

Wesleyan table tennis hosts national team trials



Courtesy of athletic department

Mark Hazinski will represent Wesleyan at the national team trials.

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Texas Wesleyan will host the national team trials on March 4 and 5. This is the first time that

Wesleyan put in a bid for the tournament, and the Sid Richardson Center and the nearby accommodation possibilities helped Head Coach Jasna Rather's cause as she prepared the bid.

"We want to show the table tennis world that we can host well," she said. "Our main goal is to be a good host and have everything run smoothly, but we also hope for a strong local interest."

Rather has received marketing support from the board of trustees, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and Chuck Burton, assistant vice president of marketing and communications at Wesleyan. Rather said she hopes for a crowd of 400 to 800 people.

"This is a great opportunity for us to promote the university and our program," she said.

The tournament will consist of men's singles and women's singles. To be eligible to play, a player must have placed top-16 at last year's nationals. Out of the top contenders at nationals, a total of 11 men and seven women will enter the national team trials to attempt to make the cut for the national team.

For the men, three players will be able to qualify through advancement through the round-robin and single elimination. A fourth player will then be selected by a panel consisting of national coaches.

For the women, the top two contenders of the round-robin tournament will qualify directly, while a third player will be selected by the panel

of national coaches.

Mark Hazinski, who won nationals, is the only Wesleyan player qualifying for the national team trials. He is entering the tournament as the No. 1 seed.

"I think it is really cool that I get to play at my home court and help promote the university," he said. "Of course I hope to win, but my main goal is to make the team."

A successful tournament for Hazinski would give him the chance to represent the U.S. in the Table Tennis World Championships in Moscow, May 20-23.

"Mark is the top-seed, and with the support from a home crowd, he definitely has a big chance of making it," Rather said.

Hazinski is playing to qualify for the World Championship. For Wesleyan, a successfully hosted event will be beneficial when it is time to bid for the trials for the London 2012 Olympics.

"To host an Olympic trial would be even bigger," Rather said. "It would definitely be big for Wesleyan."

The Wesleyan Rams are six-time National Intercollegiate

Champions and have won 38 out of the possible 52 collegiate championships since 2002.

"Beyond bringing positive attention to our university, this tournament will draw many top players here to participate in the Newgy Texas Wesleyan Open," Athletic Director Kevin Millikan said.

The Newgy TWU Open takes place March 6 and 7 and will feature many strong international players in addition to the domestic talents participating in the trials. A total of \$9,000 will be handed out in prize money during the tournament.

As one of the largest tournaments, featuring both domestic and international players, the open singles will be even tougher than that of the national team trials, and the winner will receive \$3,000.

"There is a new generation of very talented players emerging," Hazinski said. "I have good chances and will hope for the best."

For more information about the national team trials and the Newgy TWU Open, contact Jasna Rather at jrather@txwes.edu or (817) 531-7555.

Jacobi in his last inning, looks to add conference championship

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Ryan Jacobi, a member of the Texas Wesleyan baseball team, is in his final season as a Ram and aiming for the NAIA World Series. As a starting outfielder, Jacobi has made a significant difference for the baseball program and hopes to finish his Texas Wesleyan baseball career with success.

"Jacobi has been a quality player for our team, and he does a great job defensively,"

Head Coach Mike Jeffcoat said. "He is a good young man on and off the field."

With his final season in progress, Jacobi said he is willing to do whatever it takes to make it a successful year with the other 15 seniors.

"We aren't going to hold anything back," he said. "We are going to leave it all on the field and play like it might be our last competitive season."

Jacobi said he also wants to win the conference tournament and make it to the NAIA

World Series. As a personal goal, Jacobi said he is hoping to be selected to the first team all-conference team.

Prior to Wesleyan, Jacobi played baseball for Mansfield High School. In his senior year he was named first team all-district outfield player and was a member of the district championship team.

When looking to attend college, Jacobi said he was attracted to the Wesleyan baseball program and went on a tour of the campus.

"I liked the fact that Wesleyan has a coach that was a major league player and that the team plays at La Grave Field," he said.

The small campus size and the aroma of food in Dora's cafeteria were additional sellers for Jacobi.

"I got to venture into Dora's during my campus tour, and it smelled amazing, so I knew I would never go hungry," he said.

As a junior, Jacobi received the Champions of Character Award for Texas Wesleyan and second team all-conference recognition. He also received the Red River Athletic Conference Golden Glove award as a sophomore for his performance as a right fielder.

As a pitcher in his freshman year, Jacobi helped the Rams to a RRAC title, the first in 27 years.

"In the final inning against Northwood, I threw out a player at the plate and my assist sealed our victory to make it to the championship game where we won the long-awaited title," he said.

Since the win, the Texas Wesleyan baseball team has yet to reclaim the conference title. However, Jacobi said he hopes to leave the baseball program just as he started it.

"I want to create a new favorite memory by winning the conference championship



Rebecca Moore | Rambler Staff

Ryan Jacobi swings in during practice.

title again this year," he said.

Jacobi is also active outside of Texas Wesleyan. In summer 2007, he played for the Niagara Power in the New York Collegiate Baseball League. He also played in a summer league after his sophomore year in Alberta, Canada, for the Sherwood Park Dukes.

"I gained a lot from playing in the summer leagues, and I enjoyed the different experiences with each team," he said.

Jacobi said he also likes to share his passion for baseball with others through coaching. This past summer, he coached 16-year-olds on the DFW Twins, an organization run by former Wesleyan player Ross Elmore. Jacobi also coached

with the Mansfield Legacy High School teams at the freshman, junior varsity and varsity levels.

Off the field, Jacobi has achieved a cumulative GPA higher than a 3.0 and will graduate in May with a degree in business management.

After Wesleyan, if given the opportunity, Jacobi is looking to sign as a free agent with an independent baseball team.

"My baseball career will depend on how well I do this season," he said. "I would like to sign with an affiliated team and continue playing ball at the professional level."

Jacobi also aspires to open his own business while coaching baseball.

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Upcoming Sports:

	Game	Time/Place
Thursday	Women's Basketball vs. Huston-Tillotson U.	5:30 p.m. Austin
	Men's Basketball vs. Huston-Tillotson U.	7:30 p.m. Austin
Saturday	Softball vs. University of Houston-Victoria	Overland, KS 12:30 p.m. Victoria
	Women's Basketball vs. Our Lady of the Lake University	2 p.m. Sid W. Rich.
	Men's Basketball vs. Our Lady of the Lake University	4 p.m. Sid W. Rich.
Sunday	Softball	Overland, KS
Monday	Golf at Pine Needles Intercollegiate	Southern Pines, NC
Tuesday	Golf at Pine Needles Collegiate Baseball vs. McMurry University	Southern Pines, NC 5 p.m. Abilene

The Weekly Sports Quote

"Julian Dicks is everywhere. It's like they've got 11 Dicks on the field."

Sports Announcer
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Wesleyan Week in Sports

- The Rams Softball team (1-4) lost to University of Science & Arts (3-1 & 8-5) and Oklahoma Baptist University (3-0 & 10-2) but beat Evangel University (3-2) in the Cowtown Classic Feb. 19-20.
- The Rams Baseball team (5-3) picked up a pair of wins (3-1 & 6-3) against LSU-Alexandria Feb. 20 and added a third straight win, 11-1, against LSU Feb 21.
- The Women's Basketball team (18-7, 14-3 RRAC) recorded a 62-53 win against Wiley College on Feb. 18 before suffering a 58-46 loss at Jarvis Christian College Feb. 20.
- The 19th-ranked Rams Basketball team (21-7, 14-3) beat Wiley College 77-51 Feb. 18. They followed up with a 89-68 win on the road against Jarvis Christian College Feb. 20.