29 H, 5 HR, 19 RBI, 23 R, 11 SB) were named first-team All-SRW for the Braves.

Belmont finished 21-6 overall, 11-2 in the SRC and won the program's 19th regional title in the past 25 years.

Senior shortstop **Emily Bierman** (.439, 29 H, 6 2B, 12 RBI, 18 R, 9 SB) and sophomore catcher **Madi Weber** (.344, 16 H, 3 2B, HR, 9 RBI, 3 SB) earned first-team All-SRW honors for the Potosi/Cassville Chieftains (7-13, 6-7 SRW).

Seniors senior pitcher **Mailia Weber** (7-12, 3.60 ERA, 101 K, 116 2/3 IP; 207, 12 H, 3 2B, 4 RBI), second baseman **Abby Tasker** (.250, 17 H, 3 2B, 7 RBI, 11 R) and junior second baseman **Wynne Siegert** (.197, 12 H, 2 RBI, 12 R) were among the 13 players who received All-SRW honorable mention.

SRW champion Highland (22-3, 12-1 SRW) swept the league's three major awards.

Senior Lillyana Michek was named the SRW Player of the Year, senior Grace Dreischmeier was named the Pitcher of the Year and the Cardinals' Ike Campbell was named the league's Coach of the Year.

- 2023 All-Six Rivers West Softball Team**
Player of the Year
Lillyana Michek.....sr.....Highland
Pitcher of the Year
Grace Dreischmeier.....sr.....Highland
Coach of the Year
Ike Campbell.....Highland
- First Team**
P - Payton Johnsen, Belmont.....sr.
C - Rylee Rogers, Belmont.....sr.
2B - Mia Hodgson, Belmont.....sr.
SS - Reese Runde, Belmont.....jr.
OF - Bailey Mester, Belmont.....jr.
OF - Lainey Riechers, Belmont.....jr.
OF - Bronwyn Halverson, Highland.....sr.
IF - Ella Cody, Highland.....sr.
P - Grace Dreischmeier, Highland.....sr.
IF - Harper Drury, Highland.....sr.
C - Lillyana Michek, Highland.....sr.
IF - Emily Bierman, Potosi/Cass.....sr.
C - Madi Weber, Potosi/Cass.....so.
C - Mackenzie Esser, River Ridge.....sr.
OF - Payton Millin, River Ridge.....sr.
- Honorable Mention**
IF - Camden Russell, Ben/Shulls.....jr.
OF - Elsie Ennis, Ben/Shulls.....jr.
OF - Emma Pedley, Ben/Shulls.....sr.
OF - Halle Stluka, Ben/Shulls.....jr.
OF - Franki Schmitz, Highland.....sr.
IF - Kate Tarrell, Highland.....so.
DH - McKenna Niemeier, Highland.....sr.
P - Abby Tasker, Potosi/Cass.....sr.
P - Malia Weber, Potosi/Cass.....sr.
IF - Wynne Siegert, Potosi/Cass.....jr.
IF - Alexia Doyle, River Ridge.....sr.
P - Brynlee Kazda, River Ridge.....jr.
IF - Ellaina Gage, River Ridge.....fr.



REESE RUNDE
Belmont, Jr., SS
First Team All-SRW



BAILEY MESTER
Belmont, Jr., OF
First Team All-SRW



LAINAY RIECHERS
Belmont, Jr., OF
First Team All-SRW



EMILY BIERMAN
Potosi/Cassville, Sr., SS
First Team All-SRW



MADI WEBER
Potosi/Cassville, So., C
First Team All-SRW



MALIA WEBER
Potosi/Cassville, Sr., P
Honorable Mention All-SRW



ABBY TASKER
Potosi/Cassville, Sr., 2B
Honorable Mention All-SRW



WYNNE SIEGERT
Potosi/Cassville, Jr., 3B
Honorable Mention All-SRW

ALL-SWC BASEBALL TEAM

Platteville baseball earns five All-SWC honors

by Jason Nihles
sports@theplattevillejournal.com

After a successful 2023 season, five members of the Platteville baseball team were named All-Southwest Wisconsin Conference by a vote of the league's coaches.

Junior third baseman/pitcher **Riley Donahoe** was named first team All-SWC as a utility player. Sophomore shortstop **Lucas Ludlum** joined Donahoe on the 11-player first team.

Sophomore pitcher **Trent Mumm** and sophomore outfielder **Jonah Vorwald** were named to the 13-player second team, and junior catcher **Cam Key** received honorable mention.

Donahoe hit a team-high .455 (25-for-55) with seven doubles, two homers, 19 RBI, 17 walks and 12 stolen bases to earn first-team All-SWC for a second-straight year. He also went 2-0 with two saves, a 3.15 ERA and 27 strikeouts in 13 1/3 innings pitched.

Ludlum finished second on the team with a .286 (20-for-70) batting average with one double, one triple, eight RBI, 18 runs scored and a team-high 24 stolen bases. Ludlum received All-SWC honorable mention last year as a freshman.

Mumm went 1-5 with a 3.73 ERA, and a team-high 31 strikeouts in a team-high 35 2/3 innings pitched this year as the Platteville ace. Mumm also batted .200 (12-for-60) with one double and six RBI.

Vorwald hit .273 (15-for-55) with two doubles, six RBI, nine runs, seven walks and nine stolen bases. He also went 1-1 with a 1.88 ERA and 20 strikeouts in 18 2/3 innings pitched.

Key batted .241 (13-for-54) with one double, seven RBI, three runs scored, 14 walks this year. He also went 0-1 with a 9.88 ERA and seven strikeouts in 11 1/3 innings pitched.



Riley Donahoe
Platteville, So., 3B/P
First Team All-SWC



Lucas Ludlum
Platteville, So., SS
First Team All-SWC

The Hillmen finished 10-11 overall and 4-6 in the SWC to tie River Valley (6-17, 4-6) for third-place in the six-team conference under third-year head coach Randy Knight. The 10 wins were a seven-game improvement from 2022, when the Hillmen finished 3-17 overall and 0-10 in the SWC.

Prairie du Chien senior **Maddox Cejka** was named the SWC Player of the Year after batting a team-high .361 (26-for-72) with four doubles, two triples, three home runs, 16 RBI, 18 runs and 13 walks in 22 games for the SWC champion Blackhawks (14-8, 9-1 SWC). He also went 7-1 with a 0.95 ERA and 76 strikeouts in 51 2/3 innings pitched in nine starts on the mound.

Dodgeville's **Pat Reilly** and Prairie du Chien's **Ryan Pedretti** were named the SWC Co-Coaches of the Year.

Reilly led the Dodgers to a 22-5 record and an 8-2 second place finish in the SWC.

2023 All-SWC Baseball Team

- Coach of the Year
Pat Reilly.....Dodgeville
Ryan Pedretti.....Prairie du Chien
- Player of the Year
Maddox Cejka.....sr.....Prairie du Chien
- First Team**
P - Maddox Cejka, Prairie du Chien.....sr.
P - Dalen Rickard, Dodgeville.....sr.
C - Sean Reilly, Dodgeville.....sr.
IF - Tarron Bockhop, Dodgeville.....sr.
IF - Shea Luckey, Lancaster.....so.
IF - Lucas Ludlum, Platteville.....so.
IF - Noah Pedretti, Prairie du Chien.....jr.
OF - Keagan Dull, Prairie du Chien.....jr.
OF - Hunter Jones, Prairie du Chien.....jr.
OF - Griffin Sprecher, River Valley.....so.
UtI. - Riley Donahoe, Platteville.....jr.
UtI. - Maddox Cejka, Prairie du Chien.....sr.
- Second Team**
P - Colby Lull, Lancaster.....jr.
P - Trent Mumm, Platteville.....so.
C - Ty Wagner, Prairie du Chien.....jr.
IF - Trenton Reddell, Dodgeville.....sr.
IF - Mitch Wolf, Lancaster.....sr.
IF - Layne Miller, Rich. Center.....jr.
OF - Tyson Anthony, Rich. Center.....sr.
OF - Chayse Gilbertson, River Valley so.
OF - Logan Wolf, Lancaster.....jr.
OF - Jonah Vorwald, Lancaster.....so.
OF - Drake Ingram, Prairie du Chien.....jr.
UtI. - Brady Oyen, Lancaster.....sr.
UtI. - Alex Pipkorn, Dodgeville.....sr.
- Honorable Mention**
P - Bruce Buchholtz, Rich. Center.....jr.
C - Nolan Wolf, Lancaster.....so.
C - Cam Key, Platteville.....sr.
C - Abbott Milanowski, River Valley.....so.
UtI. - Daniel Yanke, River Valley.....jr.



TRENT MUMM
Platteville, So., P
Second Team All-SWC



JONAH VORWALD
Platteville, So., OF
Second Team All-SWC



CAM KEY
Platteville, Jr., C
Honorable Mention All-SWC

NHSFR

from page 12A

concentrating on the national finals right now."

Before Gillette and Calmur, Vesperman, who has also been competing in Great Lakes Circuit pro rodeos in Madison (April 15), St. Paul, Minn. (April 29), and Atlantic, Iowa and Bellevue, Iowa this past weekend, will also compete in the National Little Britches Rodeo Finals in Guthrie, Okla. July 2-8.

Vesperman qualified for NLBRF in four events after winning Illinois Little Britches state titles in steer wrestling, tie-down calf roping and dally ribbon roping. He and Richland Center's Keegan Cooley also placed third in team roping.

Vesperman qualified for nationals by competing in 18 rodeos in Sheridan, Ill. — once a month, three rodeos per week-end — from Oct. 2022 until Labor Day weekend.

(from Thursday-Sunday, June 8-11 @ Richland Center Fairgrounds)

- All-Around Cowboys Standings** — 1.J.B. Bound (Fort Atkinson) 521, 2.Jesse Vesperman (Platteville) 459, 3.Trent Parr (Mondovi) 457.
- All-Around Cowgirls Standings** — 1.Josie Laue (Richland Center) 521, 2.Clare Burcalow (Waunakee) 515, 3.Raelynn Johnson 505, 4.Lainee Burks (Lancaster) 558.
- Rookie Cowboy** — Jayden Johnson 251.5.
- Rookie Cowgirl** — Carley Gukenberger 209.
- (Livestock Event Winners)**
Bareback Bronc Riding — 1.Kade Parrish 200, 2.Ty Sovo 145, 3.Braxton Bretsch 117.
- Barrel Racing** — 1.Lainee Burks (Lancaster) 228, 2.Tierra Hauser 205, 3.Josie Laue 184, 4.Ali Butler 157.
- Boys Cutting** — 1.Trent Parr 39.5, 2.Wyatt Heer (Platteville) 33.5, 3.Brady Uppena 31, 4.Justin Gukenberger 29.
- Girls Cutting** — 1.Carley Gukenberger 37, 2.Josie Waldenberger 36, 3.Josie Laue 27, 4.Raelynn Johnson 21.
- Breakaway Roping** — 1.Ella Lawton 228, 2.Clare Burcalow 206, 3.Raelynn Johnson 184, 4.Mary Thiel 165.
- Bull Riding** — 1.Ty Sovo 149, 2.Kade Parrish 109, 3.Theison Folk 10.
- Goat Tying** — 1.Lainee Burks (Lancaster)

- 226, 2.Clare Burcalow 213, 3.Sara Siegenthaler (Darlington) 175, 4.Josie Laue 160.
- Pole Bending** — 1.Ali Butler 252, 2.Camilla Hauser 203, 3.Brynlea Hoffman 174, 4.Keira Elsner 152.
- Reining Cowhorse** — 1.JB Bound 39, 2.Justin Gukenberger 37, 3.Taylor Donskey 28.5, 4.Carley Gukenberger 24.5.
- Saddle Broncs** — 1.Tripp Kite 170, 2.Ethan Archer 109.
- Steer Wrestling** — 1.Jesse Vesperman (Platteville) 237, 2.Walker Goffard 206, 3.Brody Kielley (River Ridge) 179, 4.Gukenberger 143.
- Team Roping** — 1.JB Bound/Justin Ochs 221, 2.Brady Breitsprecher/Treyton Carlson 197, 3.Brady Uppena/Bryce Bunting 180, 4.Trent Parr (Mondovi)/Wyatt Heer (Platteville) 167.
- Tie-Down Roping** — 1.JB Bound 261, 2.Wyatt Heer (Platteville) 202.5, 3.Jesse Vesperman (Platteville) 191, 4.Justin Gukenberger 175.
- (Shooting Event Winners)**
Trap Shooting — 1.Sam Morehead 162.5, 2.Jesse Vesperman (Platteville) 144, 3.Tyler Spiegelberg 131, 4.Lucas Miller 117.
- Small Bore Rifle** — 1.Josie Waldenberger 71, 2.Ethan Olson 68, 3.Jesse Vesperman (Platteville) 60, 4.Rachel Sovo 59.

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COLLEGE TRACK & FIELD



Members of the UW-La Crosse women's and men's track & field teams were recognized at the White House in Washington, D.C. as part of College Athlete Day Monday, June 12. Platteville High School graduate Skye Diman (middle row, sixth from the left) and Benton graduate Emma Lawrence (back row, fourth from the right) were part of the UWL women's track and field team that won both NCAA D3 indoor and outdoor national championships this year.

Digman, Lawrence visit the White House with UW-La Crosse track and field teams

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Members of the UW-La Crosse women's and men's track & field teams were recognized at the White House in Washington, D.C. as part of College Athlete Day last Monday.

Former Platteville prep standout Skye Digman and Benton standout Emma Lawrence were a part of the UWL women's national championship teams for both the indoor and outdoor seasons this past year.

Vice President Kamala Harris welcomed the women's and men's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championship teams from the 2022-23 season.

Team Photo

"I don't think our teams can cram any more into a 24-hour block of time," said UWL men's head coach Josh Bucholtz. "The opportunity to see the sights of our nation's capital, visit the White House and get a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol Building was well worth the investment these student-athletes made toward NCAA titles. This was a true experience they will never forget."

UWL departed campus Saturday, June 10 and had an opportunity to sight see in

Washington, D.C. Sunday, June 11. The teams arrived back in La Crosse Tuesday, June 13.

"Truly an honor to be a part of something so special," said J.T. Zell, who along with Lawrence represented UWL on the stage at Monday's ceremony. "These opportunities are once in a lifetime," added Zell. "We are super thankful to everyone involved for making it happen."

"Being invited to this event was empowering itself, but being able to represent our teams in front of everyone there was extremely special," said Lawrence. "This is huge for our program, and this trip was a way to take a step back again and realize what we accomplished this season."

UWL head women's track & field Nickolas Davis added it was humbling to be in the presence of so many great athletes from around the country while also being gratifying to be a part of that elite list.

"Our athletes really enjoyed their moment to celebrate such a memorable season in our nation's capital," said Davis. "I am incredibly proud to be here with our amazing women and men, representing

our university. These athletes work day in and day out to be the best they can be both on and off the track. For us to be able to share this moment and represent our great university is a privilege we will not soon forget."

The men's and women's squads swept the NCAA Division III Indoor Championship on March 10-11 in Birmingham, Alabama. It was the men's 19th indoor title in school history (most in NCAA Division III) and first since 2017. UWL has captured 12 of the last 20 indoor national titles.

UWL's women's team captured its second (2015) indoor national crown. The Eagles also won the NCAA Division III Outdoor title on May 25-27 in Rochester, New York. The women's team won its fourth (1983, 1984, 2015, 2023) outdoor national crown.

"A once in a lifetime opportunity, visiting the White House was a surreal experience," said UWL student-athlete Aidan Williams. "It's amazing how doing the sport that I love, poured countless hours of work into, would lead me to an honor as great as this one."

SPECIAL OLYMPICS WISCONSIN

Belmont athletes compete at Summer Games

Athletes from the Belmont Special Olympics program that include current Belmont student A.J. Ludlum and adult athletes Tanner Morrissey and Rick Woods recently participated at the Special Olympics Summer Games.

The summer games, held for the first time on the campus at UW-Whitewater, was the culminating event for the five spring seasons for track and field, cornhole, powerlifting, tennis and soccer.

Woods and Ludlum took fourth place in Division 24 of cornhole. Morrissey participated in the unified cornhole,

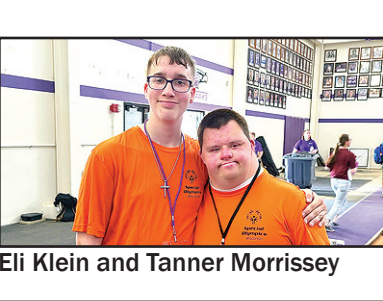
Division 45, and along with his unified partner, Eli Klein, also took fourth place.

In addition to the competition athletes were also able to participate in healthy athlete disciplines including Health Promotions, Special Smiles, the HEAR WI Mobile Audiology Clinic and Fit Feet.

These free screenings are provided to Special Olympics Wisconsin athletes in a fun, welcoming environment that removes the anxiety and fear individuals with intellectual disabilities often experience when faced with a visit to the doctor or dentist.



Rick Woods



Eli Klein and Tanner Morrissey



A.J. Ludlum

ALL-SWAL BASEBALL TEAM

Iowa-Grant trio named All-SWAL



WILL FULTON
Iowa-Grant, Fr., OF/C
First Team All-SWAL



EVERETT ZIMMER
Iowa-Grant, Jr., SS/OF
First Team All-SWAL

by Jason Nihles
sports@theplattevillejournal.com

A trio of Iowa-Grant Panthers earned All-Southwest Wisconsin Activities League baseball honors when the league recently announced its 2023 postseason awards.

Freshmen Will Fulton (OF/C) and Everett Zimmer (SS/OF) were among the 18 players named first team, while junior Brach Holman was one of the 15 players who received All-SWAL honorable mention.

Fulton went 3-3 on the mound with a 1.95 ERA and 42 strikeouts in a team-high 46 2/3 innings pitched. Fulton also batted .257 (18-for-70) with one double, 13 RBI, 23 runs scored, 17 walks and 12 stolen bases in his first varsity season.

Zimmer earned first-team All-SWAL honors after hitting a team-high .375 (30-for-80) with three doubles, one triple, nine RBI, a team-high 25 runs, 14 walks and a team-best 23 stolen bases.

Holman, who was also an All-SWAL pick a year ago as a sophomore, went 3-2 with one save, a team-low 1.77 ERA and 37 strikeouts in 39 2/3 innings pitched. At the plate, Holman batted .257 (18-for-70) with two doubles, one homer, 14 RBI, 10 runs, a team-high 21 walks and two stolen bases.

The Panthers finished 12-11 overall and 6-8 in the SWAL to end in a three-way tie for fourth place.

Cuba City's Steve Graber was named the SWAL Coach of the Year and senior Reece Rosenkrantz was named the SWAL Player of the Year after leading the Cubans (20-6, 12-2 SWAL) to a share of the SWAL title with Fennimore (21-5, 12-2).

Seniors Riley Rosenkrantz and Will Busch, and sophomore Tyson Richard, along with Fennimore seniors Lucas



BRACH HOLMAN
Iowa-Grant, Jr., P/C
Honorable Mention All-SWAL

Lendosky, Max Miles and Dawson Cole, and sophomore Ethan Sheckler were also named to the All-SWAL first team. The co-champion Golden Eagles also had four honorable mention selections for a SWAL-best eight all-conference players.

2023 SWAL All-Conference Baseball Team

Coach of the Year

Steve GraberCuba City

Player of the Year

Reece Rosenkrantz sr.Cuba City

First Team

Dylan Johnson.....Boscobel.....sr.

Reece Rosenkrantz Cuba Citysr.

Tyson Richard.....Cuba Cityso.

Riley Rosenkrantz.....Cuba Citysr.

Will Busch.....Cuba Citysr.

Breylin Goebel.....Darlington.....jr.

Gage Banfield.....Darlington.....jr.

Dawson Cole.....Fennimore.....sr.

Max Miles.....Fennimore.....sr.

Lucas Lendosky.....Fennimore.....sr.

Ethan Sheckler.....Fennimore.....so.

Will Fulton.....Iowa-Grant.....fr.

Everett Zimmer.....Iowa-Grant.....fr.

Brady Radtke.....Mineral Point.....jr.

Bryce Vanstad.....Mineral Point.....sr.

Luke Kigen.....Mineral Point.....sr.

Brendan Lynch.....Mineral Point.....sr.

Emmett Drone.....Riverdale.....sr.

Carson Kinyon.....Riverdale.....jr.

Honorable Mention

Bryar Wayne.....Boscobel.....so.

Gabe Tomas.....Boscobel.....sr.

Breyden Johl.....Cuba City.....so.

Max Lucey.....Cuba City.....sr.

Reagan Jackson.....Darlington.....jr.

Tyson Gehrke.....Fennimore.....sr.

Macey Miles.....Fennimore.....so.

Tyson Starkey.....Fennimore.....so.

Wyatt Ahnen.....Fennimore.....so.

Brach Holman.....Iowa-Grant.....jr.

Brady Radtke.....Mineral Point.....jr.

Chase Chitwood.....Riverdale.....so.

Logan Kagel.....Riverdale.....jr.

Cade Buxton.....Southwestern.....sr.

Tyler Brotzman.....Southwestern.....sr.

NATURE'S FRUIT

maturations, population increases being felt

BY JERRY DAVIS

It was a long wait, but the first fawn ran toward the house, tucked in behind several ferns and hostas, then waited to be disturbed before running back into the forest.

The peak fawning period is late May, but not being in the right place at the right time delayed seeing a day-old deer. This fawn was already traveling short distances by itself, even though the doe may have been in sight or smell of the venturesome, tiny youngster.

A female muskrat made a home of a kitchen-size, spring-fed farm pond to raise her two kits. Just after first light the three were swimming about, gathering fresh vegetation from terrestrial environs and taking it underwater and under bank for eating later or construction of a matted den.

Their dark color and rounded shape made them appear bolder-like while sitting on the pond's shore. Within seconds of coming above water the young muskrats' fur appeared as if it was velvet.

A cluster of pale purple coneflowers, all members of the same plant, showed no purple at all, a palest of purple heads stood among numerous compass plants opening their first blooms of hundreds of tiny ray and disc flowers.

The first nuts, hazelnuts in this case, are open enough to show a glistening nut.

Birds have made short work of the Juneberries and are doing the same on mulberry trees.

Fishing is very good with warmer water and new green weeds helping anglers catching smallmouth bass and walleyes particularly in the Madison Lakes, according to Wally Banfi, fishing guide and sales clerk

at Wilderness Fish and Game in Sauk City

Half night crawlers, crank baits, and jigging have all been working. Some of the smaller waters including Blackhawk Lake and Yellowstone Lake have been good, too.

"Usually early and late in the day are best," Banfi said.

Trout anglers, too, have been doing well on Black Earth Creek, with its larger system. Cloudy afternoons and evening are best. "The fish seem to be looking up to the surface every day that is like this," said Bret Schultz, an everyday trout angler. "It's a bit too early for crickets and hoppers, but that will come."

Bugs have not been insurmountable but a little Biggins or vanilla extract seem to take care of the bothersome few. Icy Hot works on gnats.

Crowds have not been a problem with larger waters (trout streams) but small streams might necessitate moving a bit to stay clear of others.

"Richland County doesn't seem to be a problem with plenty of water and fish, too," Bret said.

Now that the spring turkey season is over, Wayne Smith, in Lafayette County, says seeing toms and hens, even out the windows has picked up. Hens calling to chicks is a noticeable change in turkey talk.

The spring turkey season showed a seven percent jump, with 42,439 birds registered. Youth hunters jumped their registrations 28 percent, to 2,972 birds.

Preliminary ruffed grouse spring drumming counts continues to drop with the bottom of the 10-year-cycle several years away.

Walleyes have been off and on in some

waters, according to Doug Williams, at DW Sports Center in Portage. Those insistent on catching fish might turn to sheephead or catfish, using night crawlers, Doug said.

Corn and soybean crops are taking a hit from little precipitation and turkeys and deer are feeding on the small plants. Hay and pasture crops have taken a smack, too.

Butterflies and other pollinators have moved into some areas where a few blooms have opened.

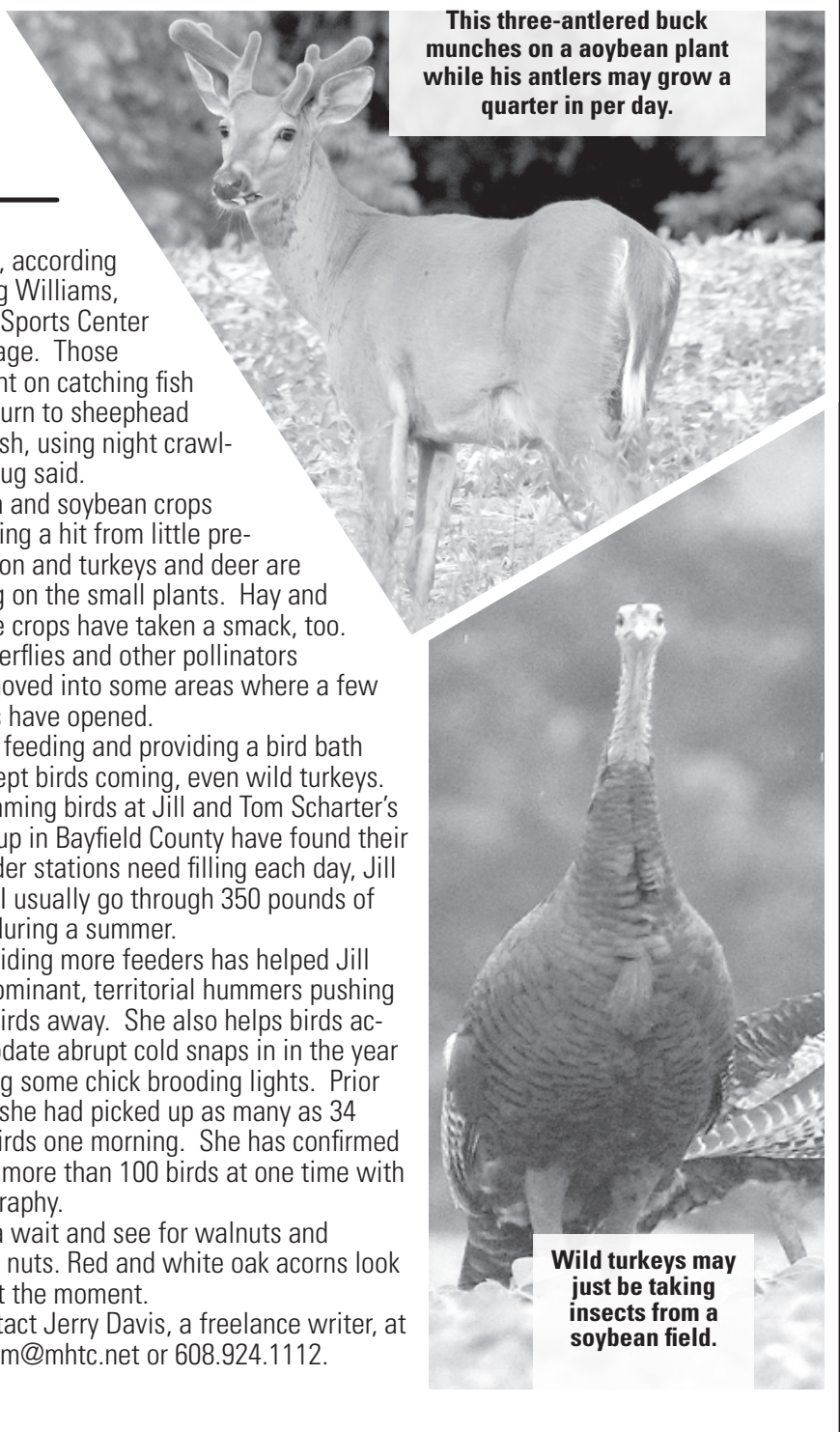
Bird feeding and providing a bird bath have kept birds coming, even wild turkeys.

Humming birds at Jill and Tom Scharter's place, up in Bayfield County have found their 16 feeder stations need filling each day, Jill said. "I usually go through 350 pounds of sugar during a summer."

Providing more feeders has helped Jill with dominant, territorial hummers pushing other birds away. She also helps birds accommodate abrupt cold snaps in the year by using some chick brooding lights. Prior to this she had picked up as many as 34 dead birds one morning. She has confirmed having more than 100 birds at one time with photography.

It's a wait and see for walnuts and hickory nuts. Red and white oak acorns look good at the moment.

Contact Jerry Davis, a freelance writer, at sivadjam@mhtc.net or 608.924.1112.



This three-antlered buck munches on a soybean plant while his antlers may grow a quarter in per day.



Wild turkeys may just be taking insects from a soybean field.

UW-PLATTEVILLE VOLLEYBALL

Coach Birkicht, UWP volleyball team release 2023 schedule



The UW-Platteville volleyball team will open the 2023 season Sept. 1-2 at the Colorado College Invitational. The Pioneers went 23-9 a year ago and advanced to the WIAC Tournament semifinals.

photo courtesy of UW-Platteville

The UW-Platteville volleyball team has announced its 2023 schedule.

Coming off a 23-9 season that included a trip to the WIAC Tournament semifinals, the Pioneers look to maintain that momentum as they compete this fall under head coach Samantha Birkicht.

The Pioneers head west to open the campaign, with Colorado College hosting the opening three matches on the first two days of September.

UW-Platteville will face Hardin-Simmons (Tex.) to open the weekend, with contests against Colorado College and Wartburg (Iowa) as well.

After a non-conference road game against Loras on Tuesday, Sept. 5, the Pioneers travel to St. Norbert for a three-match invite on Friday and Saturday Sept. 8-9 against Illinois Tech, Dominican, and the host Green Knights.

The Pioneers continue the

stretch of road games the following week starting with Dubuque on Tuesday, Sept. 12 before traveling to Augustana (Ill.) for four contests over the weekend. On Friday, Sept. 15 UW-Platteville competes against Augustana and Clarkson with Grinnell and Rose-Hulman on the schedule for Saturday, Sept. 16.

The conference opener is set for Sept. 20 when the Pioneers travel to UW-La Crosse for a 7 p.m. match. On September 22 and 23, UW-Platteville heads to Calvin College (Mich.) for games against Concordia-Wisconsin, Albion (Mich.), and Calvin.

To close the opening month, the Pioneers travel to play UW-Eau Claire Tuesday, Sept. 27 before hosting a home triangular with Carroll and Macalester (Minn.) Saturday, Sept. 30.

On Oct. 6, the Pioneers welcome UW-River Falls to the

Williams Fieldhouse for Homecoming and Yell Night at 7 p.m. The team then celebrates Alumni Day on Oct. 7 with a home quad against Carthage and Millikin (Ill.).

Platteville continues the stretch of home matches the following week against the defending WIAC champion UW-Whitewater Warhawks Wednesday, Oct. 11 for a White Out and Youth Night.

The Pioneers host Coe College (Iowa) Tuesday, Oct. 17 before traveling to face UW-Stevens Point and Cornell over the weekend Oct. 20 and 21.

UW-Oshkosh will be the final regular season road game Wednesday, Oct. 25, and Platteville welcomes Edgewood for Senior Night Tuesday, Oct. 31.

The Pioneers will host the final game of the regular season Friday, Nov. 3 against UW-Stout.

UW-PLATTEVILLE MEN'S SOCCER

UW-Platteville men's soccer team announces 2023 schedule



The UW-Platteville men's soccer team finished last year with a 12-5-3 overall record and qualified for the NCAA Division III tournament.

file photo courtesy of UW-Platteville

Under the direction of the first-year head coach Jesse Tinney, the UW-Platteville men's soccer team will begin its 2023 season on the road against Wheaton (Ill.) Sept. 1.

The Pioneers remain in Illinois for a neutral-site contest against Kalamazoo (Mich.) Sept. 2 before returning to Platteville Tuesday, Sept. 5 for the home opener against Luther (Iowa).

Two-days later, the team travels to MSOE for the second straight season prior to hosting UW-Superior to end the week, Sunday, Sept. 10.

Following road matchups

against Webster (Mo.) Sept. 15 and Greenville (Ill.) Sept. 16, the Pioneers will play six of the next seven inside Ralph E. Davis Pioneers Stadium.

UW-Platteville welcomes Wartburg (Iowa) Sept. 19, Albion (Mich.) Sept. 23, Dubuque Sept. 26, and Simpson Sept. 29 to close the month before opening October on the road against Loras (Iowa) Tuesday, Oct. 3.

The last two home games in the stretch will be versus Central (Iowa) Oct. 6 and fellow Coast-to-Coast Conference member UW-Whitewater Tuesday, Oct. 10.

UW-Platteville final two

road games will be against Principia Oct. 14 and St. Olaf (Minn.) Tuesday, Oct. 17 in the middle of October before closing the regular season with two contests at home against St. Scholastica Oct. 24 and UW-Eau Claire, Friday, Oct. 27.

After the regular season, the Coast-to-Coast conference tournament will be played Thursday, Nov. 2 through Sunday, Nov. 5.

The Pioneers are coming off a 12-5-3 overall season, which included a berth in the NCAA Division III playoffs and ended with a 3-1 first round loss to Willamette University (Ore.).

UW-PLATTEVILLE WOMEN'S SOCCER

Women's soccer opens Sept. 1

The UW-Platteville women's soccer team will begin its 2023 season on the road at Concordia-Chicago Sept. 1 with first year head coach Eliza Denmeade at the helm for the Pioneers.

UW-Platteville will play its first home game against Concordia-Moorhead Sunday, Sept. 3 inside Ralph E. Davis Pioneers Stadium.

The Pioneers continue the early season homestand with three at home against Rockford, Edgewood, and Carroll College from Sept. 4-9.

The Pioneers will be busy in the middle of September with a trio of road games at Coe,

Webster, and Greenville before returning home for a pair of non-conference games against Luther and Dubuque.

UW-Platteville kicks off WIAC play on Sept. 30 in UW-River Falls and then travels to UW-La Crosse to begin October.

Following a home non-conference matchup against North Park (Ill.) Oct. 8, the Pioneers head to UW-Stout before play their WIAC home opener Oct. 18 against UW-Whitewater.

After two more road games against UW-Stevens Point and Beloit, the Pioneers host UW-Oshkosh to close the regular season Oct. 28.

Scoreboard

PREP SPORTS

Baseball

(as of 6/13)

SWC	W	L	W	L
Prairie du Chien*	9	1..	14	8
Dodgeville	8	2..	22	5
Platteville	4	6..	10	11
River Valley	4	6..	6	17
Lancaster	3	7..	11	12
Richland Center	2	8..	2	20

SWAL	W	L	W	L
Fennimore*	12	2..	21	5
Cuba City*	12	2..	21	7
Boscobel*	12	2..	18	8
Mineral Point	10	4..	16	5
Iowa-Grant	8	6..	16	11
Fennimore	7	7..	11	12
Southwestern	5	9..	9	13
Riverdale	5	9..	12	18
Darlington	2	12..	4	18
Darlington	0	14..	2	19

Six Rivers West	W	L	W	L
Potosi/Cassville*	11	2..	18	9
Highland	10	3..	15	8
Belmont	8	5..	14	13
Shullsburg/Benton	3	10..	4	17
River Ridge	3	10..	3	17

Thursday (6/15)	W	L	W	L
WIAA State Championships				
D1: Whitefish Bay 5, Hortonville 1				
D2: Denmark 3, St. Thomas more 2 (11)				
D3: St. Croix Falls 3, La Crosse Aquinas 1				
D4: Ithaca 8, Pocatonia 7				

Softball

(as of 6/13)

SWC	W	L	W	L
Dodgeville*	9	1..	15	7
River Valley	8	2..	20	8
Prairie du Chien	7	3..	11	9
Platteville	4	6..	9	13
Lancaster	1	9..	4	15
Richland Center	1	9..	2	15

NOTE: All standings are unofficial



ELI ADAMS

Potosi/Cassville, Jr., P
First Team All-SRW



PRESTON STEINER

Potosi/Cassville, Sr., OF/P
First Team All-SRW



SAM UDELHOFEN

Potosi/Cassville, Sr., SS
First Team All-SRW



JESSE RUIZ

Belmont, Sr., OF
First Team All-SRW



JOSIAH RUIZ

Belmont, Sr., IF
First Team All-SRW



KOLBY LANCASTER

Belmont, Sr., P
First Team All-SRW



KONNER LANCASTER

Belmont, Sr., C
First Team All-SRW



DAWSON WEBER

Potosi/Cassville, So., Utl.
Honorable Mention All-SRW



RAZ OKEY

Potosi/Cassville, Sr., C
Honorable Mention All-SRW

SRW

► from page 12A

Sophomore utility player Dawson Weber (.265, 13 H, 7 RBI, 13 R, 6 SB; 3-1, 3.64 ERA, 21 K, 25 IP), senior catcher Raz Okey (.149, 11 H, 8 RBI, 4 R), senior first baseman Ethan Kerkhoff (.297, 22 H, 2 HR, 26 RBI, 19 R, 8 SB) and senior outfielder Nick Hampton (.200, 14 H, HR, 10 RBI, 16 R, 14 SB) were among the nine players who received SRW honorable mention.

Belmont seniors Jesse Ruiz (OF/P), Kolby Lancaster (P) and Konner Lancaster (C), and freshman infielder Josiah Ruiz were named first-team All-SRW after leading the Braves to a 14-13 overall record and an 8-5 third-place finish in the SRW. Jesse Ruiz hit .333 (29-for-87) with eight doubles, 14 RBI, a co-team-high 20 runs scored and seven stolen bases. He also went 2-3 with a save, a 2.88 ERA and 61 strikeouts in 411/3 innings pitched. Kolby Lancaster finished 8-3 with a 1.78 ERA and a team-high 90 strikeouts in 59 innings pitched. He batted .167 (9-for-54) with one homer and six RBI. Konner Lancaster hit a team-high .338 (26-for-77)



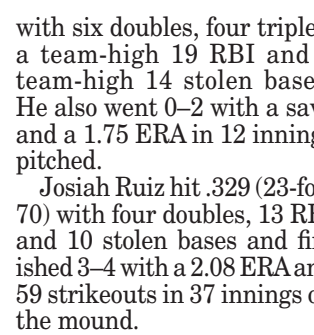
ETHAN KERKHOFF

Potosi/Cassville, Sr., 1B
Honorable Mention All-SRW



NICK HAMPTON

Potosi/Cassville, Sr., OF
Honorable Mention All-SRW



2023 All-Six Rivers West

Baseball Team
Coach of the Year
Tony Leibfried, Potosi/Cassville
Player of the Year
Logan Kruser, sr., Potosi/Cassville
First Team

OF - Jesse Ruiz, Belmont..... sr.	IF - Josiah Ruiz, Belmont..... sr.
P - Kolby Lancaster, Belmont..... sr.	C - Konner Lancaster, Belmont..... sr.
C - Eli Blaine, Benton/Shulls..... jr.	P - Nathan Keleher, Benton/Shulls..... sr.
Utl. - Bennett Smith, Highland..... so.	C - Blake Dax, Highland..... sr.
OF - Bryce Bollant, Highland..... sr.	P - Joe Bomkamp, Highland..... jr.
P - Eli Adams, Potosi/Cass..... jr.	IF - Logan Kruser, Potosi/Cass..... sr.
IF - Preston Steiner, Potosi/Cass..... sr.	IF - Sam Udelhofen, Potosi/Cass..... sr.
OF - Carter Copey, River Ridge..... so.	Honorable Mention
IF - Blake Lawrence, Benton/Shulls..... fr.	IF - Garrett Ray, Benton/Shulls..... sr.
IF - Davis Dorota, Highland..... so.	IF - Dax Smelzer, Highland..... sr.
Utl. - Dawson Weber, Potosi/Cass..... so.	C - Erasmus Okey, Potosi/Cass..... sr.
IF - Ethan Kerkhoff, Potosi/Cass..... sr.	OF - Nick Hampton, Potosi/Cass..... sr.
C - Anthony Davis, River Ridge..... sr.	