SPRING SPORTS ROUNDUP

O’SHEA MAKES HIS MARK
University of Hartford Men’s Lacrosse midfielder Kevin O’Shea capped off a stellar four years by being selected to play in the prestigious 74th United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA) laxWorld Division III North-South Game in Radnor, Pa., in late May.

A three-time America East All-Conference selection, who earned First Team distinction in 2013 and 2015, O’Shea has earned New England Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (NEILA) All-New England honors for the second time in his career when he was placed on the First Team earlier this month. Classmate Brian Monks joined Shea on the America East All First Team.

A trio of first-year players—Griffin Feiner, Dylan Protesto, and Ryan Vanderford—were selected to the America East All-Rookie Team. Junior Kevin Samaa and Monks earned spots on the America East All-Academic Team. Protesto was also named to the NEILA All-New England Second Team.

The lacrosse team’s season was highlighted by its first-ever win against the University of Massachusetts, 15-8, on April 11—capping off a four-game winning streak.

BASEBALL TEAM HITS 20 WINS
The Hartford Hawks baseball program’s 9-0 shutout of Bryant, one of the best teams in New England, on May 13 secured the sixth 20-win season in school history. It was also the first time in more than two decades that UHart has recorded back-to-back 20-win seasons. The Hawks were one of four league teams in New England, on May 13 secured the sixth 20-win season in school history.

Men’s Golf
Corey Bernier ’17 All-Academic
Annamarie Mallat ’16 All-Academic
Brooke Nethercott ’16 All-Academic
Maquhan Ryan ’17 All-Academic
Collette Schmidt ’17 All-Academic
Women’s Golf
Women’s Golf participates in the Big Sky Conference.

Softball
Jannie Sibley ’18 All-Rookie
Margarita Beza ’15 All-Academic
Peyton Fisher ’15 All-Academic

Women’s Tennis
William Drumwright ’18 All-Conference
Nicolast Sharmanko ’16 Scholar Athlete Team
Men’s Tennis participates in the Missouri Valley Conference.

Women’s Tennis
Catherine Long ’18 All-Conference
Skyler Scharn ’18 All-Conference, doubles

Track and Field
Jonathan Choiniere ’16 All-Academic
Samanta Cioffari ’15 All-Academic

More Conference Honors
UHart student-athletes continue to excel on the field and in the classroom. Here is a rundown of additional spring honors (as awarded by the America East Conference unless designated otherwise).

Men’s Golf
Exam Russell ’16
Second Team All-Conference
William Bett ’16
All-Conference Honorable Mention
Men’s Golf participates in the Big Sky Conference.

Women’s Golf
Corey Bernier ’17 All-Academic
Annamarie Mallat ’16 All-Academic
Brooke Nethercott ’16 All-Academic
Maquhan Ryan ’17 All-Academic
Collette Schmidt ’17 All-Academic

Women’s Golf
Women’s Golf participates in the Big Sky Conference.

Softball
Jannie Sibley ’18 All-Rookie
Margarita Beza ’15 All-Academic
Peyton Fisher ’15 All-Academic

Women’s Tennis
William Drumwright ’18 All-Conference
Nicolast Sharmanko ’16 Scholar Athlete Team
Men’s Tennis participates in the Missouri Valley Conference.

Women’s Tennis
Catherine Long ’18 All-Conference
Skyler Scharn ’18 All-Conference, doubles

Track and Field
Jonathan Choiniere ’16 All-Academic
Samanta Cioffari ’15 All-Academic

RUNNER IS STAYING ON TRACK
Chaz Davis ’16 ran his personal-best 5K time in the NECAA New England Championships, held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston in early May. That’s a nice accomplishment made even more laudable by the fact that, for the past year and a half, he has been losing his eyesight. Toward the end of his freshman year, Davis was stricken with Leber’s Hereditary Optic Neuropathy (LHON), a genetic disease that attacks the optic nerve.

At first, only the vision in his right eye was affected. Then, a few months later, the vision in his left eye also began to deteriorate. Despite the disease and its disabling effects, Davis keeps running, both literally and figuratively.

“Last year, it was tough to adjust to this. I did have a ‘who’s me’ moment, but then I realized the only way to move on was to move on, to keep as much of a sense of normalcy as possible,” he says with resolve. “I always had the mindset to do things for myself. Things won’t get done unless I do them for myself.”

That focus and determination are paying off. Davis is still on course academically to graduate next year with a major in criminal justice and a minor in psychology. While some suggested that he take a semester off to acclimate to his new situation, instead Davis, who is from Groton, Mass., found ways to get his textbooks as audio books—“read by people with real voices instead of just computerized voices”—and to navigate through recorded notes on his computer. Although he tries to be as independent as possible, Davis sometimes needs some help and support, and his track teammates, who are also his roommates, have stepped up. For example, to run outdoors, Davis has to run with teammates who make sure he avoids obstacles on the road. “My teammates look out for me,” he says.

“Everyone has been so supportive. They want me to succeed.”

Right now, success means graduating and going on to graduate school for a master’s degree in social work. He also wants to raise awareness of LHON and make resources more readily available to those affected. “I found the resources through research and talking to people, and I want to pass this information along to the other people who become affected by this disease,” he says.

The Student Athlete Advisory Committee held a “Chaz’s Champions” event in April to raise money and awareness for LHON. “That really touched me. I was overwhelmed with emotion. I really appreciate all the support; I wouldn’t be able to be successful without it.” Davis adds. “It’s what keeps me going. It’s what motivates me.”

Davis also competed in the 5,000-meter run during the outdoor track season this year and has his sights set on the Paralympics someday.

Editor’s note: Watch a video about Davis’s story made by one of his former high school teammates who attends Emerson College in Boston. The video, titled Flash: The Chaz Davis Story, was entered into a competition run by the New England Sports Network. Watch it at https://youtu.be/t1Uuf5scyV8.

SPRING 2015  23
22 OBSERVER
ROUNDUP

SPRING SPORTS ROUNDPUP

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University of Hartford Men’s Lacrosse midfielder Kevin O’Shea capped off a stellar four years by being selected to play in the prestigious 74th United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA) East-West Game in Radnor, Pa., in late May.

A three-time America East All-Conference selection, who earned First Team distinction in 2013 and 2015, O’Shea left his mark throughout UHart’s record books. He graduated as the fifth-best scorer in program history after racking up 175 points and is ranked fourth in goals (119) and eighth in assists (56). O’Shea also earned New England Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (NEILA) All-New England honors for the second time in his career when he was placed on the First Team earlier this month.

Classmate Brian Monks joined Shea on the America East All-First Team. A trio of first-year players—Griffin Feiner, Dylan Protos and Ryan Vanderford—were selected to the America East All-Rookie Team. Junior Kevin Sanne and Moris earned spots on the America East All-Academic Team. Protos was also named to the NEILA All-New England Second Team.

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It was the second-straight year that MacKinnon earned the honor for his baseball success, complemented by his being named All-East America East Second Team in soccer last fall.

A trio of Hawks was named to the 11-member All-Academic Team, including MacKinnon and junior starting pitcher Sam McKay, who each had a conference-best 3.95 GPA. Gauthier was also an All-Academic selection, finishing the year with a 3.69 GPA.

MacKinnon ended the regular season with a team-best .355 batting average, third highest in the America East. He entered the postseason one hit shy of tying Jeff Bagwell ’88 and Earl Snyder ’96 for the America East Conference unless designated otherwise.

Men’s Golf

Corey Bernier ’17
All-Academic
Annamarie Malott ’16
All-Academic
Brooke Nethercot ’16
All-Academic
Maugham Ryan ’17
All-Academic
Collette Schmitt ’17
All-Academic
Women’s Golf
All-Academic

Samantha Crisafulli ’15
All-Academic
Jamie Soles ’18
All-Rookie
Margaret Betz ’15
All-Academic
Payton Fisher ’15
All-Academic

Chaz Davis ‘16

Chaz Davis ’16, during his personal best 5K time in the NECAA New England Championships, held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston on May 11. That’s a nice accomplishment made even more laudable by the fact that, for the past year and a half, he has been losing his eyesight.

“Toward the end of his freshman year, Davis was stricken with Leber’s Hereditary Optic Neuropathy (LHON), a genetic disease that attacks the optic nerve. At first, only the vision in his right eye was affected. Then, a few months later, the vision in his left eye also began to deteriorate. Despite the disease and its disabling effects, Davis keeps running, both literally and figuratively.

“Last year, it was tough to adjust to this. I did have a ‘woe is me’ moment, but then I realized the only way to move on was to move on, to keep as much of a sense of normalcy as possible,” he says with resolve. “I always had the mindset to do things for myself. Things won’t get done unless I do them for myself.”

That focus and determination are paying off. Davis is still on course academically to graduate next year with a major in criminal justice and a minor in psychology. While some suggested that he take a semester off to acclimate to his new situation, instead Davis, who is from Grafton, Mass., found ways to get his textbooks as audio books—“read by people with real voices instead of just computerized voices”—so that he could navigate through recorded notes on his computer.

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“All these guys are like family. Everyone was so supportive. They want me to succeed.”

Right now, success means graduating and going on to graduate school for a master’s degree in social work. He also wants to raise awareness of LHON and make resources more readily available to those affected. “I found the resources through research and talking to people, and I want to pass this information along to the other people who become affected by this disease,” he says.

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Davis also competed in the 5,000-meter run during the outdoor track season this year and says he hopes to run the 5K at the Paralympics someday.

Pardon...

Two of our athletes were incorrectly identified in the “Sports Shots” photo in the winter 2014 issue (p. 209). All three players pictured are: with Chaz Davis ’16 (soccer), Jeff Ryan ’17 (soccer), and Katy Hinchry ’18 (volleyball).