

For Immediate Release

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For More Info. Contact: Bob Frischmann, Sports Info. Director (314) 984 7306

Meramec Magic Athletic News

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Sutton, Powell, Foley Earn All-American At NJCAA Wrestling National Tournament

Three Meramec wrestlers earned the prestigious All-American honor at the NJCAA National Tournament Feb. 23-24 in Rochester, Minn. **Ryan Sutton** (Oakville), at 197 lbs., finished third, heavyweight **Cedric Powell** (Duncan, OK) finished fourth, and freshman **Kyle Foley** (Oakville) at 149 lbs. came in fifth. All three are All-Americans. Powell also won the Most Falls Award of the tourney with his four pins.

Both Sutton and Powell were upset in the quarterfinal round, but bounced back to win their next three consolation matches. Sutton pinned Randy Pike of Jamestown College in the first period, while Powell also recorded a first period pin - sticking Southwestern Oregon's Clay Wunder.

In the next round both also found victory again - Sutton with a 11-7 decision over Labette's Elijah Martinez, and Powell with a first period pin over Iowa Central's Jacob Combs.

In the consolation semi-finals, Sutton slipped by Spartanburg's Jerimiah Webb 9-8, while Powell pinned Labette's Willie Weber in the first period.

Wrapping up a third place medal, Sutton easily defeated Northwest Wyoming's Nathan Barzee 10-3. However, Powell was upended by Clackamas' John bates 8-5 and settled for fourth place.

Foley took a slightly different route, staying on a winning path through the quarterfinal round and entered the semi-finals before losing to Iowa Central's Matt Burns in a first period pin. In his first consolation bout, he fell to Niagra's Dale Debacco 4-1. Foley recovered to beat Justin Hale of Lincoln College 2-1 for a fifth place medal.

Hale had beaten Foley three out of three matches during the regular season.

Meramec took twelfth place as a team with 48 ½ points, a tantalizing three points shy of a top ten team finish.

Also qualifying and participating in the tournament for the Magic were **Darrin Green** (Oakville) at 133 lbs., **Peter Koelinger** (Webster Groves) at 141 lbs., **Jose Caceres** (Miami Killian) at 165 lbs., **Jason Akers** (Parkway South) at 174 lbs., and **Mitch Barnett** (Liberty, MO) at 184 lbs.

Men's Basketball Team Heads To Region XVI Tourney As Top Seed

The men's basketball team will begin post season play as the top seed in the Region XVI Tournament at Westminster College Mar. 2-3. They'll open play following a first round bye in the semi-final game on

Friday, Mar. 2. If they win that game, the Magic (21-9) will be in the title game on Saturday, Mar. 3 at 2:00.

The team finished Region XVI regular season play at 7-1, with their only loss coming on the road at Penn Valley. Meramec avenged that defeat with a 105-104 overtime win over the Scouts at home Feb. 9.

The Magic had three players named to the All-Conference (MCCAC) squad: sophomore guard **Jake Hackerson** (Seckman), sophomore forward **Alex Jackson** (Ladue), and sophomore guard **Marcus Seidel** (CBC.)

Hackerson and Jackson were also named to the All-Region XVI team, with Jackson being the second top vote-getter in the region.

Hackerson, a pre-season All-American, has been the team's constant, despite missing the first month of the season to a knee injury. Upon returning, he has made his presence known with his scoring (12 points per game) and strong free throw shooting (78%.)

Jackson has been a double threat, as a scorer (13 points a game) and as a rebounder, with nine boards a game. Seidel, however, leads the team in scoring with a nearly 13 ½ points a game average.

Meramec finished its home schedule with a 72-61 win over Florissant Valley Feb. 17, clinching the top seed for the tournament. Hackerson led the scoring with 18 points, followed by Jackson with 14.

They finished the regular season losing to Three Rivers 91-67. However, the squad has clinched a winning season record for the twenty second consecutive year.

Women's Basketball Team Falls In Overtime Defeat To Cottey

The women's basketball team saw their season end in overtime in the Region XVI semi-final game at Florissant Valley Feb. 23. The second-seeded Magic lost to third seeded Cottey College 82-73.

The game was tied at 63 all following regulation. Three Magic players were in double figures: freshman forward **Michelle Senf** (Mehlville) with 18 points, freshman forward **Lizz Tudor** (Northwest) had 15 points, and sophomore guard **Ceara Brown** (University City) had 10 points.

The Magic end the season at 14-17, but show much promise for next season with several returning players, including All-Conference honorable mention pick Senf, Tudor, guard **Porscha Smith** (O'Fallon, IL), forward **Stephanie Godfrey** (Marquette), **Kathleen Spisak** (Parkway South), and **Kelly Campbell** (Hazelwood East.)

Experienced Pitching & Desire To Power '07 Baseball Magic

A wealth of experience on the mound, and a burning desire to make it to the Juco World Series that was just one win away a year ago will be the overwhelming motivation for the baseball Magic this season.

The squad, under fifth year head coach **Tony Dattoli**, will make their St. Louis debut playing a pair of doubleheaders against McHenry College Mar. 2 and 4 (Friday and Sunday.) All games will be played at Florissant Valley as the action starts at 11 a.m. each day

Lefthanders **Brad Bichel** (St. Charles) and **D.J. Nordquist** (Kalamazoo, Mich.) lead the deep pitching staff. Bichel was 7-3 in '06 with a 1.70 ERA. Nordquist was 7-1. Also back is righthanded power pitcher **Jordan Buck** (Pacific) and **Casey Johnson** (Eureka.) Bichel and Buck are two of the team's three captains.

"I feel real good," said Bichel, "just real confident with everything I have right now. I think my curveball's gotten better, and I added a new pitch, a slider. I started throwing it and just got real comfortable with it."

Comfortable would also describe Buck's state of mind entering the new campaign. "This year I'm feeling a little bit more powerful, more arm strength," said Buck. "We'll see if I can help the team out a little bit because last year I had five no-decisions.. I have to pick that up a little bit and close out some games."

Also on the mound will be **Jake Morgan**, a mop-haired, crafty lefthanded sensation of Mehlville High in '05 with nine complete games and a 1.76 ERA. Two talented hurlers will be returning from arm surgeries of a year ago: **David Birkby** (Parkway West), and the highly-touted lefty **Jason Nicholas** (Warrenton) who will be brought along cautiously.

And, if that isn't enough depth, righthander **Larry Vondracek** (Hazelwood West) adds another quality arm to the mix.

"If our pitching is good," said sophomore **Lou Vangel** (CBC), "we can be a dangerous team. The thing we'll have to do is play defense. Our pitching is going to get outs but how our defense plays to our pitching will be the key."

Although Meramec returns the majority of its pitching squad from a team that went 46-17 and won the Region XVI championship, a new year represents a new challenge.

"Whether we were 17-46, or 46-17 last year," said coach Dattoli, "we still have the mindset that last year is in the past. Our expectations are to go as far as we can this year."

That's especially true of most position players who have moved on, giving way to a new batch of talented recruits. **Jon Wilson**, a .371 hitter last year for St. Charles High, will hold down third base. At short, **Jon Myers** will take over after a sensational senior year at baseball power Ft. Zumwalt South where he hit .386 with four homers and 24 RBI's. Myers has already made a mark on Magic athletics, guiding the Meramec soccer team to a 14-4-1 record and a conference championship last fall as a midfielder.

Catching, and batting a rare leadoff for a receiver, will be transfer sophomore **Justin Rahn** (CBC) who hit .433 for the Cadets in '05. "He's a doubles machine," said Dattoli. "I've watched the kid play the last six years and all through high school. When you put him at the top of the line up, it changes his mentality quite a bit - he works that bat."

Sophomore captain **Kyle Weible** (Eureka) will also be behind the plate, along with freshman **Brady Cunningham** (Fulton.) Weible already has the positive energy of his captain spot geared toward the new season.

"I think it's going to be a lot of collective chaos," said Weible. "One through nine in the line up can hit, and we have some great arms on our pitching staff that can compete with anyone in the nation. We're going to bunt and run a lot - try to put pressure on the other team."

On the right side of the infield will be **Todd Otto** (Seckman) at second base. Otto hit .333 for the Jaguars in '06 with 22 RBI's. Platooning at first base is **Chris Sunvold** (Blue Springs) and **Nick Berding** (Affton.) Berding was an offensive machine for the Cougars last year, batting .521 with four homers and 31 RBI's. He had an unheard of .918 slugging percentage. Berding will also see duty pitching.

Speed will still characterize the outfield, as it did a year ago with the fleet-footed All-American **Nick Van Stratten** (Winnetonka, MO) in center field.

"We have two speedsters in **Darion Sanford** (Cardinal Ritter) and **Kellon McFarlin** (Kenwood Academy - Chicago) who are going to push a lot of guys for some time," said Dattoli. "We've got the returning guys

like **(Lou) Vangel** (CBC) and **(Dan) Healy** (CBC) and **(Corey) Whitesides** (Hallsville, MO) who are very solid and consistent players for us. And, we've got some freshmen like **(Dan) Harris** (North County) and **(Michael) Hope** (Webster Groves) that on pure talent alone are very projectable kids."

One other edge for the Magic lies in its pure tradition. Meramec and a quality baseball team are synonymous in St. Louis as evidenced by one national title, 11 Top Ten national finishes, and 17 Region XVI championships.

"You just know in the St. Louis area or even in the Midwest that Meramec is a five star program that everyone wants to be a part of," said Weible.

Softball Squad Opens Season Mar. 3 Under New Coach

The softball Magic, under new head coach Kim Ridenour, opens its season with a doubleheader on Saturday, Mar. 3 in the Jefferson Tournament in Hillsboro, MO.

The squad is under the leadership of first year head coach **Kim Ridenour**, who succeeds Jill Weiss. Ridenour was an assistant coach to Weiss last season and also played for Meramec in the 1999 and 2000 seasons.

The Magic continue play next Wednesday, Mar. 7 with a twin bill at East Central College in Union, MO.

After that, it's off on their annual Spring Break Week trek to Arizona Mar. 9-17 where they'll compete in the Maricopa Tournament against a collection of nationally ranked powerhouse teams.

Magic All-Sportsmanship Team Named For National Recognition Day

In recognition of the 17th Annual National Sportsmanship Day on Mar. 6, St. Louis Community College - Meramec has announced its 2006-'07 Magic All-Sportsmanship squad.

"Good sportsmanship should be recognized," said Meramec Athletic Director **Bob Bottger**.

"All too often we hear only of incidents of poor sportsmanship. These young men and women should be proud of themselves."

Exemplifying good sportsmanship are: **Nick Bigogno** (Lindbergh) for men's soccer; **Kelly Webb** (Washington, MO) for women's soccer; **Jaime Hacker** (Perryville) for volleyball; **Mindy Lamberty** (Mehlville) for cheerleading; **Adam Kaatman** (Hazelwood West) for men's basketball; **Samantha Turner** (Oakville) for women's basketball; **Jason Akers** (Parkway South) for wrestling; **Lesley Kennedy** (Quitman) for softball; and **Corey Whitesides** (Hallsville, MO) in baseball.

The day is sponsored by the Institute For International Sport in Rhode Island with over 13,500 schools throughout the U.S. expected to participate.