

THE SERVICE LINE

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Special thank you to Peter Morris for article submissions.

Headline Making Hall Of Famers!



Congratulations are in order to two members of the Spartan volleyball family who recently became Hall of Famers. Lauren Wicinski's father Rob was inducted into the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in April in recognition of his thirty-year career as an assistant and head coach, the last seventeen as head coach of Geneva High School. Geneva was coming off a winless season when he was named head coach in 1999, but he turned the program around and has guided the school to 117 victories and counting!



Also honored was Erin Hartley, who was inducted into the Midland County Sports Hall of Fame on May 14. Before her All-American career at MSU from 1998 to 2001, Erin lettered in five sports at Midland High School, including being an All-State performer in volleyball, basketball, and the long jump. She played for the national team and professionally overseas after graduation, but returned to this area a few years ago: she and her husband and three children now live in DeWitt. Erin played for the MSU Alumni team in our spring tournament at Jenison.

Well done, Rob and Erin!



Andrea Mathews (1971-2016)



The Lord gifted this world with a bright light in the form of Andrea Lenyon Mathews on February 26, 1971 in Detroit, Michigan. Born to Beverly Gay Brooks and Alan "Larry" Harmon, she was affectionately known as "Red."

She was a proud product of the Detroit Public Schools and graduated from Cass Technical High School in 1989. She then studied Business Administration at SER Business School.

On July 2, 1989 she met Edrick Devone Mathews and they married on July 13, 1996. Together they have six children: Alexis Lenyon, Edrick Devone, Evyn Andrea, Wendell Oscar, Dolores Mae (deceased), and Winston Alexander.

Being an organized and doting mother, she volunteered for fundraisers and other extracurricular activities at her children's schools. She was the biggest fan and supporter of her children and traveled extensively to watch every game, tournament, rehearsal and performance. In her spare time, she worked with the Russell-Woods Community Block club and enjoyed the various activities they produced. She also enjoyed reading, talking about her dreams, socializing and having fun with her family.

The Michigan State Volleyball family will miss her dearly and want to thank everyone who graciously donated to help the family during a time of need.

Academic Excellence: Through The Finish

During the Spartan Academic Gala on April 12th, The President's Award, the night's most prestigious award, was presented to our very own Maggie Halloran. The award recognizes the male and female graduating senior with the highest cumulative GPA and who has exhausted their eligibility in the 2015-16 school year.

A three-time Academic All-Big Ten and Big Ten Distinguished Scholar recipient, Halloran carries a perfect 4.0 grade-point average and serves as a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. Not only is Halloran an active member within the athletics community, but she has branched off to make connections and form relationships with other entities on MSU's campus and in the Greater Lansing Community. The Honors College member has been actively involved in the health care field by educating those of all ages and backgrounds during her service as an HIV counselor at Olin Health Center and a service learning volunteer at Sparrow Hospital in the mother/baby unit. Upon graduation, the interdisciplinary studies in social studies: health and society major will pursue her master's degree in nursing in women's health at Vanderbilt University.

Halloran also received the Scholar Athlete Award which is presented to the individual from each team who has reached at least junior academic status, has received a minimum of one varsity letter, and while meeting these requirements, maintains the highest cumulative grade point average on their team.

In addition, Halloran has been awarded a Big Ten Postgraduate Scholarship. The Conference office provides two student-athletes from each of the 14 Big Ten institutions a \$7,500 scholarship, based on primarily academic achievements. The award is given to athletes who plan to continue their education in a graduate degree program.

Exciting non-academic news for Maggie—she got engaged on May 15th to longtime boyfriend Lars! Wishing them the very best!



The BIG Conference: An In-Depth Look, Attendance

In a previous issue, we looked at the Big Ten Conference's success in volleyball by considering several key measuring sticks: winning national championships, reaching Final Fours, and attracting top coaches. This month, let's take a look at attendance.

According to the official statistics released by the NCAA, during the 2015 season Michigan State ranked eighth in the nation with 2,872 spectators per home match. Of the seven schools that ranked ahead of the Spartans, only one (Illinois) has a smaller official seating capacity. Very impressive!

Those statistics become even more striking when broken down by conference. Here are the top eight schools in descending order: Nebraska, Hawaii, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Penn State, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan State. Notice a pattern? No fewer than six of the top eight schools in national attendance per match compete in the BIG! As for the Pac-12, its top school was Washington in tenth place, two spots behind MSU.

Seating capacity undoubtedly kept at least one

other Big Ten school out of the Top Ten. Purdue (12th place) plays in a small gym that seats only 2,288, but with standing-room seating capacity, it was able to average 2,524 fans per match -- a remarkable 110% of capacity. Michigan (32nd place) will also rank much higher once it leaves 1,800-seat Cliff Keen Arena. In all, 13 of the 14 Big Ten schools finished in the top 63 in national attendance in 2015!

It is no coincidence that the Big Ten's rise to the top of the attendance board parallels its emergence as the nation's best volleyball conference. Looked at from one angle, fans are always more willing to turn out to watch high-quality performances. This is a two-way street, however. Athletes enjoy playing in front of large, raucous crowds and the Big Ten's dominance in this area has made it much easier to attract premier coaches and to recruit top-flight athletes. So give yourself a pat on the back for having turned out to cheer on the Spartans as they compete in the country's toughest -- and best-attended -- conference!