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## The Official Baseball Newsletter of the Manchester College Spartans

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### From Espy's Desk:

Happy New Year!

This is an exciting time for Manchester College baseball. The season is approaching quickly and our team is ready for preseason practice. Practice starts on January 29. Coach Sprunger and I are excited to get to work. I know it is a little early to do a position by position preview but these thoughts never leave my mind. I am excited to tell you about our club. To help you become familiar with the 2008 version of the Spartans I have put together a pre-season prospectus.

**Pitching:** We are looking at three seniors and two juniors to lead our pitching staff. Juniors **Colin Denihan** (3-5, 3.15) and **Brett Smalley** (1-1, 3.75) each earned one win in the league last year. The seniors that we are counting on are **Shaun Carrico** (2-1, 7.13), **Derek Hanson** (1-3, 6.69) and **Matt Holycross** (2-0, 7.04). Two juniors who saw limited action last year are **Jared Baker** (5 IP, 9.00) and **Zach Miller** (1 IP, 0.00). Top sophomore candidates include **Josh Atkinson** (2 IP, 0.00), **Travis Eggeman** (4.2 IP, 5.79), **Joe Egner** (injured in '07) and **Andrew Scolaro** (Zionsville HS). Promising freshmen include **Wes Bucher** (South Central HS), **Kyle Hardesty** (Plymouth HS), **Curtis Mallery** (Noblesville HS) and **Eric Roof** (South Bend St. Joseph's HS).

**Catching:** We have two quality veterans behind the plate and two freshmen who look like they have a bright future. All-Conference junior **Matty Miller** (.370, 6 HR) and senior **Adam Piotrowicz** (.261, 10 GP) are quality backstops. Freshmen **Trey Forbes** (East Noble HS) and **John Smolinski** (South Bend St. Joseph's HS) each have the ability to contribute this year.

**First Base:** We do not have an incumbent at this position. The top veteran looks to be sophomore **Adam King** (.261, 10GP). Two freshmen that will compete for time are **Ty Foster** (Danville Community HS) and **Andy Hughes** (Jay County HS).

**Second Base:** Senior **Heath Williams** (.194, 5 SB) looks to get the nod on opening day. Versatile sophomore **Josh Buell** (.292, 4 triples) could see time at second, third or in the outfield. Also, freshmen **Nick Seman** (Lakeland HS) looks to compete.

**Third Base:** Freshman **Jay Sheets** (NorthWood HS) looks to be the top candidate at the hot corner. Sophomore **Andrew Evans** (Manchester HS) will make the move from shortstop and freshmen **Tony McCowan** (Jay County HS) and **Josh Worch** (Richmond) could compete for playing time.

**Shortstop:** Sophomore **Kaz Kalita** (.323, .952 FLD) started 30 games at this position last year. Freshman **JT Podell** (John Glenn HS) had an impressive fall season and will provide quality depth or on the infield.

**Outfield:** Three-year starter and senior **Danner Partridge** (.278, 18 HBP) will anchor us in the outfield. Junior **Corey Oetting**

(.208, .364 SLG) played in 27 games and gained valuable experience. Competing for the third spot will be juniors **Shawn Baker** (.429, 11 GP), **Jeff Mendenhall** (.200, 4 GP), sophomores **Scott Bartley** (South Bend Riley HS), **Ryan Peterson** (Oak Hill HS), **Steve Tidwell** (Culver Military) and freshmen **Ben Dixon** (Chesterton HS), **Justin Hanson** (Warsaw HS), **Travis Hout** (Northridge HS), **Michael Raines** (South Vigo HS), **Kyle Steineman** (Huntington North HS), **David Tatham** (Brown County HS) and **Rodney Pearson** (Muncie Central HS) .

**Designated Hitter:** As usual, a number of players will compete for this spot.

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### Dugout Chatter:

As a mentor Coach Espeset has produced many players and assistant coaches that have stayed in baseball at the college and pro level. Many more are coaching in high school.

- Former assistant **Eddie Uschold**: head coach at Missouri Baptist.
- Former assistant **Eliseo Herrera**: assistant at Jackson State University.
- Former assistant **Shawn Summe**: head assistant at Savannah College of Art and Design.
- Former assistant **Justin Bergman**: head coach at Ohio Northern University.
- Former assistant **Derek Woodley**: head coach at Defiance College.
- Former player **Trevor Haley**: Area Scout for Pittsburgh Pirates.
- Former player **Eric Screeton**: head assistant at Franklin College.
- Former player **Adam Augustine**: assistant at Grace College.
- Former player **Dan Sprunger**: assistant at Manchester College.
- Former player **Matt Talarico**: graduate assistant at Heidelberg College.

## Player Profiles:

### SHAWN BAKER

**Hometown/High School:** Middlebury, IN/Northridge

**Year:** Junior

**Position:** Outfield

**Nickname:** Bake(s)

**Parents:** John and Sara

**Hobbies:** Watching sports and collecting shot glasses

**Favorite food:** Italian

**Favorite Movie:** Saving Private Ryan

**Favorite baseball team:** Yankees

**Favorite baseball player:** A-Rod

**Favorite Musical Artist:** Too many

**What is your favorite video game?** Any of the Maddens

**What is your most memorable baseball moment?** Beating Wooster in the 2006 regional

**What is your favorite holiday?** Christmas

**What former MC player(s) will you miss the most?** Scott Tarnowski and Tyler Wolfe

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** Teaching and coaching somewhere...maybe Hawaii

**What do you like most about Manchester College?** The friends I've made through baseball and social events

**Who has been the most influential in your life?** My Grandpa



### JAY SHEETS

**Hometown/High School:** Goshen, IN/ NorthWood High School

**Year:** Freshman

**Position:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Base

**Nickname:** Sheetz

**Parents:** Ron and Patti Sheets

**Hobbies:** Snowboarding, Wakeboarding, Sports

**Favorite food:** Pizza

**Favorite Movie:** The Bourne movies

**Favorite baseball team:** Chicago Cubs/Boston Red Sox

**Favorite baseball player:** David Ortiz

**Favorite Musical Artist:** Chris Brown

**What is your favorite video game?** Guitar Hero or Rock Band

**What is your most memorable baseball moment?** Pitching a no-hitter in the Sectional Championship game my senior year

**What is your favorite holiday?** Christmas

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** Graduated and teaching elementary students

**What do you like most about Manchester College?** The welcome feeling you get from people and the campus

**Who has been the most influential in your life?** My dad



### KAZ KALITA

**Hometown/High School:** La Porte, IN/ La Porte High School

**Year:** Sophomore

**Position:** Shortstop

**Nickname:** Magicman

**Parents:** Matt and Diane Kalita

**Hobbies:** Video games

**Favorite food:** Steak

**Favorite Movie:** Boondock Saints

**Favorite baseball team:** Chicago Cubs

**Favorite baseball player:** Pete Rose

**Favorite Musical Artist:** Weezer

**What is your favorite video game?** RBI Baseball

**What is your most memorable baseball moment?** Making it to the 2nd round of Semi-State my junior year of high school

**What is your favorite holiday?** 4th of July

**What former MC player(s) will you miss the most?** Matt Talarico and Zac Bireley

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** Either in grad school or being a Chemist

**What do you like most about Manchester College?** The friends that I have made and playing baseball

**Who is the most famous person you have met?** Eddie Vedder (Lead singer of Pearl Jam)

**Who has been the most influential in your life?** My dad and my grandparents



### JT PODELL

**Hometown/High School:** Walkerton, IN/John Glenn

**Year:** Freshman

**Position:** Infield

**Nickname:** Eckstein, and Ozzie

**Parents:** Rick and Jeannie Podell

**Hobbies:** Collecting baseball cards and hanging out with friends

**Favorite food:** Pizza

**Favorite Movie:** For the Love of the Game

**Favorite baseball team:** Chicago Cubs

**Favorite baseball player:** Johnny Bench

**Favorite Musical Artist:** Chris Cagle

**What is your favorite video game?** NCAA Football

**What is your most memorable baseball moment?** Getting the game winning hit in the regionals in 2006

**What is your favorite holiday?** Christmas

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** Medical School or being strength and conditioning coach at a college or university.

**What do you like most about Manchester College?** Educational program and Baseball Program

**Who is the most famous person you have ever met?** Marshall Fulk

**Who has been the most influential in your life?** My dad

