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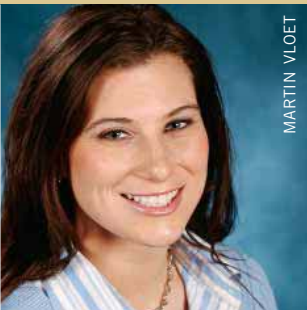
All in a Day's Work for Student-athletes



David Anving
BBA '05

Being a student in the Ross School of Business requires vision, focus, perseverance, balance, self-discipline, hard work, surmounting obstacles and working with diverse groups of people. So does being an athlete wearing the colors of the Maize and Blue.

Either role is supremely demanding, so imagine filling both. Yet the Ross students who don't have to imagine that—because they're doing it—are finding a strong correlation between what it takes to succeed in their double lives



MARTIN VLOET

Jourdan Lawlor
BBA '06



LINDA LUTZ

and the skills they'll need for the careers they envision.

Ten Ross students, in both the BBA and MBA programs, compete in nine different sports: two in tennis, and one each in basketball, baseball, water polo, wrestling, ice hockey, track and field, rowing and soccer. Some are stars, others play rarely. Some are nearing their degrees. Others are just starting out. Some already have had considerable business experience. Others haven't. The common denominator for them is how well the qualities that spell success in the athletic arena travel to the business world and, often, vice versa.

"I really don't have many gaps in my schedule," says **Jourdan Lawlor**, BBA '06, of Dexter, Michigan, a member of the women's rowing team. "People in my classes complain about being up at 8:30 and I say, oh, you don't even know. Today I started at 5:30 and I have a midnight deadline for a business statistics group project. I'll probably be up until then finishing it. I only had an hour-and-a-half gap my whole day."

The time athletes spend on the road exacerbates the difficulties. "It's real easy to say I'll study on the bus," says soccer player **Jeff Mirmelstein**, BBA '05, of Indianapolis. "But with movies constantly playing and people socializing and stuff, it's not always the best environment."

And proper management includes balance, according to **Megan Hausmann**, BBA '06, of San Diego, who's in her third year on the water polo team. "You can't wear yourself out to the point that you'll

be worthless the next day in class and at practice," she says. "Sometimes it's better to put yourself to sleep than get another two hours of reading in."

The bottom line, according to Lawlor: "You just try to squeeze everything in as much as possible while still trying to get six hours of sleep every night."

Even "down time," much less recreational activity, has to be scheduled, and Ross athletes have found that it's vital to do so. Says **David Anving**, BBA '05, of Tvaaker, Sweden, "You have kind of a tank with energy, and when it's empty you have to do something else besides playing tennis or studying."

"Sometimes you just don't have enough time for everything," says hockey player **Reilly Olson**, BBA '05, of Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada. "I've been in a position where both my hockey and my schooling have suffered. It's very tough to balance them both. I've become very good at managing my time, but it defi-

Megan Hausmann, BBA '06



nitely wasn't an overnight process."

Those small compromises seem to be worth it in the big picture. "I'm very glad I played soccer while I was in school," says Mirmelstein. "My academics might be a little bit lower than they would have been otherwise, but I think what I've learned outside the classroom is at least as valuable as those couple of tenths of a GPA."

Indeed, the recruiters who ranked Ross tops in the country in last fall's *Wall Street Journal*/Harris Interactive survey said one of its students' most attractive qualities is their well-roundedness.

Mirmelstein saw that for himself. "Even if it was nothing more than, 'oh, wow, you play soccer, that's impressive,' that was almost always the first thing recruiters noticed," he says. Given that student-athletes have to be as efficient in job-seeking as they are with the rest of their schedules, such quick, favorable impressions are even more valuable.

The ability to work within a team framework was widely cited by Ross athletes as a significant crossover skill between athletics and the school. "The leadership you learn from being on your team is just unparalleled on the collegiate level," says Lawlor. "You learn to work with many types of people; I've had teammates from Canada, Brazil, Germany and Norway, and working with people from different cultures is something you need in the business world."

With the school's emphasis on team projects, there were times when Lawlor almost felt like a missionary. "By the time an athlete makes it to a collegiate varsity team, everybody has a really great sense of that self-sacrificing team mode, but most of the people in the business school are so Type A," she says. "They're not used to working in teams, and that imposes a whole bunch of new challenges for someone who's been immersed in the team setting for almost eight years."

Some see a kind of cross-fertilization, with the learning curve flowing in the other direction. "Obviously, in group settings, there are always people who take charge and people who are followers," says Hausmann, "and I think athletes are very much leaders. But I think in the same way that athletics helps you



Jeff Mirmelstein, BBA '05

in business school, business school also forces you to be a leader and take charge in group settings, and I think that can transfer over back into your athletics."

Mirmelstein credits the Michigan men's soccer team's rapid rise (it finished the 2004 season, only its fifth as a varsity sport, ranked seventh in the country) to a ground-floor emphasis on teamwork by Coach Steve Burns. "The coach didn't only recruit the athletes, but he also recruited people who would work well together and work for each other," says Mirmelstein. "I think he did a really good job recruiting a team as opposed to a group of individuals, and that in the long run is what made us very successful."

As diverse as their backgrounds, sports and aspirations are, success is the common denominator for Ross student-athletes, lending credence to the adage that "if you want something done well, ask a busy person to do it."

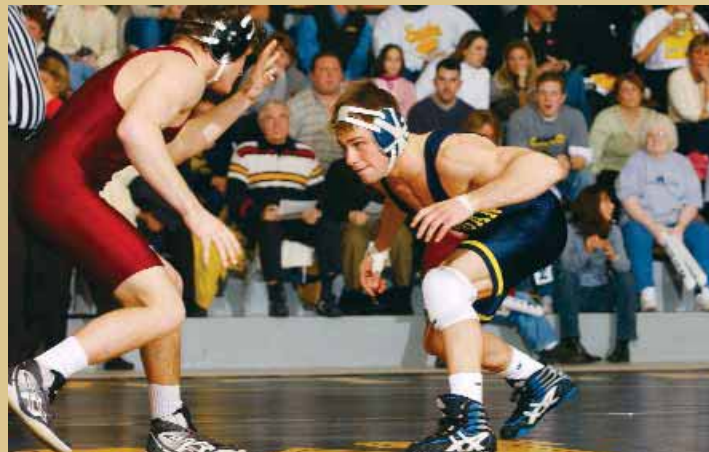
Mirmelstein is a three-time Academic All-Big Ten Conference honoree. Lawlor has been named a Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association National Scholar-Athlete in recognition of her high GPA and rowing in the team's first-string boat for 80 percent of the season. Anving earned Academic All-Big Ten Conference

honors for the 2003-04 season. Wrestler **Ryan Bertin**, BBA '05, of Broadview Heights, Ohio, has twice been an NCAA All-American and won the national championship in his weight in 2003. **Ali Husain**, BBA '06, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, who pitches for the Wolverine baseball team, earned the Steve Boros Award as its top student-athlete in 2004. Distance runner **Lindsey Gallo**, BBA '04 and MAcc '05, of Howell, New Jersey, is a two-time NCAA Indoor All-American and has been named to the Academic All-Big Ten Conference team three years in a row.

As far as leadership is concerned, it's especially telling that Bertin captains his team and Anving and Gallo are co-captains of theirs. And in the hopes of literally wedding their skill sets, Hausmann envisions representing professional athletes, and Husain expects to represent himself if he's drafted by a major league team, which is not out of the question.

"Be my own agent? Absolutely," says Husain. "I want to save that 5 percent for myself. I'm taking a law class right now; hopefully that will help me out."

Hausmann is also contemplating law classes. "It's always been my dream to be a kind of a 'Jerry McGuire' sports agent," she says. "I want to be in the sports business, you know?"



Ryan Bertin, BBA '05

The demands of their regimens notwithstanding, all Ross student-athletes seem to be doing quite well, thank you. Maybe it's because they know no other way. "I've never been in a situation where I didn't have classes and practice every day," says Gallo. "I don't know how else to be a student than to be a student-athlete." **M**

Jeff Mortimer

