

Photo by Kim North
The OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach of the Year was revealed during Tuesday night's OVAC Banquet of Champions inside WesBanco Arena in downtown Wheeling. Sharing the prestigious award were Wheeling Central boys' basketball coach Mel Stephens, left, and Monroee Central boys' basketball coach Mason Lang. This is the fourth time the coveted award has been shared.

Lang, Stephens Share 2025 OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach Of Year Award

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer
WHEELING - For only the fourth time in its history, the prestigious OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach of the Year award ended in co-Coaches of the Year as Monroee Central's Mason Lang and Wheeling Central's Mel Stephens were named the recipients Tuesday night during the 40th annual OVAC Banquet of Championship inside WesBanco Arena.

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Knights getting the better of Lang and his Seminoles twice, including in the OVAC Class 3A title tilt.

The award has been presented since 1969. The other Co-Coaches of the Year came in 1974 when John Marshall wrestling coach Bill Hinegardner and then-Woodsfield High School football coach Jay Circosta were feted. It also happened in 1992 as Cambridge boys' basketball coach Gene Ford and Cameron wrestling coach Jim Potts were honored. In 2007, Steubenville football coach Reno Saccoccia and Oak Glen wrestling coach Larry Shaw were the recip-

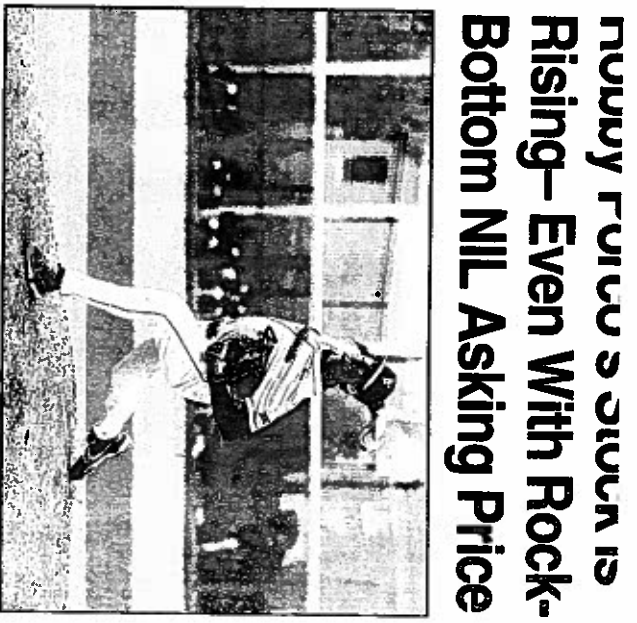


Photo by Benjamin Powell/The Dominion Post
Robby Porco throws a pitch during a Mountaineers regular season game this year.

nubby Porco is Rising—Even With Rock-Bottom NIL Asking Price

By JUSTIN JACKSON
For The Intelligencer

MORGANTOWN — Chances are, you may have heard of Robby Porco more for his free-handed approach to NIL, rather than his results on the mound. The WVU pitcher has gone viral after what may be the best Name Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunity offered in all of college athletics.

You can hang out with him for just a dollar. "A lot of people have been texting me about my NIL," he says with a smile. "A lot of people have been lighting me up."

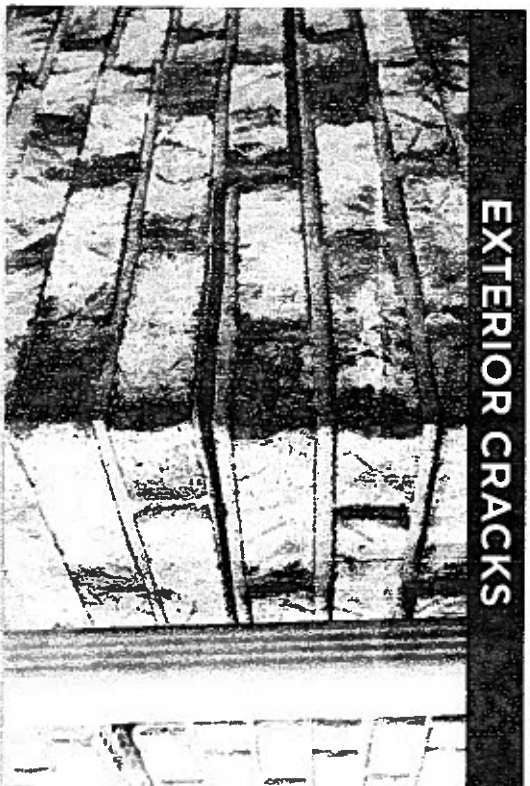
Porco is one of 399 WVU athletes who have opted into the school's NIL platform "The Mountaineer Exchange."

On the website, one can set up a punting lesson with WVU punter Oliver Straw for \$80 or receive a TikTok post from WVU volleyball player Cassidy Tanton for \$200, among others.

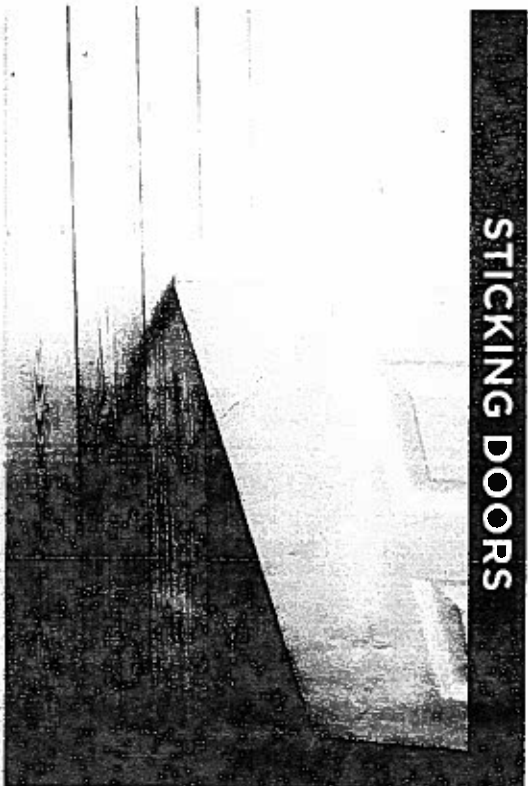
Porco just wants to hang out — under the offer he adds, "I can come chill" — and will do so for \$1.00. "We were sitting in a meeting with an influencer and I was bored," Porco said. "I went on and made a listing. It was actually about a year and a half ago, so I forgot about it. It popped back up recently. It's funny."

To this point, Porco said there have been no takers. If you're interested, just don't make any requests for his presence at the moment, because he may be a little busy.

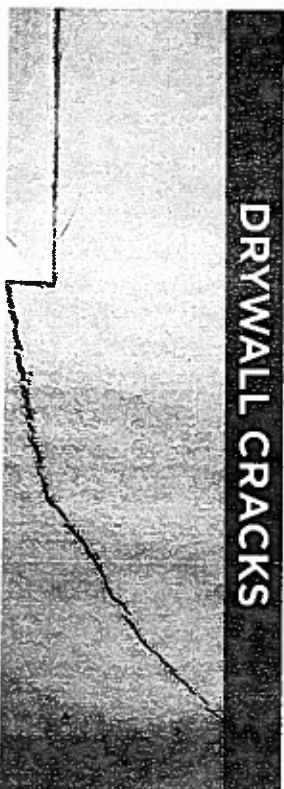
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Claudia Wilken, who has given preliminary approval but asked both sides to come up with a way to address details around roster limits that many schools are already putting in motion. Her final decision could come at any time.

The document would bind institutions to enforcement policies even if their state laws are contradictory, the person said. It would require schools to waive their

being refined, but a working copy has been distributed to school presidents, general counsels and athletic directors, the person said. Legal concerns remain, though, especially for public institutions that would essentially be agreeing not to follow state laws.

Consequences for not signing the agreement would include risking the loss of league membership.

OVAC

(Continued from Page 9)

"I think those three games really helped us both get to where we wanted to be," Stephens said. "It's a testament to what kind of competition there is in the OVAC."

Wheeling Central finished 24-2, defeating Williamstown, 59-40, in the Charleston Civic Center Coliseum.

In just his second season, Lang and the Seminoles reached the pinnacle ball; University's Ken Maisel, Wrestling; and Cameron's Holly Pettit, Girls VI state championship with a 42-35 victory over Marion Local inside the University of Dayton Arena.

Monroe Central finished 26-3.

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really thankful to receive this award and I would like to thank the OVAC," Lang said. "I'm just happy to be able to grow the program at Monroe Central along with my players, coaches and the community. Hopefully we can keep building."

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Pat Doyle and Ed Chihy were present-

ed with plaques for OverTime awards.

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Lang, Stephens share OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach of Year award

• Both honorees led their boys basketball teams to state titles on same day in March

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

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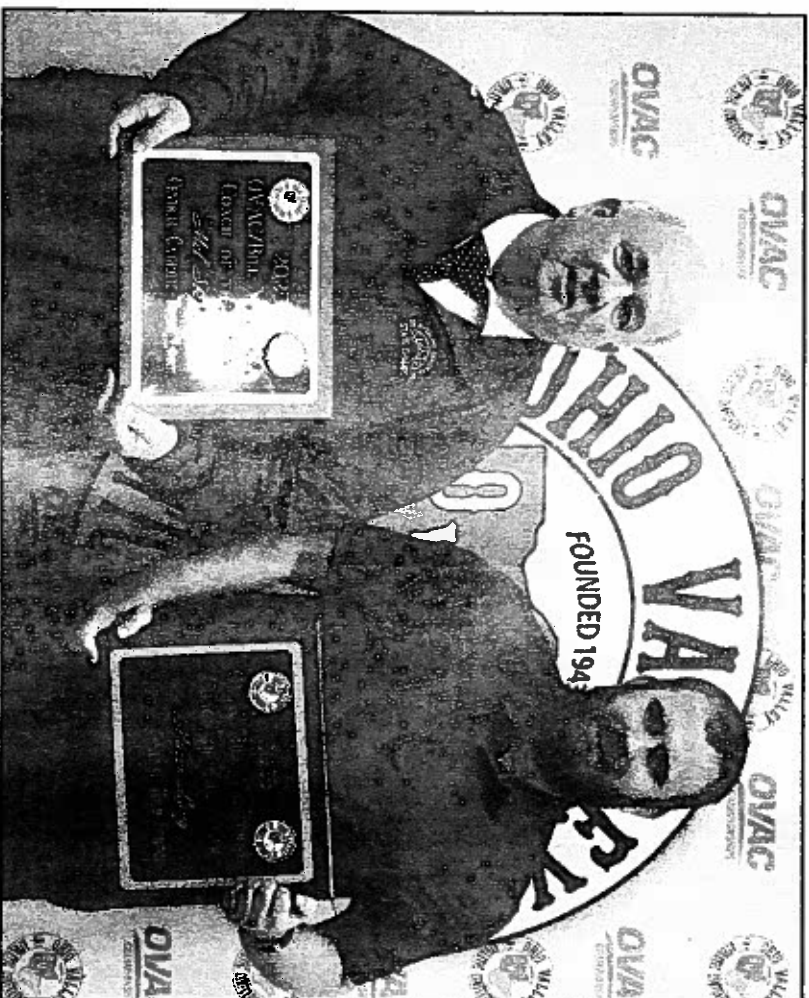


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ball coach Gene Ford and huge award for our pro-trainer was very helpful in the Cameron wrestling coach Jim Potts were honored. In 2007, Steubenville football coach Reno Saccoccia and Oak Glen wrestling coach Larry Shaw were the recipients. Ironically, Stephens shared the award in 2009 with St. John Central girls' track coach Robert "Bubba" Kapral.

"Obviously, this is a three games against a team of the caliber of Monroe Central was very helpful in the Maroon Knights drive to the W.Va. Class 2A state championship. "I think those three games really helped us both get to where we wanted to be," Stephens said. "It's a testament to what kind of competition there is in the OVAC."

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AP Photo

PITTSBURGH PIRATES' Oneil Cruz scores from second on a single by Bryan Reynolds off Cincinnati Reds pitcher Nick Martinez during the sixth inning of a baseball game in Pittsburgh, Tuesday.

Bailey Falter stays hot with 7 strong innings as Pirates top Reds 1-0

PITTSBURGH (AP) – Bailey Falter gave up four hits and had five strikeouts through seven innings and the Pittsburgh Pirates ended a four-game losing streak with a 1-0 win over the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday night.

Falter (3-3) has surrendered one run in 23 2/3 innings over his past four starts, including none in 16 2/3 in his past three.

See **PIRATES**, Page B2



Even if Hendrickson was there to express frustration over contract talks.

"I talked to Trey. It was good to see him, good having him," Taylor said on Tuesday about Hendrickson's appearance and prompt availability with reporters on May 13.

Hendrickson showed up after Taylor texted him that he would be fined if he did not attend next month's mandatory minicamp.

Besides receiving a fine warning, Hendrickson's frustration has increased about what he sees as a lack of communication on progress toward a new contract or being traded since the NFL draft concluded on April 26.

Taylor said he put a lot of time into thinking about when to communicate to Hendrickson what he expected out of his star



AP Photo

CINCINNATI BENGALS head coach Zac Taylor speaks during a news conference after NFL football practice, Tuesday, in Cincinnati.

like anybody, I'm sure there's things he'd like to have back. He's very well thought out in his process and what he's trying to do. If he thinks that's the way to go, then that's the way to go."

Hendrickson's 57 sacks since joining the Bengals in 2021 are third most in the league over the past four seasons. He signed with Cincinnati after four seasons with New Orleans.

The Bengals were 9-8 last season and missed the playoffs for the second straight season. They hired Al Golden as defensive coordinator after finishing 25th in total defense.

some pounds," Harrison said, grinning.

converter in the coming years.

Harrison hasn't committed to the newfound bulk, wondering how it will feel as the Cardinals embark on their offseason workouts.

"I'm very confident in what we have offensively," Harrison said. "From top to bottom, the quarterback, offensive line, skill positions, I think we have everything we need to accomplish our goals."

He's open to gaining more weight — or even potentially losing some — depending on results.

Harrison continues to grow close with Murray, who is entering his seventh season in the league. The receiver said he's spent plenty of time with his quarterback outside the facility, working out together in an effort to make sure their chemistry is unmatched.

"Obviously, football is a physical game," Harrison said. "A lot of contested catch situations, run after catch, things like that. So I want to see how things play out during OTAs, training camp and see where it goes."

"I feel like we should be able to go out there with our eyes closed and complete 100% of our passes," Harrison said. "That's the goal you want to get to with timing."

Harrison had huge expectations coming into his rookie season after being the first non-QB selected with the No. 4 overall pick in last year's draft. In a lot of ways, the Ohio State product delivered with 62 catches for 885 yards and eight touchdowns.

The Cardinals are nearing the end of a multi-year rebuild that began after the 2022 season when former coach Kliff Kingsbury and general manager Steve Keim were fired. Gannon and Ossendorf have methodically built the roster and last year's 8-9 record was a four-win improvement over 2023.

But for all the big moments, there were also some quiet Sunday afternoons. Harrison ranked fifth in yards receiving for a rookie behind Brian Thomas Jr., Malik Nabers, Brock Bowers and Ladd McConkey.

Now there's considerable pressure to make the postseason for the first time since 2021.

"I just had to get adjusted to the game speed, everything moves faster at the next level," Harrison said.

Harrison said that's the metric he'll use when deciding if his second season is a success.

The Cardinals have spent much of the offseason upgrading their defense, adding several new players in free

"It starts with team success, we've got to

Coach

Continued from Page B1

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Pirates

Continued from Page B1

David Bednar pitched the ninth for his fourth save. Bryan Reynolds lined an RBI single into right to put the Pirates ahead in the sixth. Oneil Cruz walked and stole second for the second time in his first three plate appearances.

Elly De La Cruz and forced Austin Hays to pop up to first.

Espinal later started the fourth with a double to left. Falter responded again, retiring the next three batters capped with a strikeout of Spencer Steer.

Key moment

Darvish's ninth inning cinch made sure Cruz's

SPORTS

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Sunday,
May 18, 2025

OVAC Coach of the Year award narrowed to five finalists

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

WHEELING — The 2024-25 OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach of the Year Committee had its work cut out for it this year in trying to determine a list of five finalists. There were 11 names submitted for consideration.

The five finalists were voted upon by committee members

on a point system.

The prestigious honor will be presented by OVAC Executive Director Dirk Decoy at the conclusion of the annual Banquet of Champions on Tuesday, May 20 inside WesBanco Arena. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with dinner at 6:30 and the program to follow.

A brief capsule of the five finalists follows:

MIKE COTTIS, Indian

Creek Baseball. Cottis, who was hired in 2001, led the Redskins to a historic season last spring as they went 22-7 and advanced to the Ohio Division II Final Four before falling to West Branch.

A graduate of the former Winterville High School, Cottis was recently inducted into the Eastern District Hall of Fame.

MASON LANG, Monroe Creek Baseball. In just his second season, Lang and the Seminoles reached the pinnacle when they captured the Ohio Division VI state championship in March with a 42-35 victory over Marion Local inside the University of Dayton Arena.

KEN MAISEL, University High Wrestling. Maisel and the Hawks won the OVAC Ron Mauck Overall and Class 5A titles in January, then captured the W.Va. Class AAA championship shortly after. This was his 30th season at the Morgantown-based school. The Hawks had four individual state champions this past season.

See COACH, Page C2

Jhonattan Vegas stays ahead in PGA Championship

(AP) — Jhonattan Vegas was in front for first time in a major and didn't back down Friday in a PGA Championship filled with drama everywhere but the top of the leaderboard.

Looming large amid an eclectic mix of contenders was Scottie Scheffler, still not in full control of his game but only three shots back going into the weekend. Vegas cruised through the



• Coach

Continued from Page C1

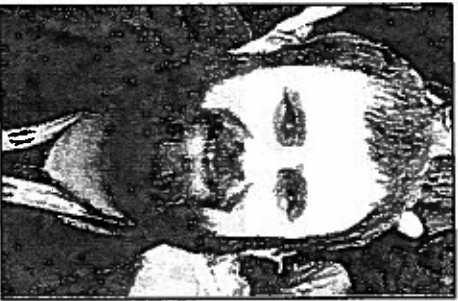
HOLLY PETTIT

Cameron Girls Basketball. The Dragons won their fifth consecutive OVAC Class A championship despite losing four seniors. They also advanced to the W.Va. Class A state tournament for a fourth straight season.

Cameron finished 18-4.

MEL STEPHENS

Wheeling Central Boys Basketball. The Maroon Knights under Stephens direction won the OVAC Class 3A championship before claiming the W.Va. Class AA state



MASON LANG



MIKE COTTIS



KEN MAISEL



HOLLY PETTIT



MEL STEPHENS

came over Ohio Division VI state champion Mon-

roe Central, as well as one of their losses.

• Harrison

Continued from Page C1

In between, Thursday night the Huskies edged out a 6-5 win over rival St. Clairsville, the No. 11 ranked team in Div. V.

"We played them in

a really good game the other night and since then I think we've had some really good at bats, we had some good at bats (Thursday) and again (Friday), so I think we're seeing the ball really well right now."

Valesko said.

After falling behind 2-0 in the top of the first on Friday, the Huskies (17-8) came out swinging in the bottom half and took full advantage of some uncharacteristic mistakes from the

Knights (21-5), plating seven runs.

After tacking on two more an inning later, Kayden Dunkle's fourth inning three-run homer over the wall in left center brought the run rule into play.

Dunkle also hit an RBI single in the big first inning and had a two-out, two-run double in the second inning to finish a triple shy of the cycle with six RBIs on the day.

Colton Rutter had a two-run knock in the big first inning, while Kolton Mizer and Hunter Snyder also had an RBI each.

"They made some mistakes that they typically don't make and credit

start looking around a little bit, knowing who is in the other dugout, but our guys stayed calm and stayed focused.

"I think we're growing and maturing. We have four seniors that have played in a lot of really big games and they have done a great job of bringing the young guys along."

After the Knights struck first, Huskies pitcher Gage Stoneking settled in and put up four straight zeroes, stranding runners in scoring position in the fourth and fifth to seal an early ending. He struck out five and walked three.

"That first inning, I think he struggled a lit-

"Anytime we play coach Valesko's team, you know it's going to be a challenge. They're a good team, we just didn't play very well.

"I told them we're going to walk out of here and put this one behind us, have a really good practice (Saturday) and be ready to go on Wednesday."

UP NEXT

Toronto: Will look to make it 30 straight round victories in row when they host 1 winner of No. 6 seed Buckeye Trail and No. seed Bellaire, who meet Monday, on Wednesday night at the Knights Baseball Complex. Toronto is the No. 2 seed in the Division VI

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Sunday News-Register
MAY 18, 2025

SPORTS

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OVAC Bill Van Horne Coach of the Year Award Narrowed Down To Five Finalists

• Prestigious Honor Will Be Presented During Banquet Of Champions On May 20

By KIM NORTH

Staff Writer

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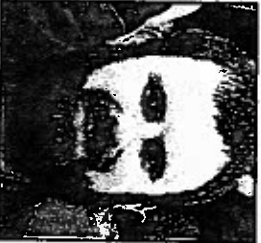
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Please see Coach, Page C2



Linsly Lacrosse Set To Play For State Championship Today

• After OT Win In Semifinals, "Unrelenting" Cadets Will Face Morgantown For Title

By NICK HENTHORN

of the game. "They're unrelenting."