

Wabash remembers Cyrus Anton

JAMES WALLACE '26
NEWS EDITOR

The Wabash family woke up last week on March 22 to the news that a fellow Little Giant had passed away overnight. Cyrus Anton was a freshman at the College who had truly taken advantage of his time here.

Anton was left paralyzed after a spinal cord injury during a car accident in 2020, but he didn't let that get in his way of reaching his goals. He graduated from Emmerich Manual High School in 2021, taking a break from school shortly after.



COURTESY OF @WABASHCIBE ON INSTAGRAM
Cyrus Anton (middle) poses with fellow Wabash men during a CIBE program that he completed over spring break 2024.

stone for many Wabash men. Himsel's classes are always built around class discussion. "He jumped in with relish," said Himsel. "He never held back with his opinions and never lacked the ability to support them. But he also welcomed criticism of his work."

Anton never let his disability define him, particularly in the classroom. His peers took note of his determination, as it was hard to miss. "Cyrus was one of the strongest people I have ever met," said classmate Nicholas Green '27. "He balked at nothing... he did everything with fearless conviction."

"He was just undaunted."

- Professor Scott Himsel '85

Outside of his studies, Anton is remembered for his admirable character. His gentle and gracious nature left a lasting impact on those who knew him. "He was funny, he had a great sense of humor — including about himself," said Himsel. "He was also courteous to other people. He could take a position contrary to someone else without making things personal."

Anton's disability affected many parts of his life, but he did his best to overcome any

challenges thrown his way. He was courageous in his approach to these challenges and to life as a whole. "He was always positive and ready for the day, I never saw him upset or discouraged," said Green. "He never indicated that he was in the last months of his life."

Anton led his life in a way that is inspiring to all. The setbacks he conquered and the goals he set are a testament to the kind of man he was. "He just was undaunted," said Himsel. "Even though his dreams — graduating college and going to law school — were going to be far more difficult to attain, he was undaunted. That's real inspiration."

Anton approached Wabash like he approached the rest of his life, with unwavering bravery and the desire to help others. His words from his article "Advancing access and equity" that is found in the October 6, 2023 edition of *The Bachelor* accurately sum up the legacy he leaves behind:

"Avoiding talking down to your peers and faculty with disabilities, considering donating to disability charities [and] asking before assisting peers and promoting general kindness towards your Wabash brothers are all simple ways to promote access and equity for our thriving disabled community."

"He balked at nothing... he did everything with fearless conviction."

- Nicholas Green '27

He arrived on Wabash's campus during the Ringing-In ceremony on August 19, 2023 with plans to major in PPE and the intention of going to law school after Wabash. He was an advocate for individuals with disabilities, serving as the Indiana President of the United Spinal Association.

He also participated in a pro bono speaker series to share his personal experiences to help advocate for disability inclusion and wrote an op-ed for *The Bachelor* during National Disability Employment Month.

Friends, professors and mentors will remember Anton for his tenacity and constant drive that was showcased in the difficult classes and extra programs he participated in at the College.

"The only thing he wanted to do was to be a college student," said Professor Scott Himsel '85. "And, more specifically, he wanted to be a Wabash man. The way he embodied that was that he was both enthusiastic and industrious."

Himsel was Anton's professor for Freshmen Tutorial, a class that is a notable corner-

Four republican candidates participate in gubernatorial debate

US Senator Mike Braun '76 among hopefuls

ELIJAH WETZEL '27
STAFF WRITER

The Indiana gubernatorial election is still months away, but the race is already starting to heat up, particularly on the republican side. With six candidates still in the race for the republican nomination, a debate was held on March 27 between the four front-runners of the party.

None of the GOP hopefuls are obvious runaway candidates yet. This stands in stark contrast to the Democratic Party, where former Indiana Secretary of Education Jennifer McCormick is already the de facto nominee due to her lack of competition and the Libertarian Party that has already held its party convention and selected Donald Rainwater as its nominee.



COURTESY OF USA TODAY
Mike Braun '76 announces that he will run for governor of Indiana in Indianapolis on December 12, 2022.

"No one really took the opportunity to take him [Braun] off that high horse."

- Professor Shamira Gelbman

The four republican candidates — Senator Mike Braun '76, Eric Doden, Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch and Brad Chambers — polled high enough in a recent poll done by Emerson College and The Hill to qualify for Tuesday's debate that broadcasted on channels across the state.

The Emerson College poll surveyed 526 registered Indiana GOP voters who were asked which Republican candidate they would support if election day was tomorrow. Braun received 34% of the support, Doden and Crouch 7% each and Chambers 5%. The other two candidates, Curtis Hill and Jamie Reitenour, received less than 5% each, missing the threshold for participation in Tuesday night's debate.

While Braun leads his closest competitors by 27 points, the same poll found a whopping 43% of voters surveyed were undecided, leaving plenty of opportunity for someone to close that 27 point gap before the May 7 primary. Shamira Gelbman, associate professor of political science at Wabash, commented that while Braun currently leads in the polls, a large share of voters still undecided means that lead is by no means safe.

"Mike Braun is seen as the candidate to beat. He has the Trump endorsement piece, he has kind of been running with that, and he's running on a pretty good track record in the Senate; good in the sense of he introduces bills and stuff happens to them, which not

all members of Congress do," Gelbman said. "It's not surprising to me that the undecided or 'I don't know yet' numbers are high, but it does say that just because Braun is sitting at 34% doesn't mean he wins this."

While Wabash voters will probably recognize at least one of the names among the four frontrunners, Tuesday's debate, the second Republican primary debate of this cycle, offered voters across Indiana the chance to go beyond name recognition and get familiar with the candidates' policies and values. Here's a brief biography of each of the four GOP frontrunners:

Mike Braun, a native of Jasper County, graduated from Wabash in 1976 with a degree in economics and matriculated to Harvard Business School, where he earned his MBA. Braun moved back to Jasper after finishing his master's and worked for a national business before taking over his own company, which became a national company a few decades later. Braun was previously a member of the Indiana state legislature from 2014-2017 before winning a 2018 election for one of Indiana's U.S. Senate seats, a role he has held since.

Brad Chambers is a Hoosier native who began a business to help pay his way through school at Indiana University, where he earned a degree in finance in 1986. Chambers grew his business, a real estate investment firm, into a multi-state entity with a portfolio valued at over \$3 billion. A self-proclaimed "political outsider," Chambers has never run for public office before, but just finished up a two-year term as Indiana's appointed Secretary of Commerce during which he oversaw the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) among other duties.

Suzanne Crouch was born in southern Indiana and attended Purdue University, earning a degree in political science. Crouch worked in local politics and government in a variety of roles before serving in the Indiana House of Representatives from 2005-2014 when she began an appointed role as Indiana state auditor,

a job she filled until 2017 upon becoming lieutenant governor in Eric Holcomb's administration. Crouch serves as the President of the Indiana Senate and as the chair for several state agencies in her capacity as lieutenant governor.

Eric Doden was raised in northern Indiana and attended Hillsdale College in Michigan before returning to the Hoosier state and earning his J.D. from Valparaiso. Doden worked in leadership positions at several companies before receiving an appointment from then-governor Mike Pence in 2015 to be President of the IEDC. He served in that role for three and a half years and is currently the CEO of Domo Venture, LLC, a private equity firm.

The hour-long debate was held in FOX 59's Indianapolis studio and featured a structured debate style. Suffice to say, there was far less crosstalk and rambling than viewers familiar with recent presidential debates were used to. That is not to say barbs were not traded, however.

"I think a lot of them still haven't materially distinguished themselves."

- Isaac Grannis '26

Terrorist attack kills more than 137 in Central Moscow

PRESTON REYNOLDS '25
OPINION EDITOR

March 22, 2024. Central Moscow is rocked by an explosion. Crocus City Hall, known for receiving both Eric Clapton and a-ha in the 2020s, prepared for Russian band Picnic to rock the house. However, around 8 p.m. Moscow Time (MSK), the venue unknowingly hosted bombs and gunmen, killing more than 137 people.

Assailants were heard invoking Allah in Arabic while slitting the throats of wounded victims, petrol bombs were used to start a fire in the auditorium and men fired indiscriminately into the crowd. The attack was claimed shortly after by the Islamic State — Khorasan Province (ISIS-K), a terror group operating primarily in South and Central Asia.



COURTESY OF AP
A Russian Rosguardia servicemen secures an area in front of the Crocus City Hall in Moscow, Russia on March 22, 2024.

"Russia/Soviet Union fought and lost a war in Afghanistan way before we did (1979-1989)," said Hollander. "So, there's no love lost in Afghanistan or the greater Middle East for Russia and its influence."

Islamist terror is something that Russians are used to seeing, as the country has been rocked by many attacks in the past.

"Russia has a lot of societal experience with terrorism, especially Islamist terrorism," Hollander said. "Russia has violently and ruthlessly suppressed rebels in its restive province of

Chechnya (which is majority Muslim). This led to several major terrorist attacks in Russia, including a previous attack on a Moscow theater in 2002."

This attack comes at a vulnerable point for Russia, during an extremely volatile period in their civil life. Five days before, incumbent president Vladimir Putin orchestrated an election which, as international observers stated, was expected to be neither free nor fair. Earlier in February, longtime political opposition to Putin, Alexei Navalny, was declared dead in a Russian prison camp.

Navalny, 47 at the time of his death, long lambasted Putin's Russia for authoritarianism and corruption. He was jailed and assaulted multiple times leading up to his imprisonment, with a poisoning incident reaching global news in 2020. For many Russians and Western commentators, Navalny represented the only legitimate and feasible opposition to Vladimir Putin.

"Russian influence and activity in the Middle East go way back," said Ethan Hollander, associate professor of political science. "Thus, this plays into anti-imperialist sentiment there, much as it does for the U.S."

This attack did not come out of nowhere. Since 1979, the Soviet Union and Russian state have engaged in wars against Muslim-majority countries.



PHOTO BY LOGAN WEILBAKER '25
Signs and flowers adorn a pop-up memorial for Alexei Navalny in Naples, Italy on March 6, 2024.

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COURTESY OF FOX59
(Left to right) Eric Doden, Mike Braun '76, Suzanne Crouch and Brad Chambers debate at the FOX59 studio on March 26, 2024.

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Gubernatorial debate

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"I think the others didn't really try to take him down very much," said Gelbman. "They could have made it about him and about beating up on him. No one really took the opportunity to take him off that high horse."

"Just because Braun is sitting at 34% doesn't mean he wins this."

- Professor Shamira Gelbman

Despite the minor clashes, candidates used this debate to establish their stance on issues ranging from in vitro fertilization and the legalization of marijuana, to the economy and their proposals for fixing failing infrastructure in small towns. On many issues there was widespread agreement. Qualified immunity laws for police officers, for one, was a topic of general consensus among the candidates: listen to law enforcement groups and make changes from there. More independent audits for state government along with widespread support of IVF practices on the grounds that it was a pro-family practice were also topics of little dispute among the candidates.

"This contest is for who is going to be the likely next governor."

- Professor Shamira Gelbman

Candidates disagreed on issues based primarily on their theories of implementation and less so due to ideological differences on issues. For example, they agreed that growing the economy without raising taxes was a priority for Indiana, but while Crouch is proposing phasing out the state income tax completely over the next few years, Braun was hesitant to commit to any sort of tax cuts that would divert money from infrastruc-

ture. Chambers and Doden echoed Braun's hesitancy to lower taxes fullbore and Doden went as far as saying that Crouch's proposal to "Axe the Tax" was "inappropriate."

While the primary elections for Democrats and Republicans are still over a month away, early debates can be some of the first meaningful exposure voters have to candidates and their platforms. But separating oneself from the pack can be difficult. Isaac Grannis, historian for the College Republicans at Wabash, spoke to that difficulty.

"I think my best way to explain my take on the debate is Governor Holcomb's lack of endorsement so far," Grannis said. "I think a lot of them still haven't materially distinguished themselves."

"Mike Braun is seen as the candidate to beat."

- Professor Shamira Gelbman

A candidate's difficulty differentiating themselves from others in the field is not necessarily that person's fault, however, said Grannis. Indiana's firm status as a "red" state can make these primary debates a little repetitive.

"It felt like where they disagreed, it was sort of potshots at each other, and everywhere else they just kind of said the same thing in different ways," said Grannis. "Which I think is par for the course with debates, and especially when everyone knows that generally Indiana is a red state."

Voters who tune in to gubernatorial primary debates may be inundated with similar versions of the same response to a problem, but in a state like Indiana which has not had a Democratic governor since 2005, the primary is likely more important than the November general election.

"There is this contest for who is going to be the likely next governor, and it's very likely the Republican candidate is going to win in November," said Gelbman. "So if you want to have a say there, this primary is important."



COURTESY OF INDIANA CAPITAL CHRONICLE

Jennifer McCormick traveled to New Castle, Indiana to announce her democratic bid for governor of Indiana on May 4, 2023.

Wabash prepares for hiring season

SAM BENEDICT '25 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
LOGAN WEILBAKER '25 MANAGING EDITOR

Every year around this time, campus begins to buzz as news begins to travel that faculty have decided to move on from Wabash. This can lead to a lot of assumptions, but the process of hiring new members of faculty is a lot less black and white than it seems from the student perspective.

While departures that occur in close succession might suggest a broader trend, there are many reasons why faculty may choose to find employment elsewhere.

"Faculty retention isn't going to be perfect," said Dean of the College Todd McDorman. "People will get here and they will decide for a variety of reasons that 'Crawfordsville, Indiana isn't the place I want to be.'"

"Some people find a better opportunity in academia," he continued, "and a lot of times that's a credit to the institution they're leaving, that they thrived there, they gained lots of good experiences, they became attractive to another institution and they go to that institution. Sometimes people make changes for family reasons: they want to live in a big city, their partner gets a job in a different location, some people make broader professional decisions, as in they decide not to continue in academia. And maybe sometimes they decide that this just isn't the college for them."

With roughly three to five new positions opening up each year, there is a constant need to plan for the upcoming hiring season. Now in mid-spring, preparations are already underway for tenure track job interviews, which typically run between November and February.

"[It's] harder, takes longer, but there's much more buy-in when that person arrives."

- Professor Michael Abbott '85

The process is long and involves numerous members of the Wabash faculty before a decision to hire is made. When a position becomes available, the department first puts together a job description for potential applicants. The personnel committee is then responsible for publishing the advertisement and processing applications to give to the review committees, who handle the interviewing process.

"Your pool might range from 60 to as many as 300 in some places," said McDorman.

After eventually shrinking the applicant pool to only three candidates, intensive interviews begin with a multi-faceted process.



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Noah McRoberts '25 asks a question during a lunch talk in Baxter 101 on December 6, 2023. Similarly, potential candidates will engage in Q&A with students when they host their lunch talk.

"Typically they [the candidates] meet with each of the three division chairs and meet with the Dean of the College," said McDorman.

Beyond meeting with each of those individuals, candidates often interact with faculty members outside of their department as well as students. This includes lunch talk presentations that are open to the Wabash community, small group sessions with students, and individual meetings with current faculty members. This ensures that the College receives a wide variety of perspectives when considering a candidate that is expected to, hopefully, stay at the College for a long time.

"Because we're small, we're super democratic," said Music Department Chair Michael Abbott '85. "A lot of people have their say about it, and that makes it harder, takes longer, but there's much more buy-in when that person arrives, because so many people are involved in the search."

As much as the College is evaluating candidates during this time period, all the candidates are equally evaluating Wabash. Especially if it's a tenure-track position, a candidate must be sure that the College and the community at large is a fit for them and, in many cases, their family.

A significant consideration when candidates are looking at coming to Wabash, is that housing isn't widely available for individuals looking to rent, but Wabash does have ways to combat this and appear more attractive to candidates.

"There's almost a network of rental properties that are only accessible to

people who are coming in from Wabash," said Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion Warren Campbell. "Being affiliated with Wabash immediately puts you into a very particular circle within Crawfordsville. Interestingly, the rentals aren't available online for the public. It's kind of through who's coming in and word of mouth and I benefited from that."

"Faculty retention isn't going to be perfect."

- Dean of the College Todd McDorman

Due to natural shifts in recruitment and retention, every decade or two, any given department will undergo what McDorman called a "life cycle." When multiple departures coincide, it shakes things up — but not always in a bad way.

"Over the last couple of years, we designed a curriculum revision that we pitched to the College to sort of say, 'Once all of our positions are lined up and we've got people who are ready to embark on their careers at Wabash teaching music, this is what the curriculum would look like,'" said Abbott. "Simultaneous to us hiring the new people for next year, we'll be rolling out the curriculum."

The hiring process is a long, detailed process that often happens behind the scenes. Year-to-year changes are common and sudden needs arise, but being able to strategically develop new faculty members is the key to ensuring continued institutional success.

Terrorist attack

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Commentators have speculated about how these attacks will impact the legitimacy of Putin's regime.

"It's easy to see how a terrorist attack by ISIS militants would lead to accusations that Putin 'took his eye off the ball', 'has the wrong priorities' and/or just isn't effective at maintaining national security," said Hollander.

Anti-Putin commentators have decried the regime's focus on queer "extremists," citing March 22 as proof of Russian impotence in domestic security policy.

Further complicating the attack are claims that Russia willingly ignored forewarning from Western intelligence. U.S. intelligence agencies claim to have informed Russian officials of the attack as early as March 17. However, the Russian government has claimed everything from never receiving a warning to only receiving general information. President Putin was quoted from a meeting with the Federal Security Service that any warning from the West "resembled blackmail [aimed at] destabilizing our society."

"It doesn't make sense for this to be a false-flag attack," says John Pantzer '26, a PPE major with longtime friends in Central Moscow. "I don't think the FSB or CIA had any reason to stage something like this. The timing is too inconvenient to make sense."

Many Russian commentators have accused Ukraine of having a role in the attack. Pantzer remains skeptical.

"It's a possibility that Ukraine could have had some involvement," said Pantzer, "but, coming to that conclusion would be assumptive."

March 22 has also prompted intensified anti-immigrant backlash.

"Russia has proceeded with mass deportations following the attack," said Pantzer. "They're questioning whether immigration is responsible while they're at war with Ukraine."

Information continues to come out about the events on March 22, as bodies continue to pile up. 11 people have been connected with the attack, with eight of them appearing in court so far. After photos emerged of three of the accused having their ears cut off and bandaged, the ethics of the trial have been questioned. Their trial is ongoing.

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The purpose of *The Bachelor* is to serve the school audience, including but not limited to administrators, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, community members and most importantly, the students. Because this is a school paper, the content and character within will cater to the student body's interests, ideas, and issues. Further, this publication will serve as a medium and forum for student opinions and ideas.

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Student senate is what YOU make it



Sarvik Chaudhary '25
John Schnerre '26
Austin Pickett '26
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Reply to this opinion at schaudh25@wabash.edu

As we all know, it is election season, one of the two times — National Act planning being the second — when almost all of the campus gains an avid interest in the functioning and role of the senate. If you ask an average student “What does the Student Senate do?” you’re likely to get either of two replies: “Organize national act” or “Give clubs money for events.” We, the Sarvik-Schnerre ticket are running because we believe that the Wabash Student has the potential to not just revitalize campus life for students and unite the brothers, but also to be a student voice to not just advocate for student concerns and problems and find a solution.

When we say we recognize the potential of the student senate, we also mean we recognize and KNOW what we can do with this opportunity. One of the concerns we have voiced during our conversations with Wallies is how today we see the senate waiting for clubs to plan events and then fund whatever comes their way. What we forget to ask ourselves is “what about the committees already present under the exec team’s control doing?” We asked that question, and we will be holding the committee chairs accountable to their committees purpose and encourage more all-campus events.

Even with one committee doing at least one all-campus event every week, we can give wallies something new and exciting to look forward to every week. You may ask, where do we get the money from to do an all-campus event every week? We HAVE the money need-

ed for events, but when we see and talk about the money remaining in senate, we only regard the “unallocated funds” and not the “unspent funds,” which are funds that have been allocated to a certain club for an event but even after the passage of events there are funds that are not spent to the dollar requested, instead it just sits in the senate bank account as money that can’t be touched since it’s already allocated. Our Audit and Finance Committee (AFC) will be putting in the extra effort to identify such unspent funds after a week or two of the given date of the event passes and the club fails to put up the event or the completion of the event.

When we see the committees planning and implementing events and long-term programs for the college, we fail to recognize the hardworking Wabash students chairing these committees and the work they’re expected to do on top of their classroom responsibilities. If elected, our team will have complete oversight on the activities and functioning of these committees to not just provide the resources they need, but also when we need to recognize complacency and lack of intent among committees and take the necessary action needed.

Sure, we use big words and might have an even bigger vision, but this team also has our past actions and work to back this ambition with. Every single person on this ticket has been involved in the senate since their freshman year, and have also showcased how they have advanced the positions and responsibilities that came with it. We did not just get the idea to make senate better and put the work in because it’s election season. We started because we wanted to see what the senate is capable of achieving, but we stayed and fought, because we KNOW what WE can achieve with senate.

HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

“BLESSED ARE THE POOR”

Lo-Five to Donald Trump for peddling \$60 “God Bless the USA” bibles. Rumor has it if you bundle with the \$400 sneakers, he’ll throw in a set of steak knives.

BEHIND DOOR #2...

Hi-Five to the person who bought the famous door from “Titanic” for more than \$700,000 at an auction this week. Apparently “never let go” doesn’t apply to your life savings.

DRAW THE LINE

Hi-Five to the thousands of men who schedule vasectomies to coincidentally align their recovery time with March Madness. At least we know where they do and don’t like to gamble.

KEEPING THE STREETS SAFE

Hi-Five to the rats who broke into a New Orleans evidence locker and got high from consuming large quantities of marijuana. Good to know that vigilante justice is alive and well.

THE PURSUIT OF HOPPY-NESS

Hi-Five to the Easter Bunny for leaving eggs around campus Thursday morning to promote mental health concerns. Don’t worry if you don’t find them all. The lawn mowers will.

March is madder than ever



Silvio Radice '26

Reply to this opinion at seradice26@wabash.edu

With March Madness in full effect, there have been a slew of surprising and almost unbelievable upsets. This is no surprise in March, of course. Every year there are crazy upsets and Cinderella stories that captivate sports fans around the nation. It is a tale as old as time and a big reason why everyone loves college basketball and looks forward to March.

However, over the last decade — and specifically in the last few years — we have seen the number of upsets start to increase. Not only that, but there have been crazier upsets than ever before. There are a few major reasons why I believe this is the case. I believe the reasons behind this are an increase in the overall skill sets of players, NIL deals, three pointers and size of older players.

The overall skill of players has been increasing over the last 10 years. There are a few major reasons why. One of the biggest reasons is the explosion of youth basketball/AAU basketball. AAU basketball is the biggest youth sport in the United States. There are leagues that start as young as elementary school all the way up through senior year in high school. The players and teams of these leagues around the nation stretch all the way from average youth and high school players all the way up through the top high school recruits in the entire nation.

The main reason why we have seen the explosion is because of the sponsorship from top corporations like Nike, Adidas and Under Armour. With so many opportunities and places for kids to play, they are able to start playing competitive basketball at a younger age. This means that more kids than ever before — even outside of the best players in the nation — can develop their skills. This leads up to college where the trend continues. All these players played high-level basketball from an early age, so that means that there are more high-level players at different and smaller colleges throughout the United States.

NIL deals have also had a major effect on the uptick in upsets during March Madness. In July 2021, a new rule was passed that allowed college student athletes to make money off their name, image and likeness. This has led to lucrative endorsement deals and sponsorship opportunities.

Because of this, more schools have been able to offer financial incentives to top recruits. This levels the playing field, because it distributes the talent pool across a broader spectrum of teams. Players are not pressured to join the notorious bluebloods like Duke and Kentucky to benefit them financially anymore. This makes mid-major programs much more competitive, contributing to the increase in upsets during March Madness.

There are also factors within the game of basketball itself that have contributed to an increase in upsets. The three-pointer has become vastly more important than it ever used to be. Almost every player on the court can shoot now, and the top shooters today are miles ahead of any top shooter from the past simply because of the frequency of three-point shots taken in recent years. This makes the game more unpredictable.

Making three-pointers can fluctuate game to game for any team. If a lower-seeded team happens to shoot the lights out like we saw this year in the Kentucky and Oakland game, then they have a much higher chance to win the game. Especially if the higher-seeded team happens to have a cold shooting night.

Overall, I think that this makes college basketball much more exciting. No longer do fans of mid-major teams have to sit idly by and watch while the top bluebloods and top seeds battle it out every year. Last year Florida Atlantic University made it all the way to a final four and lost an extremely close game to San Diego State University. And Florida Atlantic was a nine seed! Not to mention that we have had two number one seeds fall to sixteen seeds in the past six years, and that had never happened in history. I think that this trend will continue, and I think it will make for even more exciting March Madness in the future.

Wally's wall: Election issues

The Prompt:

What is the most important issue for you when voting for student body president?

Matthew Hendrick '25

I look for accountability. The correct candidate is someone who has time and time again achieved the things they promised. As long as that is the way they operate and don't have any overly ambitious goals, then they will be getting my vote.

Evan Dickey '26

I am predominantly focused on the diversity and involvement of the cabinet. It is important to me that the president-elect is not afraid to have his views challenged. The president should also actively seek to make his own informed decisions on each issue with which he is presented. In some tickets, I see a lack in these areas which raises personal concerns about other potential weaknesses the ticket may hold.

Lane Brockman '26

The most important issue to me is whether the candidates are capping or not. There are some serious yappers.

RT Hall '24

I have no issues. I can't even vote. I just hope all the candidates have fun.

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Mindfulness at Wabash



Tanner Quackenbush '26
Reply to this opinion at tjquacke26@wabash.edu

on. As we learned information from the textbook, we applied practices to our daily lives and cultivated a better understanding of mindfulness. As a result, we decreased stress and rumination. Who would ever think a class could decrease a student's stress levels?

Reflecting on my journey, I am compelled to extend a call to action to the Wabash community. Let us embrace mindfulness as a valuable tool for well-being. We even have a meditation group for students called Meditation @ Wabash, which meets every week at lunchtime; no previous experience is necessary. I encourage you to join mindfulness meetings and explore meditation through accessible apps and guided sessions. By nurturing mindfulness collectively, we can create a campus culture rooted in awareness, compassion and resilience.

As I have embarked on my journey through Wabash, I have struggled and seen some dark moments in my mental health. For all of us here, this place is difficult, and that is what makes us special. But it does not mean we are invincible. A lot of weight is on our shoulders: classes and homework, social life, family life, and personal health. I have found many of the resources available here at Wabash tremendously helpful in my daily battles, but one has made a surprising impact. And ironically, it was a class I took last semester. That class was PSY-110, 'Psychology of Mindfulness'.

Mindfulness is a term I heard about during my high school years when I first started exploring the world of meditation as a means of relaxation, reducing anxiety and stress. Starting out, it was definitely hard to sit with my own thoughts and feelings. I soon realized that this was a skill to learn and, just like any other skill in athletics or understanding a concept in class, it would take time to become better at it.

Then things got busy. I came to Wabash and was on my own. My mind was overwhelmed by the sheer intensity of this place, and my progress with mindfulness practice was gone entirely. Back to square one!

It was when I looked at the course catalog for this past semester that PSY-110 with Professor Neil Schmitzer-Torbert popped out of the screen. After reading the description, I knew I had to take it. Although I lost my progress from before, I was interested in taking a deep dive into the science of it all, and I was yet to know of the lasting impact it would have on me.

Under the guidance of Professor Schmitzer-Torbert, I delved deeper into the world of mindfulness. We used John Kabat-Zinn's book, "Full Catastrophe Living", as the class's main textbook (Kabat-Zinn is basically the godfather of modern mindfulness). From his book, we learned that mindfulness is simply "the awareness that arises by paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally" (p. 35). It encompasses fundamental traits like patience, a beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go. These qualities, though seemingly simple, hold the power to enhance well-being in profound ways.

Past the textbook, we also participated in mindfulness-based practices, taking days to go to the Fine Arts Center to do yoga movements, body scans, breathing meditations and so

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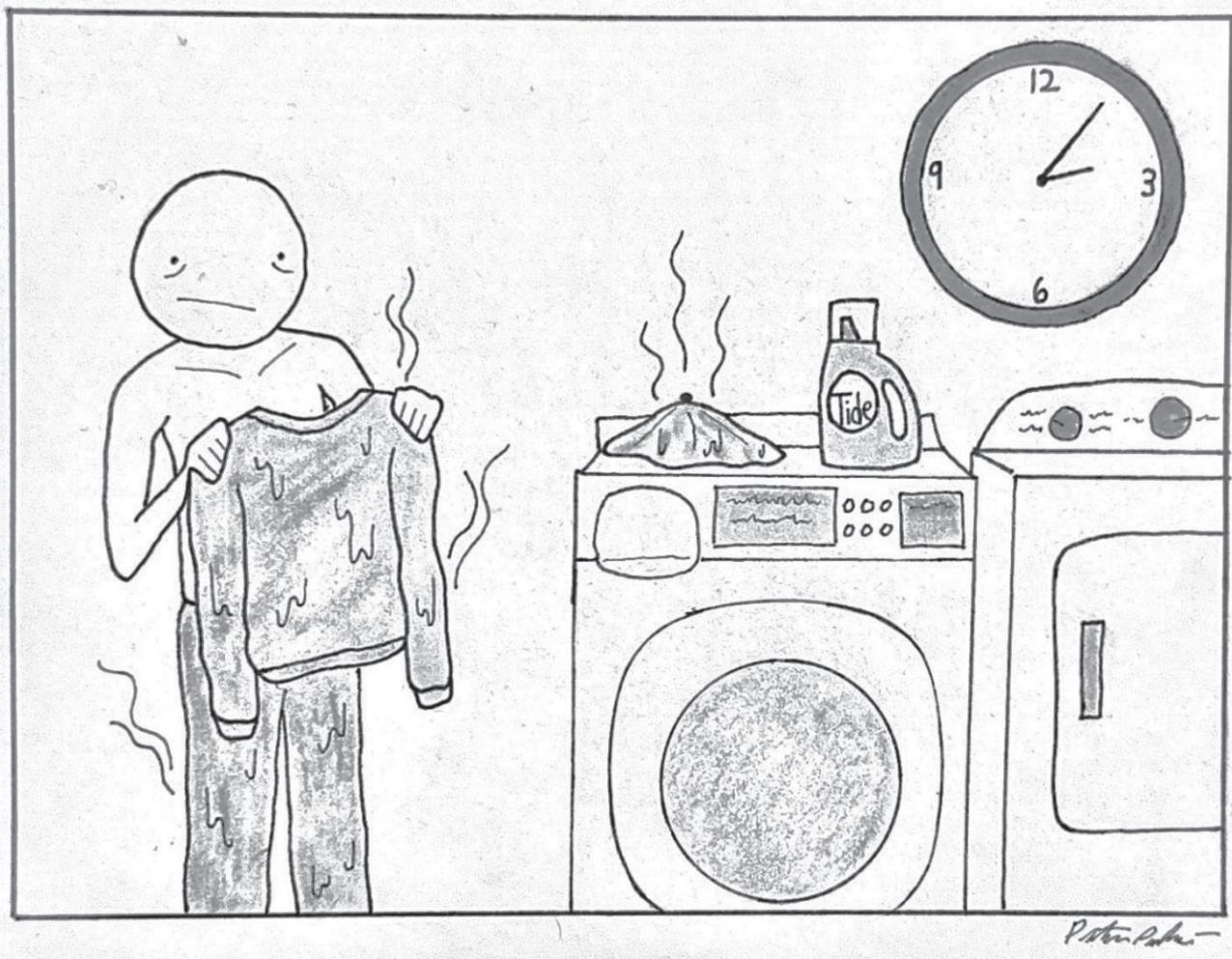
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Rodney Rhyne

Week #6: 'When day is done'



Comic by Preston Parker '26



FEATURES

Cousin Rick's pick three Sweet 16 promises even closer games

RT HALL '24 | COLUMNIST

Lines and odds provided by DraftKings, accurate as of Wednesday, March 27. Please gamble responsibly.

Zach Edey Total Points O/U 25.5 (Over) +100

Edey has managed to be quite consistent this year as a high profile scorer, failing to put up at least 18 points only six times this year and not doing so since January. With consistency in this metric, the differentiator is if Edey requires the extra usage to reach a higher mark. Personally, I believe Edey's defensive matchup does a lot to determine his offensive usage, with the logic being relatively counterintuitive. Teams that play poor defense against Edey, Utah State for instance, demand more defensive attention to Edey, creating greater offensive opportunity on the perimeter. Teams like Gonzaga, who have imposing defensive figures like Graham Ike, tend to provide more one-on-one matchups with Edey, leading to either more points off field goal attempts or more free throw attempts for Edey. This proved to be the case back in November, where Edey went off for 25 and went 9/10 from the line. With heavy whistles so far this March, expect Edey to hit the over.

3. Creighton v. 2. Tennessee at +2.5 (Creighton ML) +118

First off, I think this should be an incredibly close-fought game but I like Creighton, so I have to recommend the underdog odds. Both teams looked particularly dismal in their Round of 32 matchups, needing faltering play from their opponents down the stretch to advance, but I believe Tennessee's struggles were more representative of a trend. Both teams boast strong defenses; Tennessee's is much more prolific, but Creighton's offense slightly outpaces the Vols'. Nevertheless, whenever Tennessee has faced a strong opponent down the stretch, their three point shooting has greatly suffered, turning in 12 and 24 percent performances from behind the arc. With Creighton's strong defense, I expect this to continue and the Blue Jays to get the win.

1. Houston v. 4. Duke O/U 133.5 (Over) -115

No matter who they've played, Houston has had low O/U lines following them all season, and reasonably so as the nation's second-best defense with an average to below average offense. Yet, the status quo hasn't seemed to be so as of late. In the Round of 32, Houston outlasted Texas A&M in an absolute barnburner, and Houston flexed their offensive muscle in their late season run. For Duke's part, one of the nation's best three point shooting teams has found themselves shooting like it, shooting 32 and 50 percent from behind the arc in their two games thus far. Thanks to this combination of factors, I like the over in this game.



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Five basketball seniors reflect on last dance



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

The senior class of the basketball team stand proudly with their families on Chadwick Court during Senior Day on February 17, 2024.

HAI DEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26
STAFF WRITER

From their separate childhood lives to their paths crossing at Wabash, five senior basketball players have established not only outstanding teams, but also a bond that has fueled their journey toward achievement. As their college careers come to a close, Ahmoni Jones '24, Avery Beaver '24, Edreece Redmond II '24, Sam Comer '24 and Champ McCorkle '24 reflect on their victories on the court and on the growth they've experienced together, defining their legacy both as players and as lifelong friends.

In the past three years, subtracting any extra years of eligibility due to COVID-19, this senior class has gone 69-21, won three NCAC conference tournaments, earned three NCAA Division III Tournament bids and made one historic Final Four run. Based on a shared passion for basketball, these five seniors got to know each other, and their shared experiences slowly formed a tight-knit brotherhood over the years.

"We were a group that formed during COVID-19 — during times of uncertainty and isolation," said McCorkle. "I think this helped us grow closer together during our early times at Wabash. We formed relationships that will likely last a lifetime."

"All of us can agree that our relationships have grown over the years, especially this year living together," said Comer. "We all didn't come in together because Ahmoni had a Covid year. Avery and I knew each other from summer basketball so we decided to be roommates. Edreece lived right across our hall, we met him early on and ever since then, we just had a close bond."

The culture this group has built is on another maturity level than the culture they inherited. This change is a testament to the trust, accountability and work ethic these seniors have manufactured together.

"My freshman year, we didn't like each other that much and weren't there to play for each other," said Jones. "However, the groups that came in after my freshman year changed the culture in the way we should've viewed and played basketball. We've come together like a family over these three to four years."

"The build started our sophomore year when we made the Final Four run," said Redmond. "It set the standard for us. Since then, we've all been on the same

page and we compete every day at practice with the mindset that winning is the end goal."

"We took our craft seriously enough to where we were gonna go to work in the summer and try to get better individually so when we came in for the school year for practice, we didn't have to take a step back and figure everyone out, because we had already taken that next step in the offseason," said Beaver.

Although there are many moments to reflect on — like the run to the Final Four — the one that stands out for these men was senior night this past season, where they clinched the conference for the very last time together.

"Winning the conference on our home floor this year was my favorite moment," said Comer. "I had written it off in my head that we were gonna host and win the conference just because of how bad the year was going at one point. Being able to bounce back the way we did with all the work and all the time we put in over our careers and to win in front of 1,500 people that showed out was a really big deal and a memorable experience."

The seemingly dominant team came together with a complete team effort, headed up by underdog seniors that patiently waited for their time in the spotlight.

"We were able to win with guys who people thought we couldn't win with," said Jones. "It was fun to see these guys kill it on the court and finally get the flowers they deserve."

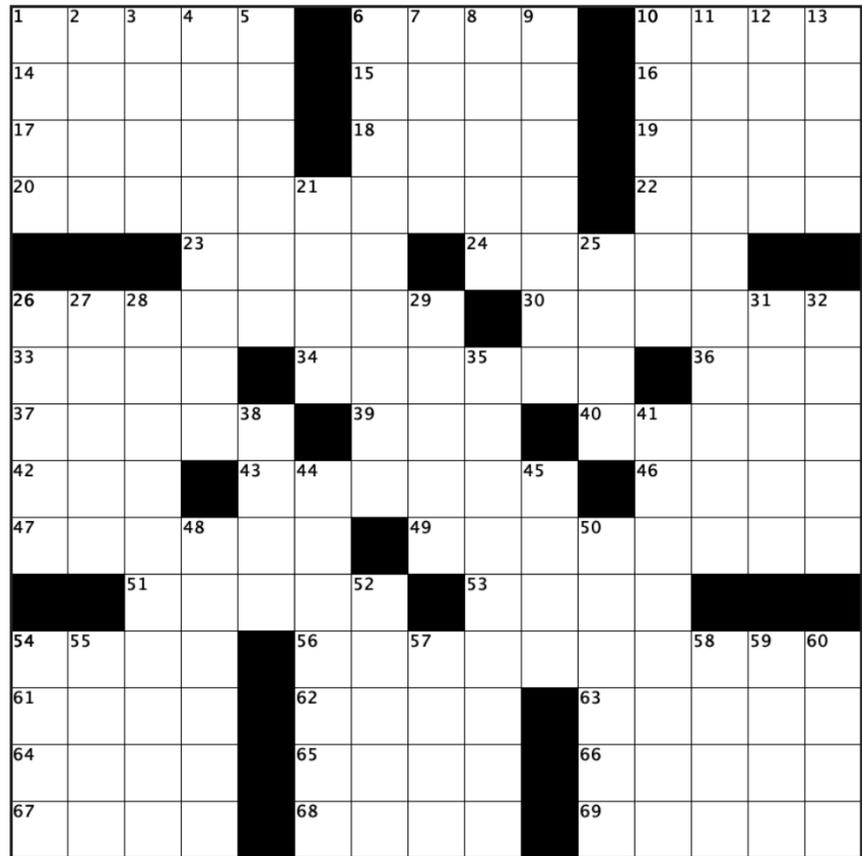
The gravity of such a moment is inherent with the crowd and the spectacle, but the personal significance was not lost on these seniors either. The conference championship win tied up not only their individual careers, but also served as a grand finale for the seniors as brothers.

"This senior class was close with each other, so beating Wooster on our home floor to clinch the regular season conference crown was definitely something memorable," said Beaver. "My sophomore year, Ahmoni had a really big impact on the game, but Edreece, Sam and I were more role players. So us all being on the floor together and contributing on senior night and winning the conference was super cool."

Through all the hills and valleys, these five gentlemen have endeavored. They've undoubtedly left their mark on the College and its basketball program.

'Themeless #1'

Crossword by
Logan Weilbaker '25



Across

- 1. Plant that causes a state of bliss when eaten, in Homer
- 6. Mountain dew?
- 10. "I can't decide" button
- 14. Take in
- 15. Key
- 16. Hiram location
- 17. High-IQ society
- 18. Light element
- 19. Apt rhyme for "take two"
- 20. Aestheticism
- 22. Verb that sounds like a legume in British English
- 23. Rich person's suffix
- 24. Pelts
- 26. Practice for Diogenes or Nietzsche
- 30. News, with "the"
- 33. Look bad?
- 34. Lathered up
- 36. Nod, perhaps
- 37. Lay up
- 39. Aunt, in Ávila
- 40. Produce, as a play
- 42. Mo. #9
- 43. Opener
- 46. Native people of Ghana
- 47. Slept soundly?
- 49. Air Forces, for one
- 51. Huey or Jerry Lee
- 53. Clout chaser's goal
- 54. Cheese, stereotypically
- 56. Bow decoration
- 61. High in the Andes?
- 62. Pedestal percher
- 63. "The Big Bang Theory" writer
- 64. Sound of the surf
- 65. Work or home alternative
- 66. .png or .tif file
- 67. Put in the mail
- 68. Motion of the ocean
- 69. Fabled fabulist

Down

- 1. Desk accessory
- 2. Polish border river
- 3. Color quality
- 4. In the brain, idiomatically
- 5. It's shocking
- 6. State name often followed by "donta know"
- 7. "Aha!"
- 8. Make waves?
- 9. Rope's kind of strength
- 10. Fruity frozen dessert
- 11. Factory-produced dessert
- 12. Hospital helper
- 13. High time?
- 21. Pupil's neighbor
- 25. June honorees
- 26. 2025, for some
- 27. Gulf of Aden republic
- 28. Like some pizza and ice cream
- 29. Ones "a-milking"
- 31. Creek of Crawfordsville
- 32. Many babysitters
- 35. With difficulty
- 38. Conquered, as a dragon
- 41. Like open-note tests
- 44. Urban skyline component
- 45. At hand
- 48. Comeback
- 50. Many a Millie.
- 52. Allied (with)
- 54. Bourbon Street businesses
- 55. Soothing salve
- 57. First
- 58. Memorable times
- 59. Jason's boat
- 60. Sea, with "the"



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Conference tournament hopes still alive for Little Giants



PHOTO BY WILL DUNCAN '27

Ricky Sessions '24 serves in the Wabash game against Trine University on March 16, 2024 at Chadwick Court.

NICK WANGLER '27
STAFF WRITER

With a tough road ahead, Wabash volleyball took a major step forward in their battle to earn a spot in the Midwest College Volleyball League (MCVL) Tournament.

The team traveled to St. Louis, Missouri to take on the Griffins of Fontbonne University on Friday, March 22. Leaving St. Louis with a win was a must, and the Little Giants did just that and finished in four sets.

Wabash is at risk of miss-

ing out on the four-team MCVL tournament. With only four games left, the team needs to win at least two of the remaining to even have a shot of qualifying for the tournament.

Currently sitting in fifth place, the Little Giants are on the outside looking into the tournament qualifications. Two of the four games remaining are against teams higher in the standings, so this can be a tremendous opportunity for the team to boost their conference rank. All four

games remaining are weekend matches on the road.

"The net is the same height and courts are all the same size so there are no excuses we can make at this point. We have had a lot of away matches this season which has prepared us for this situation well," said Head Volleyball Coach Ashaun Baker.

Taking the remaining games one by one will be key to the team's success. Although tournament implications are on the horizon, wins need to be se-

cured in order for them to be included. The team needs to have a strong focus and confidence with the rest of the regular season.

"Team by team and point by point, our focus will be to execute aggressively as we have done all season but now more than ever," said Baker. "Outworking our opponent and trusting our teammates to make the best decisions on the court is what we need to be successful."

Even though the team went on to beat Fontbonne University three sets to one, it did not come easily. Wabash jumped out to a two-set lead after battling through to win 25-21 and 25-22 respectively. After dropping the third set 25-22, the Little Giants pulled through with a 25-23 fourth-set win.

"Being able to stay focused during the tight sets is what sets teams apart," said captain William Beikes '25. "We knew that as long as we kept playing our game then we would be fine. In tight sets, I just try to remind my team that we are the better team and that we need to make a statement with these games."

With two huge weekends ahead, the team is looking

to hone in on minor details in order to pull ahead some of these stronger teams. They must focus on playing as a team and doing their best individually to pull together a win.

"We are mainly focusing on our serving and our passing," said Beikes. "The game can't be played at all without those two things and knowing that we can control those things is what we need to focus on."

We lose games when passing and serving are poor and we know this."

The Little Giants will be back in action in Alliance, Ohio where they face the University of Mount Union on Friday, March 29. They will then swing by Baldwin Wallace University on Saturday, March 30 in hopes of two road wins.

MCVL TOURNAMENT PICTURE				
	CURRENT RECORD	BEST POSSIBLE	WORST POSSIBLE	
	6-0	9-0	6-3	IN
	5-1	8-1	5-4	LIKELY
	4-1	8-1	4-5	
	4-2	7-2	4-5	POSSIBLE
	2-3	6-3	2-7	
	2-3	6-3	2-7	DOUBT
	2-3	6-3	2-7	
	1-4	5-4	1-8	OUT
	1-5	4-5	1-8	
	0-5	4-5	0-9	

GRAPHIC BY LOGAN WEILBAKER '25

Benedict: Golf continues development into spring season

SAM BENEDICT '25
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Following a consistently average team performance during the fall season for the Wabash College golf team, the team has elevated their game during the spring season. In their first two tournaments of the season, the Little Giants have placed second overall in both and even come close to winning in each tournament.

After their spring break in Savannah, the team traveled back to Indiana where they competed in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate tournament on March 16 and 17 at the Country Club of Terre Haute.

The team welcomed the return to their usual scenery because golf in the Midwest is significantly different from golf in the South. Growing up in a colder climate means that almost all golf courses will use Bentgrass. Its counterpart, Bermuda grass, is found in warm climates. When the team was in Georgia, they played on Bermuda grass, which presented a handful of unique difficulties.

"There's different grasses which makes a difference," said Brayden Weiss '24. "Putting, especially for us down south, is harder than it is up here. Down south, they have what's called Bermuda grass. The grain layers itself in a certain direction and so when you're rolling the ball flat against it, it'll actually drift the ball in a certain direction."

When looking at the sides of the golf hole, one made with Bermuda grass will have a side with dead grass. That is typically the direction that the grain is moving the ball. This adds a step to an already intense process.

Although the team fared well in foreign territory, the Little Giants were excited to get back to playing on Bentgrass after spring break. The team finished tied for second with an overall score of 595 across two rounds. The winning team, Transylvania University, won with an overall score of 585. If each player had been able to take one stroke off of each round, then the team would have been tied for first overall.

However, shaving off one stroke per round is no

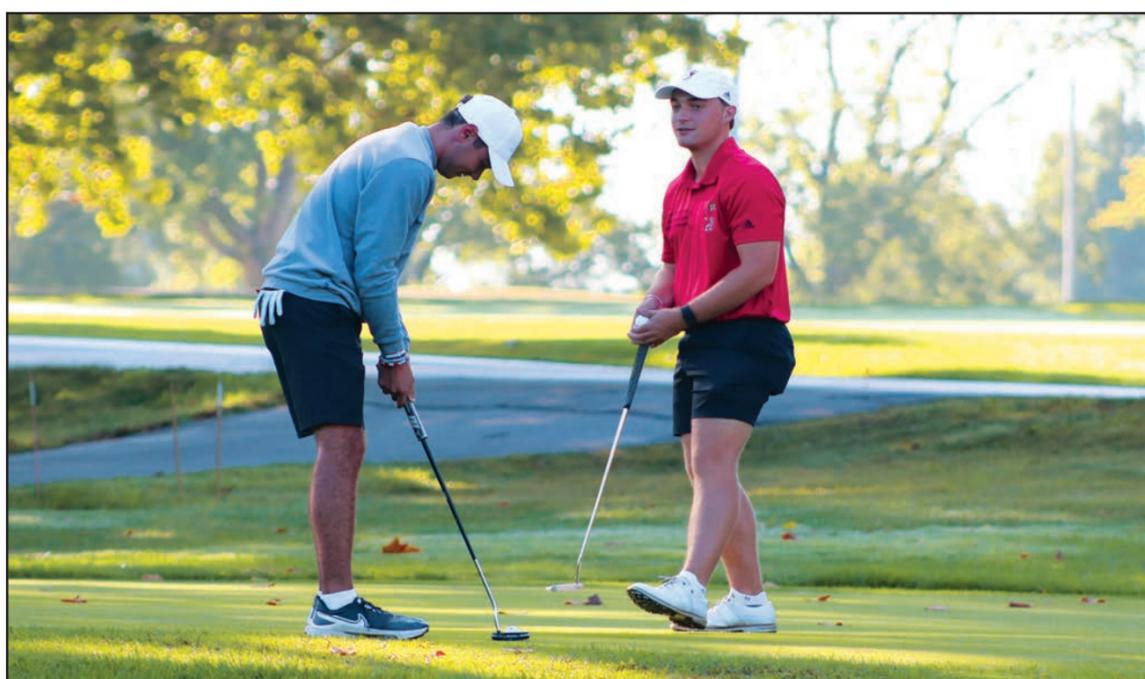


PHOTO BY JEREMIAH CLAYTON '26

Sean Bledsoe '26 and Landon Timmons '26 practice for their September 10, 2023 meet against DePauw University at Broadmoor Country Club.

small feat. Dealing with the ups and downs that inevitably come with a round of golf has been a problem for the team in the past, but is slowly becoming a defining characteristic of a group showing newfound toughness after a busy winter.

"I see a lot of guys who make mistakes and usually it's something that could tank the round because you get upset with yourself, then you're trying hard to get it back with one swing, then that swing goes poorly and it all just snowballs from there," said Wabash Head Golf Coach Justin Kopp '21. "We're going to miss putts. But, if we let it go by the time we're hitting the next shot or use it to fuel us to make better decisions, that's how we grow."

The team has continued to prioritize the mental side of the game, not only in keeping their composure, but also hitting smart, strategic shots.

An example of a situation where golfers need to evaluate different options so they can hit a strategic shot would be if a golfer should "lay up" or go for their target area, such as the green. "Laying up" means hitting a shot without the intention of attacking the pin. Instead, the golfer is thinking of it like a move in chess where one shot is setting up the next. "Shot is decaying," a software

program that the team recently began using, provides advice through statistics that inform what shot to hit in each situation.

"It ['Decade'] tells you how to play smart golf," said member of the team Lewis Dellinger '25. "It keeps us from making double bogeys or hitting shots that statistically aren't the right shot. Once you get rid of the pressure of a big number on your scorecard, then you can start playing looser, more free. And boring golf is good."

Outside of the second-place team finish, the Little Giants saw multiple outstanding individual performances. Sean Bledsoe '26 tied for seventh overall with a total individual score of 148 and Matt Lesniak '25 tied for 15th overall with a two-day total of 151.

The top performer for the Little Giants was Weiss who finished the final round with a score of 68 to complement an opening round 72. The final hole of his first-ever bogey-free round was an exciting par three with drama early.

"I understood that I was tied for first going into my last couple holes," said Weiss. "My last hole of the day was a par three and I ended up hitting it 30 yards right of the green to about the worst spot I could have put it. I ended up hitting it to about 20

feet [of the hole] and then made the 20 footer for par to save my bogey-free round and to finish tied for the lead."

Finishing the tournament tied for the lead meant that Weiss participated in a playoff hole with one other golfer. The playoff works in a true match-play style where the competitors play until one person scores better on a hole. Unfortunately, the playoff ended in a loss as Weiss' opponent scored defeated him on a long par five.

The storyline to follow moving to the next tournament that the Little Giants will compete in is who will fill the final two roster spots.

In a collegiate golf tournament, the team selects a roster of five golfers to compete in the tournament on behalf of Wabash College. The scores of those five players over the course of the tournament are added together and the team with the lowest score is the team champion.

"In the fall, we had Brayden Weiss, Mark Poole

'24 and Sean Bledsoe were all in the top five pretty consistently and then outside of that is a rotating cast," said Kopp. "We very rarely felt that we had five scorers that were just going to be reliable and put us in a position to win golf tournaments."

This previous tournament saw Lesniak's strong performance put him in the conversation after finishing with the third-best overall score, despite playing as an individual. Miles Patterson '24, Dellinger, and others continue to post strong scores as well.

"Miles Patterson shot one under par in his first round in Georgia and that was absolutely huge for us," said Kopp. "He talked to me about his mental game and that's kind of what let him down on Sunday, but that was his first bad round of the year. Then you got Lewis and Lesniak who are really peaking at the right time here and, honestly, have a lot of room to grow. So that's six guys now that we have competing for five spots."

The team will have competitions internally and externally to determine who the top five will be come time for the conference tournament.

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Leading the next generation of rugby men

How Matthew Brooks '24 became Wabash rugby's captain

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

"Most guys say they grew up with a football in their hands— well I grew up with a rugby ball in my hands," said Matthew Brooks '24.

Now in his senior season as a member of the rugby club, Brooks is looked to as one of the leaders of the program after playing a major role in the team's 2023 trip to the National Collegiate Rugby Championships, as well as his work to ensure the continued success of the program.

On the pitch, Matthew Brooks is a hook. His job is to do most of the dirty work and take most of the physical beating during a scrum and scoop the ball out to one of the faster wingers, who do most of the scoring. It is one of the most selfless positions in sports and that quality is reflected in how he approaches life at Wabash.

Off the pitch, Brooks is a brother of Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI) and member of the Sphinx Club. He loves his membership to both brotherhoods, because they allow him to be there for "anyone who needs to talk." The best word to describe him would have to be "sincere."

Brooks grew up surrounded by rugby, as his family, hailing from South Africa, were close followers of the Springboks, a team in the South African national rugby union. He began playing organized rugby in the sixth grade when he joined a local club near Carmel.

"I finally found out that I could play rugby in Indiana, because I wanted to keep playing sports," said Brooks. "That just kind of set me off on the path. It was the first time I played with tackling, but I already understood the game. I knew what the positions were and I knew how to pass the ball from growing up around it."

Even before Wabash, Brooks saw what a successful rugby program looked like, when his club won a state championship during his freshman year of high school. While he was a reserve during games, it was the off-the-pitch team building that helped him continue to cultivate his love for the sport.

But after his senior year of high school was cut short by COVID-19, Brooks was uncertain as to whether he could continue playing rugby into his college years.

Brooks visited Wabash the summer after his senior year, thanks to the recommendation of several alumni, who "came of the woodwork" to encourage him to check out the College. His visit won him over, after it introduced him to two of key parts of his future Wabash experience embodied by one individual, Sam Anderson '21, who was president of FIJI and a member of the rugby club at the time.

"I met Sam Anderson and realized the culture of the team was incredible," said Brooks. "The hours are exactly how I wanted it to be in the afternoons. And it was just a light-hearted feel for the game. From then on, as soon as I got on campus [I knew] I was going to play and from there, it just kind of kept progressing."

Brooks was not immediately able to play rugby, however, as the fall 2020 season was canceled due to the pandemic. But Brooks credits the semester as a key opportunity for him to adjust to life at Wabash.

"It really allowed me to adjust the campus, to pledgeship and to the academics here, so that was beneficial," said Brooks. "And then spring of 2021 was my real first semester playing rugby."

With a deep knowledge



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25
Matthew Brooks '24 leads the rugby squad with the Monon Keg held overhead after the Little Giants won the 2023 Monon Keg Game against DePauw University rugby Wabash rugby on November 4, 2023 at Little Giant Stadium.



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25
Matthew Brooks '24 holds the third-place trophy after the Little Giants' run at the Small College Division title of the Collegiate Rugby Championship from April 28-30, 2023 in Boyds, Maryland.

of the sport, Brooks quickly rose through the ranks of the rugby program, a transition that looks very different from the official varsity sports at Wabash.

"I had no real title, but I was helping set up cones before practice and tearing them down at the end and helping wash the jerseys," said Brooks. "Little things like that were what I helped with — nothing that really seeks credit or acclaim. I was passionate about the sport and wanted to help the team out. Being in rugby again was huge for me, because I know it was hard having my senior year cut short."

Without a coach, the Rugby players are responsible for almost all of the planning that goes into scheduling matches, whether that's planning practices, signing up for tournaments, making travel arrangements or managing entry fees. The team has found a way to ease the burden by implementing a

"solid leadership progression."

By the time his junior year rolled around, Brooks, as treasurer of the club, was a key fixture of a team that was starting to realize they had all the pieces they needed for a truly special season.

Along with their growing popularity and upcoming leaders, the team had a star player in their president Brayden Goodnight '23, who exemplified the most important piece of the puzzle — a team-first mentality.

"This story would be incomplete if I didn't mention Brayden," said Brooks. "Brayden was by far the most talented player we've ever had. He could score whenever wanted. But he didn't, because he was selfless and he would do whatever was best for the team."

The self-led team captured their first-ever conference title in the middle of a thunderstorm to

secure a bid to the 2023 National Collegiate Rugby Championships, which was held in Maryland.

By the time the team got back from the conference tournament, a wave of generosity from alumni had swept in and covered the cost of traveling. A few weeks later the team was competing in nationals.

"This was our school's first time ever going to Nationals," said Brooks. "And we were the only team out of all of the different divisions to not have a full-time coach. That was kind of a nice little chip on our shoulder."

After three excellent performances, the team finished third in the nation for Small College rugby. Brooks even scored his first collegiate try during the trip.

As the leader of the current team, Brooks is the keeper of the trophy that proves Wabash rugby really did it.

"Walking away with hardware [a trophy], actually having something physical that we could hold that showed that we accomplished something incredible, was huge," said Brooks. "And getting back and all of a sudden professors who I don't even know their names or what departments they are in knew us. That was something cool that I feel like only the bigger sports get, but this little club managed to do all of that."

In his final season at Wabash, Brooks hopes to lead another group of younger rugby players to nationals. He plans to leave behind a legacy of selfless, team-first thinking and a strong brotherly bond that he learned from those before him and has characterized his time on the team.

Lacrosse breaks program single-season win record

AYDEN SALPIETRA '27
STAFF WRITER

Coming off of a six-game win streak, the Wabash lacrosse team completed its best start to a season in program history, by tying the single-season win record.

To start conference play, the Little Giants will travel to Kenyon College, seeking revenge from a tough 26-4 loss just a season ago. With returning starters and new freshmen playing important roles, Wabash is hungry to improve from last year's losing conference record.

"We don't have anything to lose," said Head Lacrosse Coach Chris Burke. "We're not supposed to win that game, just like we weren't supposed to win the Virginia Wesleyan game. We need to go in with a mentality of, 'we are confident in what we do, we do it consistently, we work harder than you, and if we can do that we are going to be fine.'"

Wabash has gotten off to a hot start, scoring the first goal in every game they've played thus far. This momentum will be important in big games, as any adversity for the opposing team can give the Little Giants a winning edge.

The first couple weeks look tough for Wabash, facing Kenyon, Denison and Ohio Wesleyan in the first three weeks of conference play. These, traditionally, have been three of the harder opponents for Wabash to handle. The team must rely on their young talent and upperclassmen leadership to guide them to success.

"We've prepared them [the freshmen]," said Burke. "We're confident in that, we're confident in their ability, but they still have to go execute it, and the guys have responded really well every single

time."

With impressive play from behind the goal and movement up top, Wabash will be a problem for conference defenses. Luka DiFilippo '25 has also dominated on the face-off, winning 73% of his battles thus far in the season. The more face-offs won, the more opportunities Wabash has to score, giving them a better chance to excel in these big games.

"I think if the guys come out and are confident, we are going to fight in those games."

-Head Lacrosse Coach
Chris Burke

Another big boost to the Wabash defense has been goalie Colin Krekeler '27, averaging a 65% save percentage so far in the season.

The offense has been promising, led by Quinn Fitzgerald '25 and Jake Phippen '26. Combining for 44 goals, they are a force to be reckoned with. Christian Dybedock '27 has also come in and made a big impact for the Little Giants, being the third-leading scorer on the team.

"Our biggest focus is playing our game," said Burke. "One thing we take away from watching the other teams is that we can win those games. I think if the guys come out and are confident, we are going to fight in those games."

The Little Giants will take on Kenyon College on Saturday, March 30.



PHOTO BY DIEGO BANUELOS '27
Will Sorg '27 launches a pass in the Little Giants' game against Hanover College on March 16, 2024 at Fischer Field.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25
Matthew Brooks '24 leads a practice ahead of the 2023 Monon Keg Game against DePauw University rugby Wabash rugby on November 4, 2023 at Little Giant Stadium.



PHOTOS BY ELIJAH GREENE '25
Matthew Brooks '24 played a key role in the 2023 Monon Keg Game against DePauw University rugby Wabash rugby on November 4, 2023 at Little Giant Stadium.



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Baseball hands out losses to IWU and Rose-Hulman before NCAC debut

HUTCH NORRIS '27
STAFF WRITER

Conference season is knocking on the door for baseball. Beginning a difficult stretch of the schedule over the March 23-24 weekend, Wabash faced off in a three-game, two-day series against the Illinois Wesleyan University Titans. The weekend started off in Illinois with a doubleheader on Saturday, March 23.

IWU came out hot while the Wabash bats struggled to warm up, recording five runs in the first four innings without a response from the Little Giants.

The tide began to shift in the sixth inning when Kamden Early '24 brought in AJ Reid '24 on a double to left center. Reid reached second on a steal after picking up a free trip to first base, the first of seven such trips he would make during the series. Early would also be brought in, this time by a single from Will McKinzie '26.

Wabash would continue to produce through the final four innings, but it was not enough to defeat the Titans in the opening game, which finished 5-6.

Despite falling short in their ninth-inning rally, the Little Giants continued to produce into the afternoon game. McKinzie opened up the scoring with a single to center field, bringing in Early who ended up on third after a passed ball and a wild pitch.

The Little Giants capitalized on fielding mistakes by Illinois Wesleyan in the top of the fourth, where they recorded two unearned runs. They would continue to reap free bags from the Titans all weekend long, recording 28 batters walked and eight additional bags on wild pitches and balks.

"If you ask our guys, the free bases are probably the number one thing that we emphasize both offensively and defensively. As well as pitching, being disciplined offensively and recognizing when a pitcher is struggling to command multiple pitches for strikes," said Head Baseball Coach Jake Martin '03. "Be patient in those situations and make them pitch to you and throw strikes."

Left-handed Little Giants dominated on the hump for the afternoon matchup. Robbie Manuzzi '25 pitched five scoreless innings, giving up two earned runs in the sixth before being pulled. Manuzzi



Caleb Everson '26 pitches against Hanover College in the Little Giants' 8-7 comeback win on March 16, 2024 at Goodrich Ballpark.

PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

contributed 16 total outs, 13 of which came from flyouts and ground outs.

The Little Giants returned home on Sunday, March 4 to decide the series in a noon-time matchup. After they gave up a solo homer in the top of the first, the Little Giants responded quickly, putting three runs on the board in the first two.

Aside from those scores, this game was contained to the sixth inning, where IWU put up three runs. Wabash immediately responded with a five-run outing, assisted by a struggling IWU pitching staff that walked five batters and hit Michael Galanos '25.

Then Wabash traveled to Terre Haute, Indiana on March 27 to face the Rose Hulman Institute of Technology Fighting Engineers. Notably, the last time that the Little Giants traveled to Terre Haute and came back with a win, Coach Martin was the Center Field starter for the team.

The Little Giants entered the midweek matchup looking to pick up their ninth non-conference win of the season before they enter conference play. However, this effort would not go unchallenged by the Fighting Engineers, who came out striking with an RBI single in the top of the second.

Aside from this run, Nicklaus Wangler '27 only gave

up one other run, totaling a 2.08 ERA performance on the night. Wangler was also sitting batters down, with six batters going down on strikes.

The Little Giants' bats came to life in the top of the seventh where they put up five unanswered runs and another two for good measure in the eighth.

Gavin Pierson '25 came in as relief for a tired Wagner who threw 95 pitches through four and one-thirds innings. Pierson threw 2.2 shutout innings, only two walks away from the perfect shutout.

"Coach Nespo, he calls all of my pitches, and I just like the sequences that he goes with," said Pierson. "Keeping hitters off balance and trying to get strikeouts, but also trying to get balls in play to let our defense work."

The Little Giants are going to need to keep up Wednesday night's performance if they want to have a chance against the nationally-fourth-ranked Denison Big Red on Saturday, March 30.

However, Wabash fans have plenty to be hopeful as the Little Giants are coming into the matchup right as parts of the team are starting to play their best baseball.



Wallace: NCAC baseball power rankings



ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

North Coast Athletic Conference competition set to start up on diamonds across Indiana and Ohio. This early in the season, the NCAC rankings are based on win percentage, but *The Bachelor* knows some wins are better than others. Now, it's time to take a look at who's looking good and who's not.

1. Denison University (17-2)

The nationally-ranked Big Red are the only team to beat in the NCAC. With wins against top-ranked teams like Salisbury University and Baldwin Wallace University, Denison has a legitimate case for being the number-one team in Division III. They don't exactly knock the cover off the ball, but their .323 batting average reveals a ridiculous consistency from their bats. Their 4.24 ERA from the bullpen is third best in the conference, even against what has been by far the toughest schedule any NCAC team has faced.

2. Wabash College (9-7)

The Little Giants are tentatively second in the NCAC right now. Their record isn't great, but that's because they've faced one of the harder schedules so far. The team has won their last-two series 2-1, which really exemplifies their play so far—doing just enough to come out on top. They have the worst pitching by ERA, but are experts at escaping the holes they dig for themselves. They'll get the first swing at Denison this season, in which a 1-1 finish will secure their spot in the NCAC's top three for the rest of the season.

3. College of Wooster (10-8)

There's nothing like a five-game losing streak to put an end to the wide-eyed hopes of a team. The Fighting Scots had everyone fooled with their 9-3 start, but reality ran them down. Wooster has played and won against some really good teams. It's really only a matter of time before they start looking better in the wins column.

4. Wittenberg University (7-11)

How can you have the worst record in the NCAC, but then land near the top of *The Bachelor's* rankings? That's a question the Tigers are sure to be asking themselves. To give them the credit they are due, they've actually played good teams. They boast the best batting average and slugging percentage in the conference and only suffer in the pitching department. But once they get a shot at some conference opponents, they'll be good.

5. Kenyon College (12-4)

Kenyon's Owls certainly have an impressive record to boast. But they've mostly padded that line by plowing through a pretty mediocre schedule so far. Only a handful of the teams they've faced have winning records. They are the top team for fielding in the conference, but don't stick out otherwise. It remains to be seen if they're all they've been chalked up to be, when they take on the rest of the NCAC.

6. Ohio Wesleyan University (10-6)

If the Battling Bishops could hit anything they might be a top-3 team in the conference. Their .280 batting average is dead-last in the NCAC, and they are the only team who hasn't cracked 100 runs on the season. Maybe Kenyon will let them hit off a tee in their first NCAC game? It's actually impressive they've kept above .500 against a solid schedule. Once they find their rhythm, watch for the Bishops to climb much higher in the rankings.

7. DePauw University (9-6)

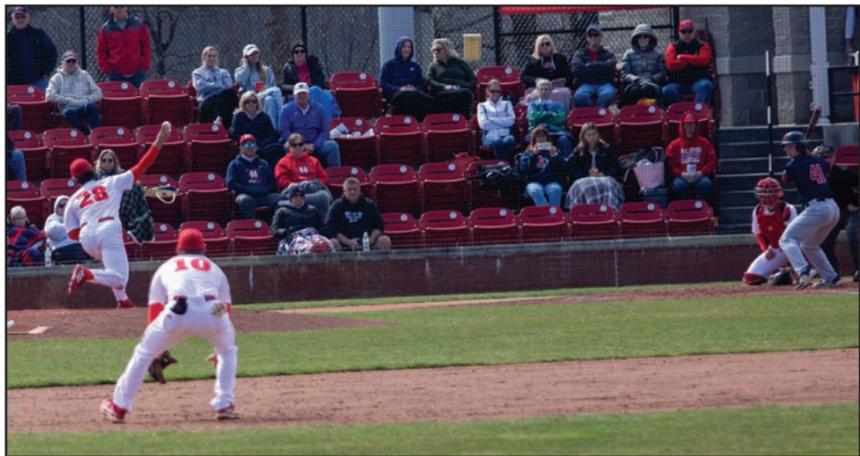
The poor Dannies got off to a rough start with three cancellations and an early 2-4 record. But they turned things around with a string of wins. Boasting the best pitching by ERA and second best fielding in the NCAC, those Tigers can suck the fun right out of baseball. Too bad they can barely hit anything. Depending on how their double-header against Wabash goes they'll have a shot at being one of the better teams in the conference.

8. Oberlin College (9-8)

The Yeomen are a solid team with serious chances of finding their way into the top half of the conference. They've beaten the teams they should have and saved losses for worthy opponents. They have the two best batters by batting average and the best pitcher by ERA in the NCAC. That fact alone means that on any given game they can turn a win against most teams. It will be their depth in series that puts them to the test.

9. Hiram College (9-6)

Don't let their record fool you, Hiram hasn't beaten anyone worth bragging about so far. They've been distinctly middle-of-the-road in every regard, and will need to be much better if they want to get off the bottom of the NCAC. Someone better tell them there's no crying in baseball, because they're probably not going to stay above .500 for much longer.



Caleb Everson '26 pitches against Hanover College in the Little Giants' 8-7 comeback win on March 16, 2024 at Goodrich Ballpark.

PHOTO BY KYLE FOSTER '27

Track athletes excel individually but keep ultimate goal in mind

ETHAN WALLACE '25
SPORTS EDITOR

The Little Giants' last appearance at the aptly named Indiana Wesleyan Polar Bear Classic was cut short, in an ironic twist, due to cold weather. Despite adverse conditions, the day was marked by multiple personal bests for the team competitors.

On Friday, March 22, 10 members of the track & field team competed in what was supposed to be the first out of two days at the Polar Bear Classic in Marion, but they did not return for the second day due to cold temperatures. The meet featured more than 15 teams from various Division II, Division III and NIAA schools.

"We performed really well against some really talented athletes from these schools, and I think it was a good test for us early in the season," said Joe Barnett '24. "The weather was cold and windy, so I think this was also really good preparation for the rest of this season. Spring weather is unpredictable, but it's good to know we can put up good results even in conditions that are less than ideal."

The meet featured no team scoring and Wabash sent only ten competitors. But Head Track & Field Coach Clyde Morgan hasn't built the track team into a successful program by worrying about wins and losses in every meet. His plan for the team is to put



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Evan Furuness '26 throws in the hammer throw event at the Robert H. Johnson "Some Little Giant" Open on January 13, 2024 in Knowling Field House.

athletes in positions to test their training.

"Our ultimate goal is the conference championship," said Coach Morgan. "We don't go into these other meets worrying about points and scoring there, because that will beat your team up by the end of the year. We worry about our conference championship. That's always been our focus. Every group knows every weekend we go to a meet, they all have something technically or mentally that they're trying to get better at."

Five long-distance runners competed for the Little

Giants in the 5,000m race. Barnett led the way with his ninth-place, 15:05.56 finish. The race marked his record time for the outdoor 5,000m event. Jacob Sitzman '25 finished 25th with a strong 15:30.75 time. Drake Hayes '24, Justin Santiago '25 and Matthew Meyer '25 finished 31st, 39th and 74th, respectively.

"I feel really good about the record," said Barnett. "It took nine seconds off my previous best, so I can tell I'm continuing to improve my fitness. My focus is just continuing to train and being as good as I can possibly

be for the team. My overall individual goal for the season is putting up as many points as possible for Wabash at the conference meet in May."

The five-man throwing team sent to represent the Scarlet and White had something of a field day at the meet. The team competed in the discus-throw and hammer-throw events, where they combined for multiple personal records and top-10 finishes.

The discus throw event saw three Little Giants place in the top 25. Evan Furuness '26 completed a career-best in the discus competition as

he hurled a 41.44m toss. He placed seventh in the event. Lane Brockman '26, who had a great day in both events, finished ninth with a personal-best throw of 44.02m. Will Boas '26 threw a 32.80m to place 21st.

Quinn Sholar '26 finished seventh in the hammer throw after he launched the weight 45.77 meters. Boas followed at 17th-place with a 32.80m measurement. Just behind Boas was Brockman, who measured 33.32m in his 18th-place finish for the hammer throw. Jacob Guse '27 landed a 34.83m throw to place 26th out of the 42 placing athletes.

"For me, a throw that ends up being a PR is a throw that I don't overthink," said Furuness. "The more I treat it like a practice throw the better it is. Overthinking is the enemy of success."

Achieving a personal best is a process that takes time, effort and execution. And for track & field athletes, the process is just as important as the result.

"The process for me achieving a better throw is to focus on a few things at a time each week at practice and hopefully connect everything come competition time," said Brockman. "If you overload yourself with things to fix it can be counterproductive."

But while the individual records are a good sign of progress, they are just one more step forward in a sport

that is built on hard work and a strong mentality stretched across an entire season.

"It's early in the season because we're still training through it all," said Coach Morgan. "We're not looking to peak yet. When you have those surprises, they're great, but we're not hanging our hat on them."

The team's next outing will come at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky on Saturday, March 30. The full team will compete in the meet, where the athletes will have a chance to execute on the lessons they learned in practice to move closer to the season goal of winning the Outdoor Conference meet.

While the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Indoor Championships meet in late February resulted in the Little Giants coming in second to Wittenberg, Coach Morgan is preparing his team for a conference meet that is a barnburner, with almost half of the NCAC vying for the top spot.

"[Conference] won't be down to two teams," said Coach Morgan. "It just looks that way. I think it will be a lot closer with a handful of teams. And it will be fun. I enjoy that."