Marty Paulsen

Marty Paulsen is a baseball legend in the State of Wisconsin. He has been the head coach at Fond du Lac High School since the late 1960's. He is one of the few coaches in Wisconsin High School baseball to exceed 550 wins as a spring coach. He has led the Cardinals to State Tournament in five different decades. He has been involved in the WBCA nearly since its inception, serving in several capacities. Beyond coaching, he is perhaps Wisconsin's best ambassador for the game of baseball. He is a highly desired clinician, speaking at several state clinics throughout the United States, as well as the ABCA Clinic. He has recently added international speaker to his resume. Paulsen is entering his 49th year as coach of the Fond du Lac Cardinals. One of the game's great storytellers, Marty always draws a crowd, and is recognized everywhere he goes. Marty is Mr. Baseball in Wisconsin.

PAST WINNERS

2015 Marcus Hanel - Milwaukee Brewers
2014 Mike Jirschele - Clintonville-Kansas City Royals
2013 Mark Fuller - Cumberland
2012 Matt Erickson - Wisconsin Timber Rattlers - Appleton
2011 Mark Attanasio - Milwaukee Brewers
2010 Steve Schmidt - Madison Mallards
2009 Ron Kading - Potosi
2008 Tim O'Driscoll - Arrowhead
2007 Tom Meyer - Milwaukee
2006 Gerry Davis, Bruce Froemming, Tim Tschida - WI MLB Umps
2005 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2004 Don Hawkins - Appleton
2003 Damian Miller – Chicago Cubs - West Salem
2002 Terry Ryan – Minnesota Twins - Janesville
2001 Jarrod Washburn – California Angels - Webster
2000 Craig Counsell – Arizona Diamondbacks - Whitefish Bay
1999 Gordie Gillespie – Ripon College
1998 Rusty Helland – Webster
1997 Alan "Bud" Selig – Milwaukee Brewers - Milwaukee
1996 Mike Dee – University of Minnesota - La Crosse
1995 Joe Waite – Cumberland
1994 Frank McCormick – WIAA
1993 Ken Kirby – Edgerton
1992 Denny Moyer – Sheboygan
1991 Tom O'Connell - Milwaukee Pulaski
1990 Bob Gifford – Wausau West
1989 Mark Fuller – Cumberland

Phil Janssen

St. Mary Catholic High School ran the table in 2016, being the only team in Wisconsin to finish with an unblemished record. They finished the season with a spotless 26-0 record. The Zebras, under Janssen, won the Eastern Wisconsin Conference before their tournament run began. Their season concluded with a 5-1 victory over Prairie du Chien in the Division III Championship game. In nine seasons he has posted a 153-44 record at St. Mary Catholic.

Scott Staude

During the 2016 season Burlington Demon coach Scott Staude earned his 200th career win. They also won the Southern Lakes Conference Championship. Reaching State Tournament, Burlington was looked at by most people as an underdog. However, victories over Janesville Craig and Green Bay Preble took the Demons to the Championship game, against a formidable Hartland Arrowhead team that had defeated Burlington 6-3 in their final regular season game. This time they stunned Arrowhead, winning 6-4, earning the Division I State Championship, and Scott Staude the Coach of the Year award.

Scott Holler

In 2016 the Oak Creek Knights posted a 31-3 record under coach Scott Holler. They won their 4th consecutive Greater Metro conference title, and 9th in the last 12 years. The Knights reached the WIAA State Tournament for the 5th time in 12 years. They have won 20 or more games for 14 straight seasons. During the 2016 season Holler also earned his 300th career win, and now owns a 320-102 overall record in only 12 seasons at Oak Creek.
ASSISTANT COACHES OF THE YEAR

PAT REILLY - DODGEVILLE
For the past 59 years Dodgeville has maintained one of the top baseball programs in southwest Wisconsin. The one constant during that period is Pat Reilly. Through thick and thin, good times and bad, coaching turnovers, and everything else, Reilly has been there. He has been committed to Dodgeville baseball since his childhood. The 2017 season will mark Pat’s 60th year as a baseball coach in Dodgeville. Because of his continuous commitment, and his passion for Dodgeville baseball, the WBCA names Reilly their Assistant Coach of the Year.

CHAD DOWLAND - RANDOM LAKE
Chad Dowland joined the Random Lake coaching staff two years ago, along with head coach Mike Donahue. Although Random Lake had a strong tradition, they had fallen on hard times. With Chad’s help, Random Lake posted a winning record in 2015, and won a Conference Championship in 2016. Chad’s commitment is to make sure the players do the little things right, both on the field and off. The program could not have come this far, this fast, without the assistance of Chad Dowland.

2003 Pete Barsness (Holmen)  
Chris Kempf (Ashland)
2002 Mike Zimmerman (Middleton)  
Doug Goering (West Bend East)
2001 Rick Hofeditz (Beloit Turner)  
Mark Rohde (Brookfield Central)
2000 Marty Paulsen (Fond du Lac)
1999 Steve Leistico (Waterloo)
1998 Bob Suter (Janesville Craig)
1997 Don Williams (Hortonville)
1996 Steve Tucker (Bangor)
1995 Bruce Erickson (Appleton West)
1994 Garry Bahe (Sun Prairie)
1993 Ron Kading (Potosi)
1992 Tom Bennett (Madison Memorial)
1991 Bruce Erickson (Appleton West)
1990 Tom Bennett (Madison Memorial)
1989 George Roman (Stevens Point)
1988 Ron Wahoske (Ripon)
1987 Mike Dee (La Crosse Aquinas)
1986 Frank Thornton (La Crosse Central)
1985 Tom Konowalski (Milwaukee Tech)
1984 Ken Trott (Westby)
1983 Frank Benevides (Greenfield)
1982 George Holland (Nekoosa)
1981 George Holland (Nekoosa)
1980 Frank Thornton (La Crosse Central)
1979 Rod Billerbeck (Gibraltar)
1978 Fred Peterson (Oconto Falls)
1977 George Holland (Nekoosa)
1976 John Bartelt (Marion)

PAST WINNERS

2016 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2015 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2014 Scott Dofek - UW-Milwaukee
2013 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2012 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2011 Mike Davenport - Madison College
2010 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2009 Dave DeGeorge - Beloit College
2008 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2007 Pat Bloom - UW-Stevens Point
2006 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2005 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
2002 John Weber - Lakeland College
2001 Gordie Gillespie - Ripon College
2000 Jim Miller – UW-Whitewater
1999 Jerry Augustine and Scott Dofek - UW-Milwaukee
1998 Mike Stuhr - UW-La Crosse
1997 Scott Pritchard - UW-Stevens Point
1996 Leo Kalinowski - MATC
1995 Leo Kalinowski - MATC
1994 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
1993 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
1992 Augie Schmidt - Carthage College

CHRIS SCHWARZ
UW-LA CROSSE
The 2016 season had many highlights for UW-La Crosse, and head coach Chris Schwarz, who wins the WBCA College Coach of the Year for the 2nd consecutive year. They were ranked #2 in the country in the preseason Division III poll. The Eagles were both the Conference Champions, and the WIAC Tournament Champions. They reached the NCAA Division III College World Series, and finished the season with a 39-10 record. In addition to being Wisconsin’s College Coach of the Year, Schwarz was also named by ABCA as their Midwest Regional Coach of the Year, and by D3baseball.com as their All-Midwest Region Coach of the Year.

PAST WINNERS

2016 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2015 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2014 Scott Dofek - UW-Milwaukee
2013 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2012 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2011 Mike Davenport - Madison College
2010 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2009 Dave DeGeorge - Beloit College
2008 John Vodenlich - UW-Whitewater
2007 Pat Bloom - UW-Stevens Point
2006 Chris Schwarz - UW-La Crosse
2005 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
2002 John Weber - Lakeland College
2001 Gordie Gillespie - Ripon College
2000 Jim Miller – UW-Whitewater
1999 Jerry Augustine and Scott Dofek - UW-Milwaukee
1998 Mike Stuhr - UW-La Crosse
1997 Scott Pritchard - UW-Stevens Point
1996 Leo Kalinowski - MATC
1995 Leo Kalinowski - MATC
1994 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
1993 Tom Lechnir - UW-Oshkosh
1992 Augie Schmidt - Carthage College
John Ball has served as a baseball coach in Wisconsin for 40 years. He has led successful programs in both New Richmond and Somerset, having success in both the summer and spring baseball seasons. He has been actively involved in the WBCA for nearly his entire career. If there was a WBCA event, Ball was usually in attendance. His leadership has been invaluable to the WBCA. His 567 career victories puts him at third highest all time. A class act, Ball continues to serve baseball as a member of the Hall of Fame committee.

Steve Block is another distinguished coach who has had a long and memorable career. He has served as the head coach at both Prescott and Ellsworth High Schools. Block took both of these schools to State Tournament several times while winning a State Championship. He was the head coach at UW-River Falls between coaching stints at Prescott and Ellsworth. He has coached for over 30 years and has amassed over 400 wins. Block has also been involved with various WBCA activities, and has continuously volunteered for WBCA events. He is also an active member of the Hall of Fame committee.

Jeff Eberle has been a behind-the-scenes mainstay in Beaver Dam since the mid-1970’s. He has been heavily involved in the Beaver Dam Little League organization, serving as a coach, a sponsor of tournaments, and the director of baseball fund-raising. His fund-raising event not only raises money, but utilizes the student-athletes, providing opportunities to teach more than just the game, striving for the boys to grow into men. He also offers winter workouts for players of all ages that want to improve their skills.

Dennis Kostac began his umpiring career in 1975, giving him over 40 years as a man in blue. He is not just an umpire, but also serves as a mentor for young umpires. In addition to baseball, Kostac also works softball, and officiates basketball and volleyball. He has worked more than 20 WIAA State Tournaments in those combined four sports. He has also worked at the NCAA level in baseball and softball. Kostac is a true umpiring and officiating legend in the Green Bay area.

Gary ’Rock’ Lawrynk has served as the commissioner of the Mississippi Valley League, one of the premier adult amateur leagues in Wisconsin, for 42 years. Lawrynk founded this league in 1975, and it continues to flourish. The league has allowed hundreds of ball players the opportunity to continue playing the game that they love. At the age of 71, Lawrynk retired after the 2016 season. His commitment and dedication to baseball in the Coulee Region is incredible, and deserving of a Distinguished Service Award.

Bob Wickman quietly stepped into the River Valley baseball program, and took it to a new level. This story, however, goes beyond coaching success. He has spearheaded the making of a new infield, built a new mound, made new dugouts, built batting cages, purchased pitching machines, fenced in the whole field, bought new field maintenance equipment, does much of the field maintenance himself, and funds freshmen sports at River Valley High School. Never one to seek attention, Wickman’s commitment to River Valley deserves recognition.

Lance Carroll was the head baseball coach at Alma High School from 1966-1972. From 1966-1970 they won five consecutive Conference Championships, and in 1967 they made it to the WIAA Spring State Tournament. This was at a time when there was only one Division in baseball, and Alma consistently had an enrollment of under 140 students. After a switch to summer baseball, Alma continued to excel. In 1971 Coach Carroll again led the Rivermen to the State Tournament. Despite being the small fish in a big pond, Alma would not be denied. Alma defeated Pewaukee 3-0, Grantsburg 1-0, and in the State Championship game triumphed over Milwaukee Sussex-Hamilton 3-2, giving tiny Alma their only State Championship. Lance Carroll retired from coaching after the 1972 season, with a career mark of 95-24. He continues to live in Alma, where he led a group of young men to an impossible dream in 1971.
PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

DI - GAVIN LUX
KENOSHA INDIAN TRAIL

Lux has played in every game in the short history of Kenosha Indian Trail High School. He was a 4 year starter. As a senior he posted a .524 average, hit 6 homers, scored 46 runs, and drove in 30 runs. He walked 31 times, as teams elected to pitch around him, which led to 23 stolen bases. A stalwart on defense as well as offense, Gavin’s skills led him to be the #1 draft pick of the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2016, and is one of the Dodgers top prospects for the future.

DII - NICK WINTER
MILWAUKEE LUTHERAN

Winter was a four-year starter as a pitcher/outfielder for Milwaukee Lutheran High School. He was named 1st Team All-Conference three times. He compiled a .519 average as a senior. While on the mound he posted a 10-1 record, with a 0.84 ERA. Winter struck out 123 batters in 84 innings. He was named 2nd Team All-American by Max Preps. He has earned a baseball scholarship to UW-Milwaukee, where he will be studying nursing.

DIII - ZACH PRONSCINSKIE
ARCADIA

Pronschinske was a versatile all-around player who played every infield position, as well as the outfield, when he wasn’t on the mound for Arcadia High School. At the plate he batted .525 as a senior, with an on base % of .663. As a pitcher, he had a 10-1-1 record as a senior, with an ERA of 0.81. In 69 innings he had 119 strikeouts, and only 21 walks. Zach is attending UW-La Crosse, as a business major, where he will be playing baseball.

DIII - RYAN GASSNER
MARATHON

Ryan Gassner dominated for Marathon High School, both on the mound, and at the plate. His career offensive stats include a .369 average, with 113 hits, and 96 RBI’s. His career pitching stats are just as impressive, posting a 33-4 career mark, and a 1.47 ERA, with 405 strikeouts in 247 innings. As a senior he was 9-0, with a 0.70 ERA. His 33 career wins is a Marathon record. He is attending UW-Madison, and will be working towards a degree in the medical profession.

DIV - JACOB HUEBESCH
ITHACA

Jacob Huebsch led Ithaca High School to great heights during his career. The ace of the pitching staff, he led Ithaca to State Tournament three consecutive years, culminating in a State Championship for the Bulldogs in 2016. As a senior Jacob had a 9-1 record, with a 0.56 ERA, with 101 strikeouts in 63 innings. During the summer he was named Most Valuable Player of the American Legion Division II Championship Series for the Viroqua national Championship team. Jacob will be playing baseball at Winona State, and majoring in special education.

SUMMER - TY WEBER
MENOMONEE FALLS

Ty Weber was a two-year captain for back-to-back State Champions Menomonee Falls. He was the winning pitcher in the 2016 State Championship game, hurling a 2-0 complete game shutout. He holds Menomonee Falls school records for wins – 23, and strikeouts – 249. He was twice named 1st Team All-State. He was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds in the 2016 draft. He has elected to play baseball in college, earning a scholarship to play for the University of Illinois.

WBCA MEDIA PERSONS OF THE YEAR

KARL RAYMOND - SUN PRAIRIE STAR

Karl Raymond has been covering sports in the Sun Prairie area since 1978. Working for the Sun Prairie Star as well as The Courier, which covers Waterloo and Marshall, Raymond has won a number of Wisconsin Newspaper Association awards for his coverage of Sun Prairie’s numerous trips to State Tournament. Recently retired, perhaps his greatest claim to fame is the positive comments he has received from coaches, fans, parents, and athletes for his work throughout the years.

MIKE MCGIVERN – 105.7 FM – MILWAUKEE – “THE FAN”

A native Milwaukeean, Mike McGivern has been around sports his entire life, including coaching, for over 35 years. In 2003 he became involved in radio. One of his shows is called The Varsity Blitz. On this program he highlights and promotes different coaches, players, teams, and conferences. He also selects a weekly Pick ‘N’ Save Student Athlete of the Week. Mike has a true love, commitment, and passion for high school athletics, and the lifelong lessons participants can learn from them.

KEN KIRBY UMPIRES OF THE YEAR

JOHN LAUDON – BLACK RIVER FALLS AND
DANN SHUTTER – TOMAH

John Laudon and Dann Shutter, the Ken Kirby Umpires of the Year, are from the Black River Falls-Tomah area, and have umpired respectively for 35 years, and 30 years. Both of them are set to retire after the upcoming season. As a crew, they have been a highly regarded pair in the Coulee and Mississippi Valley region. It is with great respect that the WBCA honors both John Laudon and Dann Shutter for their exemplary work in the umpiring profession. They have umpired minor league spring training games and annually work between 70-80 games a year.
Pete Swanson started the Viroqua Legion program in 1975, making 2016 his 42nd year as the coach. During this time, Viroqua has won over 1,100 games. They have won 3 State Titles, 10 Runner-ups, and 21 state appearances. In 2016, the Viroqua Legion had a record of 36-19. After winning the Division 2 American Legion State Baseball Championship, they advanced to the Central Plains National Championship. After losing a first round game, Viroqua came back to win 5 games in a row, and the National Championship, earning Pete Swanson the WBCA Amateur Coach of the Year award.

Mark Berquist - Hayward
When umpires recommend a coach for the Ethics Award, that is pretty high praise. According to them, working a Hayward baseball game, with Mark Berquist in charge, is something to look forward to. His players play the game the right way, hustling at all times, and showing respect for both their opponents, and the umpires. He is a great teacher of the game, and his players not only like him, but respect him. The definition of a gentleman is someone who treats other people in a proper and polite way. This defines Mark Berquist.

Bob Gawlitta - Wisconsin Rapids
Bob Gawlitta has had a fair share of success as the head coach at Wisconsin Rapids. He works hard during the season and in the off-season, being actively involved in the youth programs, and running camps and clinics. Although he is highly competitive, he never lets that get in the way of sportsmanship and character. When dealing with him, you are dealing with class and dignity. Gawlitta may be the face of Wisconsin Rapids baseball, but he always places kids first.

Blake Hansen - Union Grove
A 2016 WIAA Scholar Athlete, Blake received All-Conference recognition during his junior year. Blake graduated with a G.P.A. of 3.98 and dedicated a tremendous amount of time in Community Service projects, including spending a week in Moorhead, North Carolina helping clean up after Hurricane Sandy. Head coach Michael Arendt writes that "Blake is the type of student-athlete that every teacher and coach dreams of having multiples of because of his selfless attitude and incredible abilities." Heading to the UW-Milwaukee to study mechanical engineering.

Matthew Helms - Stevens Point Pacelli
Matthew just completed a very successful high school career both on and off the field. On the field, Matthew was 1st team All-Conference and was named CWC 8 Player of the Year. On the season, he hit .451 with 41 hits, 27 RBIs, 15 stolen bases. He also went 8 – 1 on the mound with a 0.78 ERA while striking out 57. Off the field, he earned a 3.948 G.P.A. while taking several AP and Honors classes. Just as impressive, he earned Eagle Scout. Coach Wayne Sankey says, "Matt has been one of the most unselfish players that I have ever coached." Heading to UW-Platteville to study engineering.

Logan Peterson - Somerset
Logan graduated with a 3.967 G.P.A. and was selected as the Middle Border Conference Scholar Athlete and WIAA Scholar Athlete. Logan was a three-sport athlete. He received All-Conference recognition in football, wrestling, and baseball the past three years and recently played in the WBCA All Star Game. He hopes to continue to play baseball at UW-LaCrosse next year. Coach John Ball writes, "he is a born leader and is looked up to by his peers." Heading to UW-LaCrosse to study biochemistry.

Mark Schauf - Big Foot
Mark graduated with a 3.92 G.P.A. and was very involved in the Community Service opportunities offered in and around Big Foot High School. From July of 2013 to July of 2015, Mark volunteered 195 hours of time helping community improvements on church mission trips. On the baseball field, he was a two-time All-Conference player and was voted team captain his senior year. His high school coach was Steve Bochat. He is heading to UW-LaCrosse to study math and secondary education.

Jake Wiedower - Saint Francis
Jake earned numerous academic recognitions in his high school career, including WBCA Academic All-State and attending Badger Boys State. Jake played three sports and took several AP classes while continuing to earn high grades. As a senior, Jake hit .543 with 50 hits, 40 runs scored, and 26 RBIs while going 7 – 3 on the mound, striking out 84 with an ERA of 1.35. He was selected Midwest Classic Conference Player of the Year and recently participated in the WBCA All Star Game. Coach Jared Kwiatkowski writes, “Jake is one of the best well-rounded students I have ever met . . . he takes pride in everything he does." Heading to the UW-Whitewater to study human development or pre-physical therapy.