

## Girls lacrosse

# No. 1 Wildcats edge No. 2 Warhawks

## Verona picks up pair of top-five wins

**JACK MILLER**  
Digital sports editor

In a matchup of the state's top two teams, the Verona girls lacrosse club pulled out a 13-12 victory over Arrowhead on Monday, May 8, at Arrowhead High School.

Verona (11-0, 6-0 Madison Area Conference) is ranked No. 1 in the state by Lax-Numbers, while Arrowhead is ranked No. 2.

Junior Hannah Jabas scored the game-winning goal to help Verona edge No. 5 Kettle Moraine 8-7 in a nonconference showdown on Friday, May 5, at Verona Area High School.

Verona started off its week with a 17-1 Madison Area Conference victory over DeForest on Tuesday, May 2, at DeForest High School.

### Verona 13, Arrowhead 12

Senior Abbi Rupnow collected seven goals and added three assists to lead Verona to its state-ranked win over the Warhawks. Jabas had a hat trick to go along with three assists.

Seniors Georgia Pacetti and Jasmine Connor both had one goal each.

### Verona 8, Kettle Moraine 7

Tied 7-7, Jabas scored with 1 minute, 28 seconds left in the game off a free position to put the Wildcats ahead. The Verona defense held from there.

## Boys tennis

# Verona splits Big Eight matches

## Wildcats sweep Purple Knights, edged by Spartans

**MARK NESBITT**  
Sports editor

The Verona boys tennis team split two Big Eight Conference matches last week and is in third place in the conference standings heading into the final week of the regular season before the conference tournament.

Verona (13-3, 6-2 Big Eight) rolled by Beloit Memorial 7-0 on Thursday, May 4, at Verona Area High School. The Wildcats were coming off a 4-3 loss to Madison Memorial on Tuesday, May 2, in Madison.

### Verona 7, Beloit Memorial 0

The Wildcats' four singles players went a combined 48-0 in games played in a Big Eight Conference dual match

against Beloit Memorial.

Ryder Broadbridge (No. 1 singles), Justin Hutchcroft (No. 2 singles), Riley Sweet (No. 3 singles) and Justin Happel (No. 4 singles) all won 6-0, 6-0.

Verona seniors Josh Bradley and Riley Sass at No. 1 doubles earned a 6-0, 6-2 victory.

Jacob Brierley and Sam Hudson earned a 6-0, 6-0 sweep. Verona's No. 3 doubles team of Kai Cravens and Owen Hopp dropped just one game.

### Madison Memorial 4, Verona 3

Verona won three singles matches, but Madison Memorial swept every doubles match to clip the Wildcats.

Hutchcroft at No. 2 singles topped Madison Memorial's David Klaas 6-1, 6-4. At No. 3 singles, Sweet beat the Spartans' Andrew Braun 6-1, 6-3. Happel won a tiebreaker in the second set and edged Madison Memorial's Owen Bird 6-3, 7-6 (2) at No. 4 singles.

## Blomberg: 'I have tried to focus on hitting for average, making contact and getting on base'

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the plate. She puts her back elbow up and leans a little on her back leg, glaring at the pitcher as she awaits the pitch. Blomberg has a knack for keeping her balance and driving the ball.

Blomberg has taken the tutelage from some of the top hitting coaches, including Kaukauna assistant coach Steve Meredith, who coaches her club team, the Wisconsin Bandits 18U Gold. Kaukauna (11-0) is ranked No. 1 in the Division 1 Wisconsin Softball Coaches Association state poll.

She credits Meredith for helping her tap into even more power.

"He helped me improve my wrist snap at the right point," Blomberg said. "He has an amazing hitting team. He is from a softball family and he's a great hitting

coach. I was a good hitter and he turned me into a great hitter."

Blomberg is selective at the plate. She has the experience of being a catcher, pitcher and shortstop. She uses her knowledge of pitching at the plate by looking at the rotation on certain pitches.

"I'm a pitcher and a catcher so I have got good at reading pitches and the spins," Blomberg said.

Opponents know she is one batter in the Wildcats' lineup that could change the outcome of a game with one swing. That is why she reminds herself to be patient and hit her pitch.

"I don't always get an opportunity to hit," she said. "A lot of times I get pitched around."

She started learning softball fundamentals at age 5 from

Kelly Keyes, who was the organizer of the Verona Area Girls Softball Association. She attended an eight-week camp that Keyes instructed for three straight summers.

She then evolved into club softball and started playing with the Verona Cougars at age 8.

Her mother served as her coach. She has played for several club teams the past seven years. Last summer, Blomberg and her senior sister Addie Blomberg – a South Dakota State commit – and the Wisconsin Bandits 18U Gold team went 20-9-1.

Two summers ago, Blomberg won the Midwest Fastpitch Showcase Home Run Derby hosted by Showtime Sports. She took second in the same home run derby

last summer. Showtime Sports is an invitation-only set of exhibition games featuring some of the top college prospects that is attended by college recruiters.

"I always focused on hitting the ball," Blomberg said. "Contact is a huge thing for me."

She credits her mother and her father for getting her involved in softball pitching and camps.

"My mom helped push us further," Blomberg said. "She made it fun and was a good coach. She was supportive. Both my mom and dad would get me in softball camps and pitching and hitting lessons. They wanted me to learn everything so I could pitch, catch and hit."

That's why she doesn't want to be pigeon-holed just as a power

hitter. She wants to strive to continue being an all-around hitter.

"If I always swing for a home run my average could dip," she said. "That first year (16 home runs) was an amazing season. I have tried to focus on hitting for average, making contact and getting on base."

And with that focus even more home runs come. She's embracing her role as a hitter. It's one of the ways she could get on the field with the Badgers sooner next season.

"I'm primarily being recruited as a hitter," Blomberg said after signing her National Letter of Intent on Nov. 9. "The coaches told me the fastest way I could play is probably as a DP (designated player) or pinch hitter."

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