

NEW MEDIA INC.

# ALL-REGION RECAP

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## BASEBALL

# Mustangs' Stuhr earns top honor

## Witt-Birn, Marion split top team honor

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Area high school baseball teams enjoyed strong results this spring, with several teams winning conference titles or being in the title hunt all season and several individual players finding great success at the plate or on the mound.

Marion's baseball team had a memorable spring and was one of the top-ranked teams in Division 4 all season. Jaden Stuhr was the driving force that powered the Mustangs, and his dominant overall season earned him the NEW Media Inc. Player of the Year honor. It's the second straight season Stuhr has earned the honor.

Stuhr is headed to UW-Stevens Point, where he plans on pitching. This spring, he was just about lights out every time he stepped on the hill.

The senior covered 47 innings this spring, striking out a whopping 103 batters over that span and walking just 14. He surrendered just 21 hits, and only two of the 14 runs he allowed were earned for a sparkling 0.30 earned run average.

Stuhr won 10 games and was dealt just one loss.

"Off the mound this year I became pretty dominant, mostly by mixing my pitches when I needed to and locating them where I needed to," said Stuhr. "I worked the corners of the plate and zone and hit my spots while mixing in the off speed to keep hitters off balance...."

While his numbers on the mound were elite, Stuhr's statistics at the plate also stood out.

Stuhr hit for a .500 average and posted 19 extra-base hits, with 10 triples, eight doubles and a homer. The senior walked 27 times and stole 35 bases. He drove in 42 runs and scored 33 times.

"This year was by far my best year at the plate and I changed my stance a touch to really engage my lower half even more," said Stuhr. "Just putting the ball in play and spraying it all over the field helped bring success as well."

Stuhr's standout season almost was wiped out before it began after the senior dealt with some health issues during the school year.

He had to overcome reactive arthritis syndrome, an auto-immune disease that took away his vision, along with his ability to walk because of swollen joints.

"Hearing that I may not restore my vision on top of numerous other things really brought me a sense of reality," said Stuhr. "It made me realize that everything that I have is a gift, whether I believe it to be something big or small in my life, and hearing that really drove me to want to succeed greater than the season before."

"Pushing through the mental and physical challenges that came with by working out and getting reps in as much as possible — even though some was a little sooner than I should've — really helped get back to as close as I was the previous season. Everything happens for a reason and everything that is put into our lives God knows we can overcome, and that positive go get it attitude really was the key to it all. Using it as fuel and wanting to prove myself."

Stuhr was able to accomplish everything he hoped to individually and more, which helped him earn the Central Wisconsin Conference-North Division Player of the Year honor for the third straight season.

He will play on Team North at the Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association All-Star Classic in Oshkosh on June 30 and July 1.

### Honorable mentions

There was no shortage of individual talent in the area, as demonstrated by the many all-conference first team players. A few players stood out this spring.

Shawano's Ashton Henning overcame a slow start to the season and landed on the Bay Conference first team unanimously for a third straight spring. He was a threat at both the plate and on the mound.

Lena's Josh Kristof made the Marinette & Oconto Conference first team in his senior season, starring primarily at the plate.

Pulaski's Kyle Olson earned double all-conference honors in the Fox River Classic Conference. He hit for a strong average and was the team's most-used pitcher.

Wittenberg-Birnamwood's Mason Meverden helped lead his team this spring, earning a CWC-East first team honor for his work at the plate and on the hill.



Marion's Jaden Stuhr pitches during the team's CWC-North win over Tigerton on April 10 in Marion.

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Noah Weier was a two-way star for Bonduel on his way to a CWC-East first team recognition.

Ryan Malueg also had a big season for Marion, both at the plate and on the mound, on his way to an all-conference first team nod.

### Team of the Year

Marion and Witt-Birn share the Team of the Year honor after produc-

ing similar seasons.

Marion won the CWC-North outright with a perfect record, while Witt-Birn won a share of the CWC-East crown with an 11-3 record. Eight Mustangs earned all-conference nods, while six Chargers were honored.

Both teams advanced to regional title games before falling in tight contests.

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## GIRLS SOCCER

## Pulaski's Gianna Logue named top player

## Red Raiders also earn team honor

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Only Pulaski and Shawano serve as the area's girls soccer teams, but there was still some standout individual and team play that happened this spring.

Pulaski's Gianna Logue was classified as a defender, but had an impact all over the field and was named the NEW Media Inc. Girls Soccer Player of the Year for her efforts.

"I enjoyed the spring season for many many reasons, one being able to play with my sister (Isabella) and playing under my mom (Kelly)," said Logue.

"There's a lot of hard work that goes into it in the preseason. Whether that be in the weight room, on grass fields, on turf, just getting touches at all truly makes a big difference and makes the season enjoyable. I love playing with some of my best friends and seeing them daily."

Despite playing defense primarily, Logue still scored nine goals this spring.

That goal number likely would have been a lot higher had she played forward or even midfield, but she was more than happy to help keep opposing teams from scoring goals.

"Playing both sides of the ball, offense and defense, adds a whole new perspective to the game," said Logue. "Winning a game isn't just about scoring goals, it's also not letting the other team score. Even from a young age, I never thought it was a true sacrifice playing defense, because I was always taught defense wins championships."

When Logue scored, good things happened for the Red Raiders, with the team winning all six matches she scored in.

Logue scored once in the team's 2-1 win over Kaukauna on April 4, then scored twice a week later against Wrightstown.

Her next goal came a month later against Manitowoc Lincoln. She netted a hat trick in a victory over Ashwaubenon on May 16.



Pulaski's Gianna Logue controls the ball during the team's playoff match against Beaver Dam on May 30 in Pulaski.

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## FYI

The All-Region yearly review section will be published in the June 30 papers.

The senior's final two goals came in postseason play. She scored once against Beaver Dam and once against Slinger to help Pulaski claim a regional title.

"In the beginning of the season, I was told when I would play offense or forward, it had to count," said Logue. "Though I love playing both

positions, I knew I had to execute my role — in that instance, it was putting the ball in the back of the net. I knew I didn't have a lot of time when I was put up there, so I had to take the opportunity and use it to the fullest."

What propelled Pulaski to its successful season was a stout defense.

While it's difficult to show how Logue and her team shut down opposing teams with a bunch of sta-

tistics, the team's goal differential tells all you need to know.

Pulaski played a total of 24 matches this spring, scoring 71 goals.

While that number is enough to win a handful of games, only allowing 18 goals like the Red Raiders did is what helped the team reach 15 wins and their regional title.

Logue's favorite memory from this spring was a defensive battle against Bay Port in a conference battle on May 4. Veronica Decker scored in the 78th minute to help the Red Raiders prevail for a huge FRCC win.

"That game was a huge team win and a motivation shift in the middle of the season, which will be one of my favorite memories from high school soccer," said Logue.

## Honorable mention

Speaking of Decker, she was one of the other area individual players that stood out this spring. Decker led the Red Raiders with 24 goals and also assisted on nine scores.

Isabella Logue, Josie Steeno and Laci Lemke also made solid contributions for Pulaski, both on defense and offense.

Steen scored four goals and had eight assists, while Logue had six goals and two assists. Lemke scored once and assisted on four other goals.

Trinity Popelka powered Shawano all spring. She scored 28 goals and was credited with three assists. She also served as the goalie in two contests, stopping 19 shots.

Brynlie Boyles was Shawano's main goalie, making 147 saves.

Kyla Dove, Adison Moesch and Jenna Ainsworth all helped slow opposing players before they got to Boyles.

Moesch also scored five goals and had three assists, Dove tallied two goals and three assists and Ainsworth had an assist.

## Team of the Year

Pulaski earns the Team of the Year honor after its strong season and regional title.

The Red Raiders went 15-4-5 overall and finished 5-2-2 in the tough FRCC to place fifth.

Pulaski was the only conference team to not lose to De Pere, instead tying 0-0.



## BOYS GOLF

# Lena's McVane tabbed the area's top golfer

## Wildcats also top team after state appearance

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Several area boys golf teams enjoyed successful spring seasons, but it was Lena that stole the headlines toward the end of the season after qualifying for state.

Braden McVane led the Wildcats on the course throughout the season and earned the NEW Media Inc. Golfer of the Year honor for his standout efforts.

"This season was a ton of fun, every person on the team including my two coaches made this a season to remember," said McVane. "There was never a dull moment throughout the whole season with the guys on the team and the coaches. Also another big thing that helped me play well this season was the fact that I never stopped golfing through the offseason. I was always either going to a heated driving range, going to simulators, or putting in my basement."

McVane played as Lena's No. 1 golfer and turned in the team's top rounds more often than not during the season.

The junior finished as the top golfer in the Marinette & Oconto Conference, while helping the team to a conference title.

When the calendar flipped to post-season action, McVane continued to excel for the Wildcats. The golfer attributed his success to his mental state.

"Coming into this season one of my main goals was to be positive no matter the situation, even when I got into a shaky position, I always kept my head high," said McVane. "This was probably the biggest key factor that helped me get them low rounds. All I thought about when I hit a bad shot is that I am out golfing and playing the sport I love — there is no reason I shouldn't be enjoying myself."

McVane turned in a strong round of 83 at the Bonduel Regional to help the team win a regional title. At the Crivitz Sectional, McVane led the team with a round of 82 to help the team place second and qualify for state.

Even on the state's biggest stage, McVane didn't let the pressure get to



**Lena's Braden McVane looks on after taking a shot during the first round of the WIAA State Boys Golf Tournament on June 5 at Blackwolf Run - Meadows Course in Kohler.**

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him at all.

The junior fired a round of 86 in the first state round to sit in a tie for 14th. McVane carded a round of 79 on the second day of competition, propelling him to a seventh-place finish as an individual.

"I would say the highlight of the season was definitely being at state and being able to spend a few days with just the team and my coaches," said McVane.

### Honorable mentions

The area had no shortage of strong individual golfers, with pretty much every team having a player or two that excelled.

Bonduel had a strong year as a team, winning the Central Wisconsin Conference crown and then narrowly missing out on qualifying for state as a team. Reed Luepke and Jake Dreyer led the Bears most of the season and

earned all-conference first team spots for their efforts. Colin Margelofsky and Jaxon Bogacz were second teamers.

Wittenberg-Birnamwood placed second in the CWC and qualified for sectionals as a team. The Chargers were led by Dylan Resch and August Barke, who were first-team selections. Joey Seegmiller was an honorable mention.

Marion's Sam Gueths was the lone individual golfer to qualify for sectionals.

Kadyn Riel and Caden Leonhardt led Oconto Falls this spring, making the second team and honorable mention list, respectively, in the North Eastern Conference. The Panthers also made sectionals as a team.

Shawano's Luke Guenther was an honorable mention golfer in the Bay Conference, while Pulaski's Brady Hayward and Colin Schultz were honorable mentions in the Fox River Clas-

sic Conference. Pulaski also reached sectionals as a team.

### Team of the Year

Lena also earns the area Team of the Year honor after its conference and regional titles and state appearance.

The state appearance was the first in school history for Lena. Mason Belongia, Mason Spice, Drake Dionne and Evan VanderZanden joined McVane on the state team.

All five members of the team place inside the top 10 golfers in the M&O. McVane, Belongia and Dionne were all on the first team, while Spice and VanderZanden made the second team.

What's most impressive with Lena's memorable spring is that the starting lineup was comprised of all sophomores and juniors, meaning the entire team will return next spring with eyes on a state title.



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## GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD

# Rogowski named top girls athlete again

## Suring repeats as top area team after 2 titles

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

This spring season was another special one for area high school girls track and field athletes and teams, with several individuals making it to the state meet in La Crosse to cap the year.

After another dominant season and a state showing highlighted by four top-10 finishes, Wittenberg-Birnamwood's Reese Rogowski was tabbed the NEW Media Inc. Girls Athlete of the Year. This is the second straight spring Rogowski has earned the honor.

"The coaching, training and staying active during the off-season, like competing in other sports, helped me to enjoy the spring season I had," said Rogowski.

After a regular season full of top finishes and some of the state's top marks, Rogowski continued to impress as the season winded down.

At the Central Wisconsin Conference-Large Division Meet, Rogowski won the 100-, 200- and 400-meter dashes and long jump.

The top finishes became the norm for Rogowski during her high school career, but it was the fashion in which she won that stuck out.

She was 0.27 seconds faster than the second-place finisher in the 100, 0.94 seconds faster in the 200 and 3.13 seconds better in the 400. Rogowski won the long jump by a full foot.

Those finishes were even tighter than some of the ones she had earlier in the season, but Rogowski kept a couple things in mind to keep her eyes on the end goal of performing well at state.

"I tried to meet interval benchmarks while running throughout each meet to continue to improve throughout the season," said Rogowski.

"I kept in mind each meet that it could be my last meet, and to give everything I had to give in that moment."

Even with increased competition in the postseason, the top finishes kept piling up.

Rogowski won regional titles in the 100, 200, 400 and long jump and sectional titles in the 100, 200 and 400. She placed third in the long jump at sectionals to make it to state in all four of her events.

Rogowski competed in her three sprints on the first day of state competition and did enough to qualify for the finals in all three events.

She competed in the finals in the three sprints and in long jump on a hot second day of state.

Ironically, it was Rogowski's lowest finishing-event at sectionals that she turned in her best finish at state. She placed second in the long jump after a top leap of 18 feet, 2 inches.

Rogowski also made the state podium in the 400 (56.45) and 200 (24.94), placing third and sixth, respectively. The senior took 10th in the 100 (12.65).

"I'm proud to look back at the state meet now that I've let things sink in, because it was a goal of mine to finish top 10 in all my events," said Rogowski.

Rogowski is headed to Division 1 North Dakota



Wittenberg-Birnamwood's Reese Rogowski takes off from the starting block during the Division 2 400-meter dash prelims on June 2 in La Crosse.

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State University to continue her track and field career.

### Honorable mentions

As mentioned before, several individual girls ended their seasons competing at state.

Rogowski wasn't the only Witt-Birn girl to excel in La Crosse. Sophomore Faith Resch made it to state in the 300 hurdles and ended up placing third overall.

Suring's Christine Sleeter also made the state podium after tying for fourth in the high jump and pole vault.

Shawano's 4x800 relay team of Adalyn Barkley, Bailey Hendricks, Lily Guenther and Grace Chelberg made it to La Crosse, with Barkley, Chelberg and Guenther also making it in individual events.

Pulaski's Olivia Sprangers was a state qualifier in

the 200 in her freshman season.

Bonduel's 4x800 relay team of Kendra Troxel, Cierra Schnell, Ashlyn Kurey and Mariah Wondra were state qualifiers, with Wondra also making it individually.

Lena's Eva Brooks made it to state in the high jump as just a sophomore.

### Team of the Year

Suring takes the Team of the Year honor for a second straight spring after winning the Marinette & Oconto Conference title.

The Eagles won the M&O title with 200½ points, 64½ points better than the second-place finisher.

Suring went on to claim a regional title as well, placing first at the Suring Regional, claiming the top spot by 36 points.



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## BOYS TRACK AND FIELD

## Kietlinski the top athlete after monster spring

## Lena/STAA takes team honor

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Area high school boys track and field teams and individual athletes enjoyed a productive spring season, with plenty of top finishes along the way.

Bowler's Emmitt Kietlinski separated himself from other individuals as the season went along and picked up a pair of top-two finishes at the state meet on his way to being named the NEW Media Inc. Boys Athlete of the Year.

"I trained hard to prepare for a great spring," said Kietlinski. "Being a three-sport athlete certainly helped as well."

"I put extra time into the weight room, adding a few new exercises for leg strength, and I worked on my core a lot at home. On weekends, I would often get in some extra jumping work at a sand volleyball court in Phlox."

Kietlinski, who was a part of the Bowler/Gresham co-op, competed in the high jump, triple jump and long jump to start this spring, and was earning top finishes in each event as soon as the season kicked off.

Kietlinski placed first in each event during the Central Wisconsin Conference-Small Division Meet on April 18.

By that point in the season, the senior owned some of the top marks in his events, not only in the state, but the entire country.

Despite the buzz starting to build around him, Kietlinski didn't let it affect him in a negative way by keeping things simple.

"I know it sounds simple, but I focused every day on doing something to get me to jump higher or farther," said Kietlinski.

The top finishes continued to pile up for the senior, including top finishes in all three events at the CWC-Small Meet on May 12.

When the postseason began, Kietlinski dropped the long jump and powered on while focusing on the high jump and triple jump.

Despite the competition improving, it didn't stop Kietlinski from winning.



Gresham/Bowler's Emmitt Kietlinski competes in the Division 3 boys triple jump competition during the state championships on June 3 in La Crosse.

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He was the top finisher in both events at the regional meet and then won the sectional high jump title, while placing second in the triple jump.

"In sports I never get nervous during games or meets. I actually tend to do better during big moments," said Kietlinski. "I certainly enjoyed competing in front of large crowds and I tended to feed off the pressure situations. I would remind myself to just do what I've done all year and everything would turn out fine."

Kietlinski delivered again during the state meet in La Crosse, winning the high jump and placing second in the triple jump.

The senior cleared 6 feet, 6 inches in the high jump. He was leading the triple jump with a leap of 44-9/4 before the final jump of the competition bumped him back to second.

"My goal all season was to be a state champion, so finishing state champion and state runner-up is something I will cherish forever. It

was a great way to end my senior year," said Kietlinski. "Being just the third state champion in Bowler school history is really special."

"In fact, a few hours after I won the high jump, I received a phone call from Tim Hanke, Bowler's first ever state champion (1987 in the triple jump). He had been watching the live results online from his home in South Carolina, tracked down a way to contact me, and called. His first words were, 'Welcome to the club!' His call meant a lot to me."

Shortly after graduating, Kietlinski made a trip to the University of Oregon to compete in the high jump and triple jump at the Nike Outdoor Nationals.

Kietlinski placed second in the high jump after clearing 6-9, and was 23rd in the triple jump after a top mark of 42-2/4.

#### Honorable mentions

There was no shortage of talented individuals on track and field teams this spring, with a few get-

ting to state.

Gillett's Alex Peterson made it to state in three events, placing fourth in the 1,600, fifth in the 3,200 and fifth on the team's 4x800 relay team.

Pulaski's Jack Marsh qualified for state in the discus, placing eighth in a loaded field of competitors.

Bonduel's Ryan Westrich and Karter Schroeder were individual state qualifiers in the shot put and high jump, placing eighth and ninth, respectively in La Crosse.

Lena's Anthony Seefeldt also made it to state in the shot put, placing seventh.

#### Team of the Year

The Lena/St. Thomas Aquinas Academy co-op is the top area boys team this spring after winning the Marinette & Oconto Conference and a regional title.

The team scored 163 points to win the conference crown, 25 points better than Coleman.

Lena/STAA won the Suring Regional title after scoring 111 points.



## BOYS TENNIS

# Buerman, Sheldon named top players

## Shawano takes top team honor as well

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Boys tennis is a sport for just two area high schools, but there were still some strong seasons put together this spring.

The best season was produced by Shawano's No. 1 doubles team of George Buerman and Tristan Sheldon, who were named the NEW Media Inc. Players of the Year.

Buerman and Sheldon enjoyed a strong regular season and then went on to qualify for state. At state, the Hawk duo won a match.

"One thing that helped me with this season was staying in a tennis mindset and continually playing tennis this offseason," said Buerman. "Just playing with Tristan really gave us a good head start in not having to take two weeks to get back into tennis."

Sheldon also mentioned a "consistent offseason," as well as receiving motivation from teammates as to reasons why the duo was able to be so successful this year.

After earning several wins during the regular season, Buerman and Sheldon got into the post-season swing with a second-place finish at the Bay Conference Tournament. The duo rallied from a set down to secure a spot in the first-place match while there.

Gritty wins like that typified the season as a whole for the No. 1 doubles team.

After a 6-3, 6-0 win at subsectionals got them into sectionals, Buerman and Sheldon claimed a 6-2, 1-6, 11-9 victory over Kimberly to punch their ticket to state.

The upset win was each player's favorite individual moment from this spring season.

"George and I relied on each other all season to help calm emotions during big moments," said Sheldon. "No matter how big of a match we had, I knew I could count on George to keep me in a good mindset."

"One way that Tristan and I stayed composed in big matches was always talking to each other, and not letting ourselves get in our own heads," said Buerman. "Also, the constant support from coaching and family/friends motivated us to perform well. I'm not saying we weren't nervous, because I was shaking nervous before our big matches."

While the duo dropped their final two matches at sectionals, the only thing that mattered to Buerman and Sheldon was making it to state in Madison.

Buerman and Sheldon had one more gritty win in them at state, prevailing 6-2, 2-6, 13-11 in their first state match. It was an unforgettable moment for the pair, and they added it will give them something to build on going into their senior seasons next spring.

The duo dropped their second state match, ending their season with a 15-7 overall record.



Shawano's Tristan Sheldon, left, and George Buerman congratulate each other during a triangular on May 20 in Shawano.

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"A top reason that we were successful was staying in points and being patient, waiting for them to make a mistake," said Buerman. "Also our motivation and energy we brought to each other after each point fueled us."

Buerman's favorite team moment from the season came in a loss against Menasha, but the setback was a confidence booster with each flight playing tight matches.

Sheldon's favorite moment was the team's senior night.

"My favorite team moment was senior night because of how much they contributed to our success," said Sheldon. "We cannot do what we do without them and they will all be very missed next year. Next year we will have a very large group of seniors so we hope to be good role models for the rest of the team."

### Honorable mentions

Pulaski's No. 1 doubles team of Eric Sperduto and Jacob Ebent also made it to sectionals this spring after a win at subsectionals.

Justin Freadrich (No. 2) and Donovan Holderness (No. 4) earned singles wins at subsectionals for Pulaski.

Shawano's No. 2 doubles team of Isaac Weland and Tristan Tetting and the No. 3 doubles team of Andrew Vandenheuvel and Seth Williams also picked up a subsectional win this spring.

### Team of the Year

Shawano is this spring's Team of the Year after a fifth-place finish in the Bay Conference.

All three doubles teams finished in the top three at the conference tournament before a win each at the subsectional.



## SOFTBALL

# Vertz, Thompson split top player honor

## Pulaski, Bonduel the top teams

By **MORGAN RODE**  
Sports Editor

Area high school softball teams enjoyed plenty of success during the spring season, with a few teams and several individuals standing out.

It was Pulaski junior Morgan Vertz and Bonduel junior Hailee Thompson who were the top performers throughout the season, and were named the NEW Media Inc. Players of the Year for their efforts.

Both players were named Co-Players of the Year in their respective conferences and landed on all-state second teams.

“My success definitely doesn’t just come overnight, the hours I put in during the offseason is what made me so successful this year,” said Vertz. “The training I do at Velocity Training is truly where I saw my skills advance.”

Thompson noted several things for her success, including her teammates, the Fear Softball Program and her strength coach.

“Lastly, I feel as though my faith has helped me become the player I am along with helping me have a great high school career so far,” said Thompson. “I put all faith and trust in God to help guide me throughout my journey as a softball player.”

Vertz was the Co-Player of the Year in the Fox River Classic Conference after a big season at the plate and in the circle.

In conference play alone, she pitched 100 1/3 innings, with 153 punchouts and only 19 walks. She allowed just 24 runs across the 18 games she pitched and helped her team win 14 games.

“Repetition. Pitching is such a detailed skill to have. One inch or second could make the difference between a ball or strike or determine where the ball is going,” said Vertz on her pitching success. “So this offseason, I worked on all the small things to go into the season at my best.”

As if her stats in the circle weren’t enough, Vertz hit for a .474 average in FRCC play.



Pulaski’s Morgan Vertz pitches during the team’s playoff win over Green Bay West/East on May 23 in Pulaski.

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Eleven of the junior’s 27 hits went for extra bases, including four long balls. She drove in 27 runs and

scored 14 times. Vertz walked 10 times and was a strikeout victim just four times.

“Growing up, the love for the game was found on the mound, but coming into this year, I had a goal



for myself that I wanted to be a threat at the plate,” said Vertz. “I put in many hours this offseason and after practices to get more swings in. After putting in the work, I saw it all pay off during the season.”

Vertz top individual moment from the season came when she pitched 12 innings and struck out 21 batters against De Pere.

“As a team my favorite moment was our grit to see the game into the very last out, so my favorite moment would be all our walk-off hits and celebrating with the team,” said Vertz.

Thompson starred at the plate for Bonduel, while playing providing great defense from her short-stop position.

She finished the season with a .533 batting average, posting 40 hits across 24 games.

Thompson popped 11 home runs to go along with nine doubles. She drove in 40 runs and scored 43 times.

Thompson walked 11 times and struck out just twice. She stole 15 bases.

“I knew my team would need a lot of people to step up this year if we wanted a long postseason run, or even just a good regular season in general,” said Thompson. “I decided to step into that role and try my hardest to be the teammate my team needed both on and off the field.”

Some of Thompson’s best games came late in the regular season when the team was chasing a Central Wisconsin Conference-East Division title, and then carried over into the postseason.

Five of her home runs came in the final three regular season games and the team’s first postseason contest. She drove in 13 runs between those four games and the second postseason contest.

“Me personally, I love pressure, I feel as though I perform better under pressure and I just continue to strive to be that person my teammates count on to deliver on the field,” said Thompson. “I prefer to be down in the count during my at-bats, it helps me to focus in and just put the ball in play to advance my teammates on the bases.”

The junior’s top individual moment from this season was breaking the school’s home run record, an accolade she’s been after since she was a freshman.

“My favorite team memories would have to be all the bus rides with loud music, our victory over Amherst at home, and just the countless hours I got to spend with this amazing team,” said Thompson.



**Bonduel's Hailee Thompson follows through on a swing during a CWC-East game against Witt-Birn on May 15 in Bonduel.**

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### Honorable mentions

Vertz and Thompson weren't the only area players to earn Player of the Year honors in conference play.

Tigerton's Abby Swartz and Bowler/Gresham's Emma May split the top honor in the CWC-North after great seasons at the plate. Emma Kristof starred for the Gillett/Suring co-op and was the top player in the Marinette & Oconto Conference.

Wittenberg-Birnamwood's Rory Salvesen and Oconto Falls' Ame-

lia Danielczak both produced big freshman seasons as hitters to earn all-conference first team nods. Salvesen also made the all-state second team.

Pulaski's Molly Molthen also excelled as a freshman, making the all-conference first team and all-state honorable mention team.

### Team of the Year

Thompson and Vertz not only had great individual seasons, but were part of some strong teams. Bonduel and Pulaski were tabbed

the area's top teams after memorable springs.

Bonduel earned a share of the CWC-East title after matching Amherst with an 11-3 record. The Bears won a regional title before being eliminated by eventual state champion Iola-Scandinavia. Bonduel went 18-6 overall.

Pulaski came in second in the tough FRCC, going 15-3 and finishing just one game behind Green Bay Preble. The Red Raiders won a regional title on a walk-off wild pitch. Pulaski went 17-6 on the season.



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