

# **NEWS FROM THE SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE**

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## **SportsCenter of Connecticut/SCC Scholar Athletes of the Month for February** *Fourteen Outstanding Student-Athletes Recognized*

**New Haven, CT** – Fourteen student-athletes from seven high schools have been named The SportsCenter of Connecticut/Southern Connecticut Conference Scholar Athletes of the Month for February.

The SportsCenter of Connecticut/SCC Scholar Athlete of the Month program honors 14-16 outstanding young men and women each month during the 2006-07 academic year. The program will recognize a total of 138 student-athletes – six from each of the conference's 23 member schools. Student athletes who are selected must be a varsity letterwinner and have a 3.0/B average while demonstrating leadership qualities such as: being a positive role model; helping teammates overcome adversity; showing a commitment to self-improvement; or putting the needs of the team before themselves. Sports Center of CT/SCC Scholar Athlete of the Month recipients and receive a certificate, commemorative tee-shirt and a SportsCenter of Connecticut activity pass.

### **The SportsCenter of Connecticut/SCC Scholar Athletes of the Month – February, 2007**

#### **Pamela Holt – Derby**

A member of the Derby cross country and indoor track squads, Pamela Holt has led by example for the Red Raiders throughout her career. She has also excelled in the classroom while at Derby. Said cross country/track coach Ryan Adams: "Pamela has a top notch work ethic both academically and athletically that spreads to all those around her."

#### **Stacey Stobierski – Derby**

A two-year captain of the Derby girls' basketball team, Stacey Stobierski has been a steady contributor for the Red Raiders on the hardwood. Academically, she ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in her class and carries a 3.9 grade point average. Stacey is also a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Honor Society. Said Athletic Director Joe Oraziatti: "Stacey has been the perfect role model for her teammates both on and off the court."

#### **Rachel Hogue – Hand**

A true student-athlete, Rachel sports an impressive 3.85 grade point average in the classroom and was a member of the Tigers' girls ice hockey team that reached the finals of the Central Connecticut Girls Hockey League in 2007. In addition, Rachel serves as the managing editor of Hand's student newspaper, *Hand Print*. Craig Semple, Hand's athletic director said, "Rachel is a valuable member of the Hand community and her results and successes are indicative of her efforts."

## **Page 2 - The SportsCenter of Connecticut/SCC Scholar Athletes of the Month – February**

### **Ethan Bates – Hand**

A three-sport (soccer, indoor and outdoor track) athlete for the Tigers, Ethan is also a top student with a 3.46 grade point average. On the soccer pitch, he earned All-Hammonasset Division honors in 2006. Said Hand athletic director Craig Semple, "Ethan is a true representation of a student-athlete - he is disciplined, focused and an outstanding team leader."

### **Lori Pagliano – Jonathan Law**

An All-State gymnast, Lori Pagliano has thrived both on the mat and in the classroom while at Jonathan Law. In addition to her athletic success, she carries a 4.15 grade point average. Lori was also a member of the Powder Puff football team and participated in the school's Fashion Show. Said Athletic Director Frank Luysterborghs: "Lori is truly a dependable team player. She is always ready to help the team in any way that she can."

### **Brian Roach – Jonathan Law**

A member of the football and basketball teams, Brian Roach has made an impact during his scholastic career. He carries a 3.9 grade point average and volunteers his time with the Special Olympics. Said Athletic Director Frank Luysterborghs: "A leader through his actions, Brian is very hard working and sets a great example for his teammates."

### **Jeff Baker – Lyman Hall**

An All-State performer in both indoor and outdoor track, Jeff Baker has separated himself from his peers as one of the top field athletes in Connecticut. During the outdoor season, he was an All-State pick in the javelin and discus. Indoors, he was the Class L champion in the shot put and also earned All-State honors. Jeff is also involved with the Math Club, Chorus and is a Varsity Club Officer. Academically, he ranks sixth in his class at Lyman Hall. Said Athletic Director Elaine Piazza: "Jeff is not only the ultimate scholar and athlete, but he is a community leader as well."

### **Karen Grunwald – Lyman Hall**

The captain of the Lyman Hall girls' soccer, basketball and outdoor track teams, Karen Grunwald has led on all fronts during her high school career. Academically, she ranks 16<sup>th</sup> in her class at Lyman Hall. She has also been honored by the Rotary Club of Wallingford as its 2006 Citizen of the Year. Karen has also received the Smith College Book Award and is a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Club. Said girls' basketball coach Tom Lipka: "Karen is one of our most committed athletes and is a role model and leader for our younger players on and off the basketball court."

### **Lauren Bendel – North Haven**

A four-year member of the cheerleading squad and the top ranked student in the senior class, Lauren Bendel has been an outstanding role model at North Haven High School. She is a member of the National Honor Society, the Spanish Honor Society and the Environmental Club. Lauren has also been the recipient of the Yale Book Award and the Bausch and Lomb Science Award. In her spare time, she volunteers at the Benhaven School, helping autistic children and adults. Said cheerleading coach Kathy Crisafi: "Lauren is a wonderful person who for four years has been a role model to all. Excelling in both the classroom and on the cheerleading mat, Lauren is a quality individual who will be sorely missed next year."

## **Page 3 - The SportsCenter of Connecticut/SCC Scholar Athletes of the Month – February**

### **Aaron Melendez – North Haven**

A three-sport captain in football, indoor and outdoor track, Aaron Melendez has distinguished himself from his peers through both his athletic and academic endeavors. He led the Indians football squad to a division title this past fall and was a four-year letterwinner. He also competed with the outdoor track team for four years and the indoor track team for two years, all while maintaining a 3.5 grade point average. Said football coach Anthony Sagnella: "Aaron is a tremendous person and leader who gives 100 percent at whatever he does. He is well respected by both his peers and the coaching staff. He is one of the best captains that I've ever had in my career."

### **Megan McGorry – West Haven**

A key member of the Blue Devils' swimming and tennis teams, Megan McGorry has made the most of her scholastic days. In the pool, she holds six school records and has earned All-State and All-Area honors. Academically, Megan carries a 3.6 grade point average and has been active with the Marching Band, Jazz Band and History Club. Said Athletic Director Jon Capone: "Megan leads by example and has been an outstanding role model for four years."

### **Joe Innamorato – West Haven**

A two-sport standout in hockey and tennis, Joe Innamorato has been a steady contributor both on the ice and court while at West Haven High. He holds a 3.6 grade point average and is a member of the National Honor Society. Joe has also received the Bayer Honors Award and the Academic Achievement Award. Said Athletic Director Jon Capone: "Leaders can be the difference between winning and losing, and Joey has made a difference for us at West Haven."

### **Tyrell Brock – Wilbur Cross**

A three-sport performer in football, basketball and outdoor track, Tyrell Brock has excelled during his time at Wilbur Cross High School. He captained the basketball squad as a senior and carries a 3.5 grade point average. Outside of school, Brock also works at LEAP. Said Athletic Director Jake Jarvis: "Tyrell is an overachiever, the ultimate team player, and someone that any organization would be proud to have as its representative."

### **Ashley Velazquez – Wilbur Cross**

The captain of the Wilbur Cross girls' soccer and indoor track teams, Ashley Velazquez has displayed fine leadership qualities guiding both squads. She has also fared well in the classroom, as evidenced by her 3.0 grade point average. Said track coach Esteban Rivera: "Ashley is a role model in the classroom and on the field. Any coach would be proud to have known Ashley."

*The SportsCenter of Connecticut offers an exciting and unique combination of fun, recreation, lessons and competitive exercise! Located at 784 River Road (Route 110) in Shelton, the Sports Center of Connecticut offers and a premier weather protected golf practice facility, 18-hole miniature golf course, baseball & softball batting stadium, lazer tag arena, fun bowl and the world's only double-decker ice arena. For more information, visit [www.sportscenterct.com](http://www.sportscenterct.com).*

*Founded in 1994, the Southern Connecticut Conference is in its 13th season of competition in 2006-07 with 23 member-schools and nearly 23,000 students. Recognized as the premier athletic league in the state of Connecticut, SCC member schools have captured 240 state championships since the league's inception. More importantly, the SCC is recognized for its outstanding non-athletic programs and events, which attempt to break down barriers and build bridges of understanding to its students. For more information on the SCC, visit [www.SouthernConnecticutConference.org](http://www.SouthernConnecticutConference.org).*

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