Physicals To Become Orientation ‘Event’; Slated For July 19

Sports physicals for both new and returning athletes will be part of an afternoon of events, including a barbeque on Wednesday, July 19. The physicals are required before an athlete can participate in any team practices.

Much-needed information will be offered during the afternoon, starting at 2:00 with opening remarks by Manager of Athletics Bob Bottger. Other topics covered will include academic monitoring, and sportsmanship. At 4:00, barbeque, cooked up by head coaches, will be offered while student/athletes get their physicals. Campus ambassadors will also offer tours of the various buildings.

The event is a new one, designed to introduce athletes to one another, as well as athletic department personnel, and receive necessary information all in one setting. Parents are not only welcome, but are encouraged to attend.

Former Meramec Wrestler Riley Baker Killed In Iraq

Riley Baker, a former Meramec wrestler and national qualifier, was killed in the line of duty June 22 serving as a Marine in Iraq. Corporal Baker was killed by a roadside bomb.

The former Eureka High state wrestling champion’s death deeply touched the community, with thousands of persons turning out for the return of his body to Lambert International Airport, as well as the funeral and burial at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery June 30.

Baker wrestled at the competitive 141 lb. weight class for coach Ron Mirikitani in the 2002-’03 season, and earned a trip to the NJCAA National Tournament in Rochester, Minnesota. The team finished ninth at the tournament.

Baseball Squad’s Van Stratten, Howard Sign Pro Contracts

Meramec Magic baseball players one day, Florida Marlins and Kansas City Royals players the next. That was the success story for sophomores Nick Van Stratten (Winnetonka, MO) and Adam Howard (Bonne Terre, MO) in early June.

Van Stratten was selected as the first pick of the tenth round (one of the highest picks ever out of Meramec) by the Kansas City Royals - practically in his native Winnetonka’s backyard. He reported in mid-June for assignment to Arizona.
The storybook centerfielder did everything, setting several school records and one national record his sophomore campaign for the 46-17 Region XVI champions. Van Stratten’s 14 triples set a new national as well as school mark. His 113 hits and .498 batting average were also new school marks.

However, his defensive skills were just as eye-popping as his bat. Van Stratten possessed blinding foot speed in the Magic outfield, and made many a dazzling diving catch.

Third baseman/pitcher Adam Howard was drafted by the Florida Marlins in 2005, and was signed by the team days before the ’06 draft during their waning rights period to him. Howard, a power hitter with size, was also a force on the mound as a hurler for coach Tony Dattoli. He reported in early June to the Marlins facility in Jupiter, Florida.