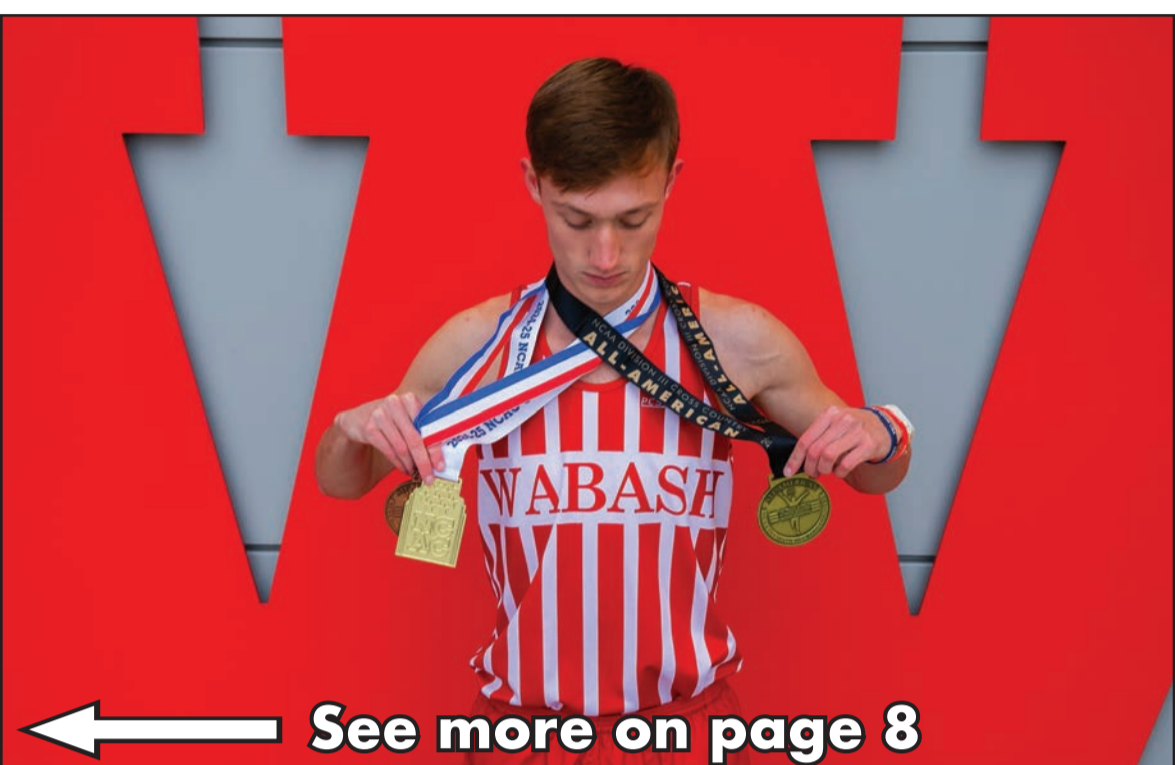


# A good day to be an All-American



See more on page 8

PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

## Wabash prepares for Scarlet Honors Weekend

BEN DOUGLAS '27  
STAFF WRITER

Wabash College will welcome high school seniors from across the country for Scarlet Honors Weekend, an annual event that provides prospective students with an inside look at life on campus. From December 6-7, participants will experience Wabash's academics, student life and culture while exploring whether it's the right fit for their college journey.

**"Scarlet Honors Weekend at Wabash College gives prospective students a real feel for campus life."**

- Interfraternity Council President Lucas Carpenter '26

The weekend is designed to be hands-on and engaging. Attendees will meet professors, join classroom discussions and take part in campus tours led by current students. From academic programs to residential life, the goal is to offer an authentic view of the Wabash experience.

Scarlet Honors Weekend has long been a key part of Wabash's recruitment efforts, giving future students a deeper understanding of what makes the College unique. Traditionally, it has been a busy, hands-on experience.

"This has honestly been a pretty light Scarlet Honors Weekend compared to the ones I've witnessed in the past," said Interfraternity Council (IFC) President Lucas Carpenter '26. "We're making some efforts to try to get people to show up to the swim meet, but we're not organizing table events or other activities like we have in previous years."

This year, Scarlet Honors attendees will also have the chance to witness the intensity of one of Wabash's athletic rivalries. On Saturday, December 9, the Wabash swimming and diving team will face off against DePauw in a home meet at the Class of 1950 Natatorium.

The meet offers a firsthand look at the school's competitive spirit, as the Little Giants take on their historic rivals. Scarlet Honors participants are invited to attend and cheer alongside current students and alumni.

Continued page 2

## News around the world

JACKSON GOODYEAR '27  
STAFF WRITER

**Syria**  
On December 2, 2024, Syrian rebels captured the city of Aleppo in their latest offensive in northwestern Syria. Aleppo, a central urban center of Syria, has not seen combat since 2016. The violence is a reminder that Syria is in the 13th year of its ongoing civil war. The assault was led by the terrorist organization, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, and their leader, Mohammed al-Golani, who have previously been connected to Al-Qaeda. Golani and his troops are among other opposition groups in Syria. Their objective is overthrowing the rule of the autocratic leader, President Bashar Al-Assad. Assad has been the main target of rebel forces since his violent response to peaceful protesters in the 2011 Arab Spring. In the past few days, Golani's rebel forces have successfully defeated Assad's state military forces guarding the city. Golani has seized key assets inside the city, including the airport and military academy. Despite the advance of rebel forces, support from Assad's allies — Russia and Iran — is strong. As rebel forces advance, Russian airstrikes pound the front line. The rebel offensive is yet another example of the rising tension in the Middle East.



COURTESY OF AP

**Syrian opposition fighters ride by Syrian army planes at the Al-Nayrab military airport after taking control of the facility on December 2, 2024, in the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria.**

### Ireland

Coalition talks are underway between the two major Irish center-right parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, negotiating to form a stable administration. After elections on November 29th, Fianna Fail had won 48 seats and Fine Gael won 38 seats among the 174 total seats in Parliament. The left-of-center party, Sinn Fein, won 39 seats. However, the other two parties continually refuse to work with Sinn Fein because of its cooperation with the Irish Republican Army during the three decades of violence in Northern Ireland — often referred to as "The Troubles." Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have the numbers to form a government together, similar to their alliance made after the

election in 2020. Since Fianna Fail won 48 seats, it is likely that its leader, Micheál Martin, is to become the next prime minister. Although both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael remain in the majority for now, they only control 40% of the vote combined. This means that both parties will have to seek support from smaller parties — such as the Social Democrats or the Irish Labour Party — to remain the majority in Parliament. It won't be easy for this newly elected government coalition, as the Irish housing crisis and high living cost are major ongoing issues. The pressure of finding a solution now falls on the shoulders of the soon to be coalition government of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael.



COURTESY OF AP

**Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin is thrown up in celebration after the General Election on November 20, 2024.**

### Georgia

Violent clashes between thousands of protesters and police continue in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi. The protests started on November 28th and have continued until December 3rd. Protests started over the decision by Georgia's majority party, Georgian Dream, to suspend the country's membership negotiations with the European Union until 2028. The Georgian Dream party had retained power in the parliamentary elections in late October. However, many, including the Georgian president Salome Zourabichvili, have accused the election of being rigged by the bordering superpower, Russia. On November 28th, the Georgian parliament voted for a non-binding resolution supporting the election as being illegitimate.



COURTESY OF AP

**Protesters stand in protest as police use a water cannon to block them on December 1, 2024, in Tbilisi, Georgia.**

## Demolition of Sparks Center still in limbo

Approval for critical documentation holds up the teardown



COURTESY OF @WABASHCOLLEGE ON X

**Wabash men gather around a table to eat their first meal at the Grub Hollow dining hall on November 11, 2024.**

JAMES WALLACE '26  
NEWS EDITOR

After months of anticipation from students, faculty and Bon Appetit staff alike, Grub Hollow served its first customer on November 11, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. Abdul Tonmoy '27 had the honor of being the first served customer, and since then, over eight thousand meals have been served. While it took 17 weeks since the delivery of the first module on July 15, the opening of the new dining hall is a big step for the College as it continues to prepare for the demolition of the Sparks Center and the construction of the Community Center.

**"Getting demolition started is our highest priority... But the timeline for the demolition remains uncertain."**

- Wabash President Scott Feller

"One of the important things that really needed to happen was getting the [temporary] dining up and going," said Wabash Chief Financial Officer Kendra Cooks. "[It's opening] was a key component."

With Grub Hollow fully operational, resources and time can now be focused towards other aspects of the extensive process of building the new Community Center. However, while it had been discussed that work would continue to happen on Grub Hollow, namely the construction of a temporary Wally's Pub, the College won't be funding a permanent home for the campus staple.

"I think that [Wally's] is not going to happen," said Cooks. "When we were first looking at it and pricing it out, we thought it would be about \$300,000 to \$350,000 [for the temporary modules], but it's going to be double that. That just does not pencil. I hate to say that, because that just kills me, but we are looking at alternatives."

While the construction of a temporary Wally's is not like-

ly, students living on the west side of campus returned from Thanksgiving to see an early Christmas gift — an open parking expansion off of Union Street. The future demolition and construction on the Sparks Center and subsequently, the Community Center, will displace parking spots — which has already happened to many parking spots along the Mall. Since this would disrupt Wabash's status with city parking requirements, the new lot was constructed to deal with this potential issue.

While these two key elements have been completed, there still remains work to do before the demolition of the Sparks Center can commence. While the lack of action along the Mall may be misconstrued as inaction by the College, the truth is quite the opposite.

"Getting demolition started is our highest priority and my hope is that we will begin without delay once financing is approved," said Wabash President Scott Feller. "But the timeline for the demolition remains uncertain."

This is due to many unknowns relating to the federal processes that need to be completed before physical progress can be made.

"The uncertainty is driven by the approval process for the financing we are seeking through USDA-Rural Development," said Feller. "This is a completely new program for Wabash College, which makes the crystal ball very difficult to read."

In particular, there are two important steps the College must complete before the project can begin.

"We're on two tracks, if you will, for approval," said Cooks. "The project side of things that needs to be approved through USDA-Rural Development, and the financial track, which can happen even later."

The project requirements for demolition are the current hold up — since the College will be funding the demolition itself, the financial requirements won't need to be met until construction of the new Community Center starts.

Continued page 2



COURTESY OF @WABASHCOLLEGE\_SAFETY\_SECURITY ON INSTAGRAM

**The newly constructed parking lot off of Union Street opened before students resumed classes following Thanksgiving on December 2, 2024.**

# Demolition of Sparks

Continued from page 1

Currently, the two main obstacles of demolition starting are the report detailing the plan to preserve the historical impact of the Sparks Center, as well as the approval of an Environmental Report, which also includes the Architectural Feasibility Report.

“The last signer [of the historical preservation agreement] is USDA-Rural Development,” said Cooks. “I’ve signed it along with the Department of Historical Preservation and Architecture in the state. [USDA] doesn’t have concerns about the agreement, it’s just finding a federal preservation officer that will sign it.”

The Environmental Report is currently in its final draft stages, and once approved by the Wabash team, will also be sent to USDA to be reviewed by their national office for approval. Once both the Environmental Report and the agreement for historical preservation are approved by the USDA, demolition

would be able to commence. However, it is hard to say when these documents will be given the green light.

“We are committed to do this project. This has been a project that our community has been saying was needed for 20-plus years.”

- Wabash Chief Financial Officer Kendra Cooks

“Our construction team has said, after approval, it will take a month to mobilize [for demolition],” said Cooks. “The team believes that demolition will take four to six weeks. A few days will be necessary to reclaim any items that need to be physically removed from the structure, and the remaining time will be used to complete the demolition and the removal of material from the site.”

One problem with the uncertainty of when demolition can start is the impact it might have on the

Wabash community, potentially during an academic semester. The demolition of the Sparks Center was originally slated for the summer of 2024, but the discovery of the USDA-Rural Development Grant paused any progress. However, the College is looking to press on with a balance of progress and minimal disruption to campus life if necessary.

“Getting demolition started is our highest priority and my hope is that we will begin without delay once financing is approved, even if classes are in session,” said Feller. “We will shoot for a balance between progress on a new building and disruption to current operations — a balance we have been striking since last spring when we kicked off the electrical infrastructure project.”

“We are committed to do this project,” said Cooks. “This has been a project that our community has been saying was needed for 20-plus years. So we are doing this project.”

# Scarlet Honors Weekend



COURTESY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING  
Professor Walter Novak guides prospective Wabash students with a classroom activity during Scarlet Honors Weekend on December 1, 2023, in the Hays Science Building.

Continued from page 1

“Scarlet Honors Weekend at Wabash College gives prospective students a real feel for campus life,” said Carpenter. “One of the standout events is the Wabash vs. DePauw swim meet on Friday at 7 p.m., offering a great chance to see Wabash’s competitive side and the strong sense of community that comes with it.”

A key feature of Scarlet Honors is the chance to explore Wabash’s active fraternity system. Throughout the weekend, prospective students can attend Greek Life Rush

Events, where they’ll meet fraternity members, tour houses and get a sense of the culture that defines Greek life at Wabash.

“Planning is the most important thing for Scarlet Honors,” said Lambda Chi Alpha Rush Chair Bryce Kinneman ’27. “The fraternity sells itself, but you need to make sure that every brother in the house knows what’s going on so there’s a buy-in culture.”

These events provide an informal setting for potential students to connect with current members and understand what fraternity life is like at

Wabash, while also understanding the greater community that Wabash has to offer.

“[The swim meet] offers a great chance to see Wabash’s competitive side and the strong sense of community that comes with it.”

- Interfraternity Council President Lucas Carpenter ’26



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25  
Wabash has been in an almost-continuous state of construction since the beginning of the electrical infrastructure upgrades that began in spring 2024.



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'Gladiator II' review: Chaos, callbacks and carnage



BEN WALLACE '25  
STAFF WRITER

"Gladiator II" might be an unnecessary sequel, but it somehow manages to entertain. While it's far from flawless and definitely has its share of issues, I can't deny that I had a surprisingly good time watching it. The action sequences are electric, delivering exactly what fans of the original film could hope for — epic, high-stakes combat that keeps you on the edge of your seat. Beyond the thrills, the movie also provides some satisfying callbacks to the first, offering just enough continuity to please longtime fans. It's a film that doesn't quite reinvent the wheel, but it knows how to keep things exciting.

The film opens with a stunning shot, marking the first of many callbacks to the original "Gladiator." It begins with Hanno digging his hands through harvested grain, echoing the iconic moment of Maximus running his hands through wheat as he walks through a field. This visual connection immediately establishes a link to the first film, setting the tone for the rest of the story.

I personally felt that many of the callbacks were well-justified, though there were perhaps a few too many. At times, it seemed like the film was spoon-feeding these moments to the audience. While this might feel a bit heavy-handed for fans of the original, it works well for newcomers who haven't seen the first film, as it helps them connect with the story.

The gladiator arena scenes were pure excitement. The action was amped up from the first film, introducing wild new elements like gladiators fighting baboons, rhinos

and battling in boats with sharks swimming below. These additions brought a fresh dynamic to the fights that we hadn't seen before, making them feel even more intense and unpredictable.

While these elements are slightly historically inaccurate, I've seen complaints about the film's factual liberties. In my opinion, these complaints are misguided, especially for fans of the original "Gladiator," which is itself a completely fictionalized story. The entire film is designed for entertainment, and personally, watching sharks eat fallen gladiators in the Colosseum was a thrilling spectacle.

The ending felt a bit rushed, and the overall pacing of the film was uneven. Certain scenes lingered too long on less critical moments, while more essential plot points were glossed over too quickly, leaving some narrative threads feeling underdeveloped.

The acting performances were solid across the board. However, I felt Paul Mescal was slightly miscast as Hanno. While he delivered a strong overall performance, his speeches lacked the commanding presence needed to inspire or energize, falling short compared to Russell Crowe's iconic delivery in similar moments. Outside of those scenes, though, Mescal was effective and carried much of the film well.

The standout, unsurprisingly, was Denzel Washington. He was incredible, stealing every scene he appeared in. Fred Hechinger and Joseph Quinn also impressed as the twin emperors. Following Joaquin Phoenix's unforgettable portrayal of Commodus in the original was no small task, but they managed to hold their own and deliver compelling performances.

Ridley Scott, the director of both "Gladiator" films, has confirmed that a third movie will complete the trilogy. While the plot details have been revealed, I'll avoid spoilers to keep the surprises intact for those who want to go in fresh.

"Gladiator II" was a solid film, though it didn't quite reach the iconic heights of the original. That said, it proved to be a worthy sequel, bringing back some of the magic and key characters from the first movie. If you didn't catch it over Thanksgiving, don't worry — it will likely still be playing in theaters in a couple of weeks, just in time to unwind after finals.

FINAL VERDICT:  
4/5 WALLYS



12-team College Football Playoff bracketology: Final push

**HAIDEN DIEMER-MCKINNEY '26**  
STAFF WRITER

With the expansion of the College Football Playoff from four to 12 teams, there was large speculation that there'd be less controversy in choosing the programs that'd fight for a championship. However, given the Playoff committee's latest rankings and the chaos that unfolded this past weekend, that's far from the case. We're just two days away from finding out the teams who'll be in the field, and the time to make a final statement to the committee is now.

- The rankings from the College Football Playoff Top 25 reveal show on Tuesday, December 3 are as follows:
1. Oregon (12-0)
  2. Texas (11-1)
  3. Penn State (11-1)
  4. Notre Dame (11-1)
  5. Georgia (10-2)
  6. Ohio State (10-2)
  7. Tennessee (10-2)
  8. SMU (11-1)
  9. Indiana (10-2)
  10. Boise State (11-1)
  11. Alabama (9-3)
  12. Miami (10-2)

There are no surprises in the top five, but Ohio State falling to six is important. Although they suffered their fourth-straight loss to rival Michigan, the Buckeyes ranking projects them as the eighth seed, which would result in them hosting a playoff game. This pushes seventh-ranked Tennessee to the ninth seed and would force them to travel into Columbus in the first round. And as a result of their loss to Syracuse, Miami has fallen from six to 12. We'll discuss the magnitude of the Canes ranking in a second.

Two things to keep your eyes on this weekend

There are two bid stealers that are on the outside looking in: UNLV and Clemson. These teams have a chance to win their conference and secure a spot into the playoff. If UNLV and Clemson win, the interesting thing to watch are their respectable opponents, Boise State and SMU. It's important to remember what College Football Playoff Committee Chair Warde Manuel said two weeks ago that teams who make their conference championship will be put in high regard. However, ranked at 10, the Broncos have a very slim chance at an at-large bid if they get beaten, even after earning their spot in the Mountain West championship and their other loss coming to the top-ranked team in the nation. However, SMU has a more compelling case with their current position at number eight. If they lose to Clemson, it'll be difficult for the committee to justify dropping the Mustangs multi-

ple spots and out of the playoff.

The second thing to keep your eye on is the last team holding out hope: Alabama. The Crimson Tide are currently slated above Miami, Ole Miss and South Carolina, who are ranked 12th, 13th and 14th respectively and are done for the season. Unfortunately for these teams behind Alabama, their luck has seemingly run out.

"Any team that's not playing in its conference championship does not have a datapoint to rearrange where we have those teams ranked right now," said Manuel. "So that is set in terms of how we see going into championship week. There's nothing that's going to change for us to evaluate them differently than what we have now."

In other words, teams behind Alabama have no additional impression to make in order to jump them, which means they're stuck where they are and essentially eliminated.

There's only one thing the Crimson Tide will be watching on Saturday night — for Clemson to lose against SMU, which will eliminate the Tigers from playoff contention, and allow Alabama to claim the final at-large bid. As I mentioned before, if SMU were to lose, it would be difficult to see them fall all the way out of the top-12, as they earned their spot in the ACC championship. However, if the decision for that final spot on Sunday is between a two-loss SMU who made their conference championship and had losses to two top-25 teams versus a three-loss Alabama who didn't made their conference championship and had two losses against teams who finished 6-6, that is certain to enrage the college football world even more than it did last year when the committee chose the Tide over Florida State.

Conference championships lineup



While the playoff is now expanded, one thing is certain — the chaos isn't going anywhere. The unpredictability that defines this sport will continue to thrive, and if Saturday brings more upsets and dramatic finishes, the selection committee will be met with more difficult decisions to make. With so much at stake, some fanbases will rejoice, while others will pray on the downfall of the committee. The 12-team playoff may offer more opportunities, but the road to the championship remains as wild and uncertain as ever.

**Mountain West: 20 UNLV vs 10 Boise St**

A rematch of a late-night classic in October, Boise State controls their own destiny and will rely on their Heisman hopeful running back Ashton Jeanty for victory. The Broncos got the best of UNLV the first time

around, but the Rebels are eager for revenge and their first playoff appearance in program history.

**Big 12: 16 Iowa St vs 15 Arizona St**

After two rough losses, Iowa State found their way back into playoff contention and achieved their first 10-win season ever. On the flip side, Arizona State has been one of the hottest squads in the back half of the season with one of the most underrated athletes in the country in running back Cam Skatetebo. This is sure to be an entertaining matchup in Arlington for an automatic bid to the playoff.

**SEC: 5 Georgia vs 2 Texas**

Georgia survived an 8OT thriller against Georgia Tech last weekend, while Texas renewed their rivalry with Texas A&M and walked out of College Station with a strong,

defensive-led victory. Both teams are in the playoff regardless of outcome, but Texas is eager to avenge their only loss of the season.

**Big 10: 3 Penn State vs 1 Oregon**

The Nittany Lions have continually racked up wins and can now thank Ohio State for granting them a spot in Indianapolis. However, the most consistent unit this entire year has been the Oregon Ducks, the only undefeated team left in FBS. Like the SEC Championship, both teams will be in the playoff no matter what, but a fight for seeding will be essential, especially for Penn State who may have a road playoff game if they were to lose.

**ACC: 17 Clemson vs 8 SMU**

What an unpredictable matchup. At the beginning of the year, no one would have predicted that SMU would walk into the ACC and dominate everyone in their first year. At the same rate, after blowout losses to Georgia and Louisville, it was difficult to be optimistic about Clemson earning their way to the conference championship. But thanks to Miami losing their regular season finale to Syracuse, the Tigers have an opportunity to capture not only an auto bid, but a first-round bye as a three-loss team. However, the Mustangs will hope their top-five scoring offense pulls through to avoid the upset.

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# 2024 MEGA

Crossword by Logan Weilbaker '25

ACROSS

1. Genie's offering  
5. Jets or Sharks  
9. Staffs  
13. \_\_\_\_-metal  
16. Capital on a fiord  
20. Scrooges  
26. Word shouted into a cave  
27. Next-to-last fairy tale word  
28. Ho-hum  
29. Corporate VIP  
30. Way to go  
31. Just say "no"  
32. "\_\_\_\_ to My Lou"  
33. Long skirt  
34. "Not to mention..."  
35. Hit the buffet  
36. Christian Laettner's alma mater  
37. Kind of clock or number  
38. Did a steno's job  
40. StarKist stuff  
42. Two in a row?  
44. Original inhabitant  
46. Editorial slant  
47. Guest beds, in a pinch  
49. Unit of hope or light  
51. Series accompanying a museum display  
53. Short skirt  
54. Kitten's cry  
57. "Can't Help Loving \_\_\_\_ Man"  
60. "\_\_\_\_ the fields we go..."  
61. "Ya \_\_\_\_?"  
62. Jousting's mount  
63. Ashore  
65. Bid adieu  
67. To the core?  
69. Had, as surgery  
71. "Chicago Hope" or "E. R.," e.g.  
72. Welled (up)  
73. Take a whiff of  
74. Wired apparel  
75. Homophone in an Oscar Wilde title  
77. Wks. and wks.  
78. Shocking, as a sudden stop  
79. Certain wedding expenses  
81. Artists' section of Paris  
84. Embroidered guitar accessories  
86. "... because seven \_\_\_\_ nine"  
87. Ballpark antic  
88. Cut the cheese  
89. Comes across  
91. "And Still I \_\_\_\_" (Angelou poem)  
92. Shuttle alternative  
97. To kill a mockingbird, e.g.  
100. Bear with too-hot porridge  
101. What your nose knows  
103. Bachelor \_\_\_\_  
106. Line that breaks the fourth wall  
108. X, in a love letter  
109. Atoll component  
111. Shuffle  
112. Yang's counterpart  
113. Position in an orchestra  
115. Grp. that includes Sweden, as of 2024  
116. Ice Bucket Challenge cause: Abbr.  
117. Au pair  
119. Wrestler's win  
120. Lawn-like  
121. Forwent frugality  
123. Weapon in civil rights struggle  
125. Inducted, as a Mafioso  
126. Film director Lee  
127. Baby shaker  
128. Thrice-repeated subject of a 1962 musical film or a 1987 rock album  
130. Cry at a fireworks show  
131. Raise \_\_\_\_ (cause a ruckus)  
133. Shot from a flask  
135. Barney Miller or Raymond Holt  
136. Poet's "eternally"  
137. Fingerspelling sys.  
140. Montreal street-sign word  
141. Disney character with the surname Pelekai  
142. Ballpark stats  
143. Sn, on the periodic table  
144. "Wheel of Fortune" buy  
146. Turn counter-clockwise, maybe  
148. Catch a bug  
149. Croquet court  
151. Abraham Lincoln, in a Whitman poem  
153. Peace signs  
157. Door posts?  
158. Guitar hero Paul  
159. One might be "of Technology"

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253								254				255				256					257					258				

162. Home-builder's buy  
163. Buckle under pressure  
164. Billy Joel's "\_\_\_\_ It Goes"  
165. T, for Telemachus  
166. With 167-Across, a number from 1-36  
167. [See 166-Across]  
168. Magnetic extreme  
169. "Wicked" or "Cats," e.g.  
170. Harris and Helms  
171. Early responder's comment, often  
173. Property law topic  
175. Symbol of Horus  
176. Back  
178. Antlered Yellowstone beast  
179. Seize  
180. Five Pillars faith  
182. Witty criticism  
183. Truckloads  
185. Vehicle with its own lane  
188. Aggregate \_\_\_\_ (concept in macroeconomics)  
190. Going from A to B, maybe  
194. Body language  
198. Patriotic hymns  
200. Agcy. in charge of Oppenheimer's security clearance hearing  
202. Paradigm  
203. Good, in slang, ironically  
204. Like a noble gas  
205. Ice cream units  
206. Bring British music to the U.S., say  
208. Just plain awful  
211. Scrip info  
212. High society  
213. Gnocchi ingredient  
214. Streamlined  
215. VCR tape successor  
216. Word with long or man  
217. Almost on "E"  
218. Last month: Abbr.  
219. When a.m. meets p.m.  
221. Sport in which "attack" is a position  
223. Baby's "piggy"  
224. "Your table's ready" gadget  
226. Partner of 80-Down  
227. Was a sore loser, say  
228. Like petting-zoo animals  
230. Former Weekend Update anchor  
232. Baker's 13  
236. EEG shapes

239. Birthplace of seven U.S. Presidents  
240. Humanitarian offering  
242. Batman villain  
244. Feature of many a high-end hotel room  
246. When it's cracked, it's broken  
247. Two-piece suit  
248. Pegasus appendage  
249. Tre minus uno  
250. Where the Rhone and the Saone meet  
251. "Budapest" singer George  
252. Pants part with a patch, perhaps  
253. 007 et al.  
254. Loads slooowly  
255. Texting format, briefly  
256. 1/100 of a bolt  
257. Derrière  
258. Texter's button

DOWN

1. Bank of Israel?  
2. "Blech!"  
3. Endorse a fictional pairing  
4. Partners of dreams  
5. Precious stone  
6. Hindu god incarnate  
7. Where it all comes together?  
8. Cheshire Cat's expression  
9. Deg. for a future exec  
10. Bronze, but not silver or gold  
11. Cape Canaveral initials  
12. Like a VRBO rental  
13. Blackjack half  
14. Emulated Pisa's tower  
15. Bottom line figure  
16. Run-of-the-mill  
17. Suitcase stuffers  
18. Fishing spot  
19. Poem titled "To a..."  
20. Rice or rye  
21. Wholesalers' customers  
22. Craft for ETs  
23. It's "the word"  
24. Letter that looks like a pitchfork  
25. Volunteers' org.  
39. Lamb's blood locale, in Exodus  
41. Far from verdant  
43. "Burnt" Crayola color  
45. Grouted material  
46. Action on eBay  
48. U.S. bank, with "the"  
50. Sit before getting drunk, say

52. They're fed next to spaces  
53. "Au revoir, \_\_\_\_ amis"  
54. "Ave \_\_\_\_"  
55. Javelin, e.g.  
56. Pump alternative  
57. Frisbee shape  
58. Palindromic princess  
59. British bonehead  
61. Ancestry.com concern  
62. Swing at a fly  
64. Razing  
66. Cornfield unit  
68. "\_\_\_\_ Good Men"  
69. Not mine, in textspeak  
70. Payment on Park Place  
71. Like a Netflix show  
72. Fade, as hair  
74. Like insincere promises  
76. Aerobics class order  
78. Leader of the Argonauts, in myth  
80. Partner of 226-Across  
81. .Paak's musical partner  
82. Neighbor of Ida.  
83. Nickname on some gold-colored license plates  
85. Kind of mower  
88. Like a hangry baby  
90. "Careless Whisper" instrument  
92. Gives the boot  
93. "Stat!"  
94. Dentist's direction  
96. Rural towers  
97. Alphabetize, maybe  
98. Aer Lingus destination: Abbr.  
99. Carp, carp, carp  
102. Just got (by)  
103. Command that is ironically not Ctrl+P  
104. Path girded with petals  
105. Appliance with a lint trap  
107. Low toll  
109. Religion of only two U.S. presidents  
110. Calculus calculation  
114. Panama or toque  
117. "Neato!"  
118. Skateboarder's kicks, often  
119. Produce a portrait  
120. Cultivate  
122. No longer into  
124. Snake shapes  
129. Part of RBI  
131. Jerseys and Guernseys  
132. Bee and Em, famously  
134. Reset, as a hard drive  
135. At ease  
137. Swimming pool buildup  
138. In good shape  
139. Prepares to ship

141. Dan's rank, in "Forrest Gump"  
144. Cello's smaller cousin  
145. Apple, for Apple  
147. Grads-to-be  
148. Juneau this state!  
150. High-jumping African  
151. Succeed in treating  
152. "Maybe the real puzzles are the friends we made \_\_\_\_ the way"  
154. Exhortation for le roi  
155. Apt anagram of vile  
156. Vie for, as political office  
160. Delay a kick, in football lingo  
161. Woody or Buzz  
165. Disney World shuttles  
166. "Aladdin" prince  
168. ["You have a message"]  
169. Æd  
172. Express lane count  
174. Zip  
176. Final word in a French film  
177. Trig fig.  
181. Unhung paintings  
182. About 97.5% of a modern penny  
184. Tatooine has two of them  
185. Rooted (in)  
186. "Enough already!"  
187. Stone-faced  
188. Income-tax deduction  
189. Cheapening  
191. Gossip, with "the"  
192. Congenially  
193. Enrolled in, as a class  
194. Explorer's need  
195. \_\_\_\_ Madrid (soccer club)  
196. "Cogito \_\_\_\_ sum"  
197. What worrywarts do  
199. Spelled-out word in a Chappell Roan song  
201. Library listings  
203. Bloom-to-be  
206. + or - particle  
207. Mooring place  
209. Wedding words



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The purpose of *The Bachelor* is to serve the school audience, including but not limited to administrators, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, community members and most importantly, the students. Because this is a school paper, the content and character within will cater to the student body’s interests, ideas, and issues. Further, this publication will serve as a medium and forum for student opinions and ideas.

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# The bittersweet reality of senior year



Carl Suba ’25  
Reply to this opinion at  
cjsuba25@wabash.edu

Senior year of college is a paradox of emotions: a cocktail of excitement, nostalgia and nervous anticipation. It’s the final chapter of an era that has shaped who you are, challenged your limits, and taught you resilience. At the same time, it’s the first page of a new story brimming with possibility. Senior year is a time of reflection and celebration, where every moment feels significant, every goodbye feels too soon, and every future plan holds a glimmer of hope.

On one hand, senior year is liberating. You’ve spent years navigating the challenges of academics, friendships and personal growth, and you’ve come out stronger. Classes that once seemed impossible now feel manageable (or at least you survived it) and you’ve likely found your place on campus. You know the best places to eat in town, which professors inspire you most and the spots on campus where you can take a breath when studying for that organic chemistry test feels overwhelming. There’s a quiet confidence that comes with being a senior. You’ve overcome setbacks, celebrated successes and grown into someone your freshman self could only dream of becoming.

This is the year to revel in traditions, cherish milestones, and soak in the unique energy of campus life. It’s the year where every laugh with friends, every late-night adventure and every shared memory feels richer because you know they’re fleeting. Yet, as the

cap and gown draw nearer, the questions start coming: What’s next? Are you going to grad school? Do you have a job lined up? Where will you live? These questions, often well-meaning, can feel overwhelming, especially if your plans are still taking shape. The future may seem like an empty canvas with too many colors to choose from, and that uncertainty can be daunting.

But here’s the hopeful truth: not having all the answers is okay. It’s normal. Senior year is about embracing the unknown as an opportunity rather than a burden. For every uncertainty, there’s potential. If you don’t know your next step, you have the freedom to explore. If you’ve decided on a path, you can walk it with the confidence that this college has prepared you for the twists and turns ahead.

This is also a year of profound gratitude. College friendships are uniquely intense — formed through late-night study sessions, spontaneous road trips and shared victories. These connections are not bound by geography or schedules; they’re anchored by the experiences that shaped you together. As you prepare for the next chapter, take comfort in knowing these relationships don’t have to end — they will evolve and grow with you. Senior year is not just a goodbye; it’s a celebration of how far you’ve come and how much further you will go. It’s a reminder that the uncertainty of the future is what makes it exciting. As one chapter closes, another begins, filled with possibilities you can’t yet imagine.

So seniors, embrace the “lasts,” but also look forward to the “firsts.” Take the pictures, make the memories and march through the arch (on graduation day, of course) and into the future with hope in your heart. You’ve worked hard to get here, and the best is still to come.

# HI-FIVES

FIVE THINGS WORTHY  
OF A HI-FIVE THIS WEEK

## THAT’S A WRAP

*Hi-Five to Spotify Wrapped and Apple Music Rewind for giving us some reason to live during dead week. To our Amazon Music brothers, we’re thinking of you.*

## SKIBIDI BRITISH RIZZ

*Hi-Five to Oxford University Press for making “Brain Rot” their word of the year. Seeing as it’s really two words, the Rot seems to consume us all.*

## FOOL ME ONCE

*Lo-Five to Poker Pro Cory Zeidman for defrauding people out of millions by claiming to have inside info on sports games. To be fair, sports betters aren’t exactly known for their restraint.*

## BETTERS DAYS AHEAD

*Lo-Five to Ohio State players for fighting Michigan players who put their flag at center-field. If only they had started fighting four quarters sooner, this whole thing could’ve been avoided.*

## “FIRE RUSTY”

*Hi-Five to Wabash students for showing out at the Wabash–D\*\*\*\*\* basketball game. Leave it to Depauw to have a home-field disadvantage.*

# Wally’s wall: Comprehensive exams

The Bachelor asked Wabash College faculty and staff to impart wisdom on our senior class. Here’s what they said:



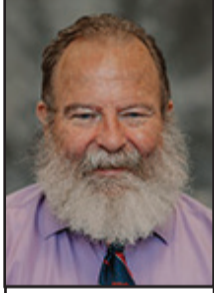
Lorraine McCrary  
  
Associate Professor of Political Science

Set up a time to meet with the faculty on your board beforehand!



Pam Sacco  
  
A.A.C. Division III

Comps has a level of unnecessary pressure. You don’t want to take it lightly, but it’s nothing worth locking yourself away all winter.



Rick Warner  
  
Associate Professor of History

It’s not about knowing the exact answers, it’s about knowing how to speak intelligently. I’ve never heard one faculty member complain about Oral Comps. We like it. The pain we endured as graduate students encourages us to inflict the same pain on you all.

*Editor’s note: Rick Warner will not inflict physical harm on any students.*



Bobby Horton  
  
Professor of Psychology

Try to use the word aluminum as many times as you can during the fifteen minutes. Remember that we are on your side. We’re interested in what you have to say.



Gaylon Ross  
  
Associate Professor of Physics

If asked in oral comps what science distribution classes you took, do not say “Astrology from Prof. Ross.” I expect any faculty member hearing this to fail the student on the spot, or at least require a detailed horoscope to be provided for each examiner.

*Editor’s note: Dr. Ross is such a Libra.*



Julian Whitney  
  
BKT Assistant Professor of English

The most important thing any group of faculty looks for is an understanding of your intellectual transformation over four-years. This means understanding your major and the critical concerns of the field. We also look for connections between student’s majors and minors. From an at-large perspective, this also means understanding your civic responsibilities as a graduating student. At a basic level, we’re looking for competency and nuance. Take this as an opportunity to engage with faculty as co-intellectuals.



Laura Wysocki  
  
Professor of Chemistry

Don’t forget, your professors want you to succeed! Show us what you have learned and how you have grown in your time at Wabash. In oral comps, you can influence the direction of the conversation. Bring up topics that help you shine and try to avoid the dark caves you haven’t explored in a long time. Don’t be surprised if you’re asked to sketch out an idea on a chalkboard or piece of paper. Pictures communicate your understanding well!

**The Bachelor wishes all Wabash students a happy holidays!**

**Good Luck to all seniors in January!**

**The Bachelor will return on January 24th.**

## Beyond 'bash



**Jacob Weber**  
Reply to this opinion at  
jtweber25@wabash.edu

Especially at the end of the semester, it's easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of assignments, exams and campus events. These days, Wabash can feel like a bubble: a self-contained world where everything is measured in deadlines and exams. But amid the pressure and the thrill of student life, it's important to remember that what happens these next few days is only a short chapter in a much larger story. What often gets overlooked in the rush to finish papers and cram for exams is the importance of preparing for the world beyond campus. Too many students, myself included, sometimes forget that after graduation, our lives will continue. The memories we create now will shape who we become and how we navigate the future. But those memories are heavily influenced by the attitude we have as students when we make them.

It's easy to let your time in school slip by without truly savoring it. Amid studying for exams and balancing internships or grad school and job applications, it's tempting to think of each day as merely a hurdle to overcome. But what about the friendships you make, the small moments of joy that get drowned out by to-do lists? These are the moments that will stand out years from now, when you look back at these fleeting years.

So, as we move through our time at Wabash, don't just think about final exams, your GPA, comps or what it says on your degree. Don't overwhelm yourself because of one bad grade. In the bigger picture, these moments

can teach us one of the most valuable lessons: we will not always succeed. Learning to deal with failure in a healthy way that makes us grow as men is better than not failing at all.

My message can be boiled down to this: be cognizant that all your successes and failures today may be mere footnotes in your story of tomorrow. Whether you get distinction or need to retake comps, win or lose an election or have a successful season of athletics, don't focus on the specific instances of success or failure. Instead, focus on the themes that carry through them, and learn from each experience.

While it is normally hard to see beyond the finals week pressure, I'd encourage everyone to look at their current struggles through the lens of their future achievements. Wabash sets up us students to do great things in our future, and makes it easy for us to find a successful life on our own terms. No matter how you define success on an individual level, whether it be a prosperous career, building a family or supporting causes that you care for, we can make it happen once we leave Wabash.

When we cross the graduation stage, the world will no longer be defined by syllabi or semester schedules leadership positions. We'll have the opportunity to define our own futures, and embark on a journey where the real learning begins. By focusing on the experiences that go beyond just the classroom, we'll have a treasure trove of memories and skills to draw upon when the time comes to take that next step. The connections and insights we make now will continue to resonate throughout our lives, enriching our futures and helping us navigate whatever challenges come our way.

Think about the memories we're building, the horizons we're expanding, and the life we're creating for ourselves after this chapter closes. This time may pass quickly, but the experiences and lessons we take with



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# SPORTS

## Football falls 10–13 in ForeverLawn Bowl

**ETHAN COOK '28**  
STAFF WRITER

In the inaugural ForeverLawn Bowl, the Little Giants were defeated in heartbreaking fashion. On Saturday, November 23, Wabash would lose by a final score of 13-10 to the Hanover Panthers on a game-winning field goal.

The game took place in Canton, Ohio at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium as part of the Opendorse Bowl Series. The Little Giants earned the distinction of playing in this inaugural game by placing second in the North Coast Athletic Conference.

The game was a defensive masterclass from both teams, as neither offense was able to build momentum or move the ball consistently. It was a rare rough day for quarterback Brand Campbell '27. Campbell threw for 189 yards and zero touchdowns with one interception. He also took three sacks in the game. Wide receiver Tim Miller '27 was the Little Giants leading pass catcher with four receptions for 86 yards, including a 51-yard reception to close out the third quarter.

"I feel like our weapons could have been used more effectively," said Cole Dickerson '28. "We tried to rotate our players out more and I feel like it threw our rhythm off a little bit."

It was not a good day on the ground for the Little Giants either. Running back Xavier Tyler '26 was only able to gain 74 rushing yards on 4.1 yards per carry. Dickerson was able to add on 43 yards and a touchdown on just eight rush attempts.

The Scarlet and White defensive effort led the way in this game. They held Hanover to just 182 yards through the air and 155 total on the ground.

"Even though there was an option for seniors, everyone



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25  
**Cameron Ford '25 and Gavin Ruppert '26 embrace at the conclusion of the 130th Monon Bell Classic on Saturday, November 16, 2024, at Blackstock Stadium.**

on the defense decided to play one more time together," said Broderick Frey '26. "That sense of unity and commitment to finish strong really played a big role in how we executed."

Frey intercepted Panthers quarterback Eian Roudebush on the opening drive of the game. Frey and Jerry McBee '26 shared a sack and Jordan Cree '27 got one as well.

"I knew they had a tendency to run screen passes, so I was focused on their offensive line and quarterback," said Frey. "I saw the ball

come out and I got my hands up just in time to tip it, I tracked it and made the interception. It felt great to make a play for the team."

This was a necessary bounce-back performance by a defense that struggled in their previous game. The Panthers entered this game sporting the second highest scoring offense in the Heartland Conference, and the Little Giants held them to their third lowest scoring performance of the season and their lowest since Week Two.

"The main difference for us coming into the game was mini-

## NCAC ALL - CONFERENCE HONOREES

### 1ST

CONNOR THOMPSON '25 - WR  
QUINN SHOLAR '26 - OL  
MIKE HOLSCLAW '26 - DB

### 2ND

SAM RINGER '26 - OLB  
GAVIN RUPPERT '26 - ILB  
JORDAN CREE '27 - OL  
AVERY EPSTEIN '25 - CB  
BRAND CAMPBELL '27 - QB  
XAVIER TYLER '26 - RB  
KANON KELLY '25 - C  
CAMERON FORD '25 - OL

### 3RD

TJ ALEXANDER '26 - WR  
ENRIQUE RUIZ '25 - OL  
JERRY MCBEE '26 - OL  
BRODY RUCKER '26 - K

GRAPHIC BY WILL DUNCAN '27



# 74 – 48



## Rob Sorensen '28 steals the show in rivalry game on DePauw's home court

ETHAN WALLACE '25  
SPORTS EDITOR

In front of a small, equally divided crowd, Wabash basketball handed the Tigers their worst loss to the Little Giants since 1981. While most Wabash students were busy getting through their dead-week blues on Wednesday, December 4, the Little Giants and a handful of fans traveled to Greencastle for a North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) showdown.

Both teams entered the game with an record of 2-4 (1-0 NCAC), with Wabash securing their first home win over Hiram on November 30.

After a slow start for both teams, the Scarlet & White went on a blazing run, dropping 43 points in the first half – all coming off 6-12 shooting from deep. Meanwhile the Tigers struggled to put together consecutive scoring possessions and finished the half with only 21 points.

Things didn't get easier for DePauw from there, as Wabash kept racking up points on the scoreboard until the final buzzer. When the dust settled, the Little Giants were on top with a commanding 74-48 final score. The victory extended Wabash basketball's winning streak to five-straight games and brought the team to 7-1 in the last eight games against their rival.

Shooting 50.9 percent – and 48 percent from beyond the arc – Wabash left DePauw's defense in shambles, hitting spectacular shots left and right.

The team was led by one of the great performances the rivalry has ever seen, and it came from freshman Rob Sorensen '28. Sorensen lit the court on fire by scoring 21 points on 75 percent shooting from the field.

"I was just dialed in from the start," said Sorensen. "As a group, collectively, we were all dialed in. Guys like Josh [Whack '26], Randy [Kelly '26] and Vinny [Buccilla '25],



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

**Rob Sorensen '28 scores a three point jumper with a DePauw defender in his face during Wabash's game against DePauw on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at the Neal Fieldhouse.**

they all helped me stay locked in. And I think that's what contributed to my shots just falling."

"It's hard when you're a freshman to get settled in," said

Head Basketball Coach Kyle Brumett. "But tonight, he found his groove... Rob really gave us an unbelievable win."

His performance was a major

turnaround from a rough stretch of shooting that the freshman was coming off of. In the four previous games, he struggled to hit five out of 21 shot attempts.

"When you're missing almost every shot you take, and then the coaches are still barking at you, 'Just shoot it,' you still [keep] your confidence," said Sorensen. "And it helped out tonight."

Another standout performance from Vinny Buccilla '25 marked what is most likely his last time playing on the road against DePauw. With 15 points, Buccilla was perfect from the field (6-6), from deep (1-1) and from the free throw line (2-2).

"Obviously, when we come to DePauw our main goal is to get the win," said Buccilla. "I've lost here once, but this time we've won. It's definitely a good send off in this place. And last time we played DePauw, we lost. So we had to come get revenge for the school. And I know the whole team is loving it."

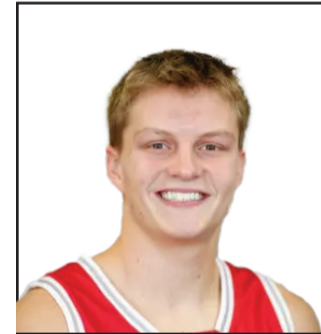
One of the few areas of struggle for Wabash came in rebounding, as they lost the battle for the glass, giving up 38 rebounds, 15 of those being offensive. But some of that disparity is due to the fact that DePauw simply had more interior misses to go after.

DePauw was led in scoring by Sam Jacobs, who had 18 points with eight of those coming from the charity stripe. The Tigers combined for a 28.6 field goal percentage, hitting 16 of their 56 attempts and going 13-23 from the free throw line.

Defensively, Wabash had a tyrannical presence around the arc, keeping their rivals to 3-16 from deep.

"That's what this team has to be," said Brumett. "We have Josh Whack and Noah Hupmann '25 who should be two of the best defenders in the league [NCAC]. We played more zone tonight than I probably ever played in my career."

The victory could be the boost the team needs to get over their early struggles. With a crucial win in hand, the Little Giants will face Oberlin on Saturday, December 7, as they try to keep their perfect NCAC record intact.



### Rob Sorensen '28

**21 points**  
**8 - 12 FG**  
**5 - 7 3PT**

### Vinny Buccilla '25

**15 points**  
**6 - 6 FG**  
**2 STL**



## Dead heat expected in upcoming dual against DePauw

TY MURPHY '27  
STAFF WRITER

Coming off of Thanksgiving break, students only have a few things on their mind: dead week, finals and a well-deserved winter break. But the Wabash swimming & diving team has one more thing on their plate before they can ease off into winter break — a classic dual meet Friday, December 6, against rival DePauw. And to add even more excitement, it will be hosted at home in the Class of 1950 Natatorium.

"We're excited about welcoming them over here," said Wabash Swimming & Diving Head Coach William Bernhardt. "The last two years, it's come down to the final relay. Two years ago, we won by two points. Last year, they won by two points. Anytime you can have a whole meet come down to a single event as the last event of the evening, it makes for a super exciting meet, because there's a lot of back and forth. We have strengths, they have strengths, but our weaknesses aren't the same. It should be a battle."

Last year, the team came up just short in a tight matchup, and, for underclassmen and upperclassmen alike, it left a bad taste in their mouths that they do not want to have again.

"They won by two last year, and I've only lost to them in that dual meet, and it's one of the worst feelings ever," said sophomore swimmer Quinn Sweeney '27. "So just go into it and focus on what we have in front of us. Because any rivalry in any sport is always



PHOTO BY ELIJAH GREENE '25

**Quinn Sweeney '27 prepares for his event in the double-dual meet against Albion College and Centre College on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at the Class of 1954 Natatorium.**

50/50. We just saw that with all these football games last weekend, and I think the same thing is going to hold true. For this meet, whoever wants it more is going to win the meet, and, as a team, we definitely want it more than they do."

This sentiment is felt throughout the team, but especially on the underclassmen that have never experienced this kind of rivalry. Standout freshman and school record holder Ryan West '28 will be looking to continue his success in the pool this Friday.

"My goal is to just put my hand on the wall first and score points for the team so we can beat these guys," said West.

There are plenty of others to

look out for as well, including Captains Connor Craig '25 and Ethan Johns '25, who will make a strong presence in the starts.

"The coaches, team and I have been preparing mentally, because this is going to be a battle," said Johns. "We beat them at our invite meet, but dual meets have a different format on how they're scored. We're not expecting anything to be given or guaranteed, we know that we're going to have to take care of business, and I think that's the mentality of the team right now. My goal at dual meets, no matter who the competition is, is to win every event that I'm in, because it always puts my team in the best position."

This will also be a very special meet for diver Keane Albright '25 who will be graduating at the conclusion of the fall semester. That means this Friday will be his last meet competing for Wabash in the pool.

"I would like to ask everyone to give their support to Keane Albright. He's our senior diver and he is graduating in December," said Bernhardt. "This will be his very last competition of his collegiate career. Guys could come out to support Keane in that endeavor. He will be diving for the last time for the Wabash men, and we're pretty excited to have him go out at a rivalry like this."

Of course, hosting a rivalry

meet at home or any meet for that matter brings something a little extra. And that is the inclusion of the fans.

"I want to see people getting wild, getting into the meet, getting excited," said Johns. "We'll bring a lot of energy on deck, so we need the fans to match, or even bring more energy up in the stands. It will make all the difference. DePauw, at our mid-season meet, was trying to emulate our energy, and I think it would be fun to drown them out with our crowd."

With Scarlet Honors also taking place the same day, the swimmers hope they can show recruits just what Wabash is all about. Not only with a win against the School Down South, but also support from the fans.

"We have an opportunity to show prospective students the environment and atmosphere we have on campus," said Johns. "If they see that we can bring the energy for a DIII swim meet, then it's going to be a huge selling point for them coming to Wabash."

With strong momentum and a historic rivalry, the Wabash swim & dive team will look to go into winter break training with a boost of confidence off a dual meet win. It is promised to be a tight showdown filled with high energy for the fans and recruits alike.

# A good day to be an All-American

Brayden Curnutt '25 finishes 18th in the NCAA Division III National Championship



**“When it all comes down to it — with school records that he could break and the amount of conference titles he’s won — Brayden might be able to walk away from this year as the finest runner ever to come to Wabash.”**

-Head Cross Country Coach Tyler McCreary

**ETHAN WALLACE '25**  
SPORTS EDITOR



Brayden Curnutt '25 finished one of the greatest Novembers in Wabash cross country history by earning All-American honors. At the 2024 NCAA Division III National Championships, the senior from Kokomo, Indiana, proved he was amongst the best cross country runners in the nation. The meet was held on Saturday, November 23 at the LaVern Gibson Cross Country Course in Terre Haute, Indiana. Three weeks after he began the month of November by winning the individual North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) Championship, which came with the title

of 2024 NCAC Men's Cross Country Runner of the Year, and two weeks after a first-place finish at the 2024 Division III Great Lakes Regional, Curnutt was lined up for the biggest meet of his life. For Curnutt, the goal was simple, even if it wasn't easy. He wanted to be an All-American. "I don't think I expected to finish as 18th-best runner in the country — definitely not in August," said Curnutt. "As the season progressed, once we hit the pre-nationals meet in October, it really started to click — I could definitely go get it done." More than a thousand fans were gathered around the coils of the eight-kilometer course,

creating an environment unlike any other in DIII cross country. "That atmosphere was crazy," said Curnutt. "That's something that I've never witnessed. It was completely different from what I've experienced." Despite his incredible streak heading into the meet, Curnutt was stepping into the most competitive field of runners he had ever faced. "I was pretty nervous — probably the most nervous I've been for a race in my time here," said Curnutt. "But the race started out like I expected it to — kind of hot. And keeping my composure throughout the race, I had a mentality of, 'I'll have an oppor-


tunity to get that All-American title.'" After the opening minutes of the race, Curnutt found himself outside of the top-40 mark, the cutoff for earning All-American honors. "Brayden was in 51st place 1,000 meters in, and running incredibly fast," said Head Cross Country Coach Tyler McCreary. "A lot of really good runners, they're not used to having hundreds of guys that are about as good as they are all jammed together in a pack, and they aren't used to being in 50th place right away. A lot of guys, they'll panic and fade at the national championship. So for Brayden to exe-

cute in the way he did in his first one — it was incredibly impressive. But it wasn't surprising. He just raced how he would have raced all year." Curnutt worked his way forward through the pack, until — with less than 1,000 meters left — he was in the top-20. With a final time of 24:30.1, Curnutt finished in 18th place. He secured his place as an All-American and finished one of the most dominant stretches in the history of Wabash cross country. Curnutt is now the 19th All-American the Red Pack has produced and just the fourth since the year 2000. "Brayden Curnutt is tough, coachable and an overall great guy," said Head Track & Field Coach Clyde Morgan, who coaches Curnutt during track season. "I think what makes him truly special is he's figured out how to use whatever type of adversity he is going through to push him to greatness." Entering the season, it was unclear what the year would look like for Curnutt or how far he could go. After battling injuries throughout his first three seasons, Curnutt had never reached the national meet, but following an intense summer of preparation, Curnutt and McCreary were confident that a special year was in the making. "It's definitely really special, sticking with it, which, in my mind, is hard to do when I kept having these little nagging injuries," said Curnutt. "But the confidence and faith that Coach had in me never really wavered." The rest is history, now that Curnutt has finished his cross country career with a defining achievement. Alongside his performances on the course, Curnutt has been an important leader for the younger runners during his senior season. "Brayden has a quiet strength to him," said McCreary. "He brings this intensity to practice and to meets that not many people match. It's important for us to have that edge." While Curnutt has finished his cross country career, Wabash will still see him compete during the track season, where he has found incredible success, including multiple all-conference finishes, that he hopes to carry forward through the spring. "[I want to compete] in track the same way I finished cross country, just putting myself in a position to make it to the national meet," said Curnutt. "I now know that I'm one of the best in the country, and I think that's something that Coach McCreary and I can definitely build on." Wabash fans can look forward to seeing more of Brayden Curnutt, NCAC Champion, Great Lakes Regional Champion and All-American. "When it all comes down to it — with school records that he could break and the amount of conference titles he's won — Brayden might be able to walk away from this year as the finest runner ever to come to Wabash," said McCreary.



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