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THURSDAY
February 7, 2019

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Navy holding its own

Academy winning most battles with Army on the recruiting trail

BY BILL WAGNER
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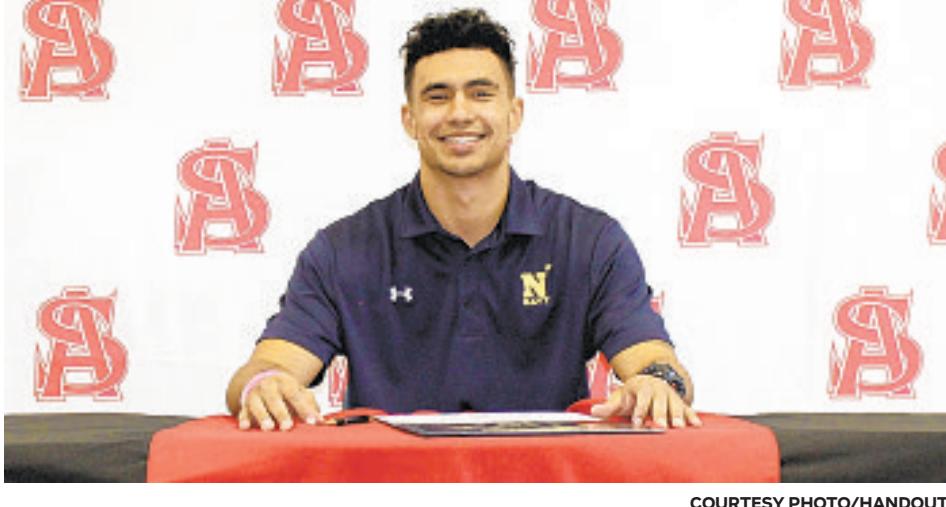
Army owns bragging rights over Navy on the football field, but apparently that has not automatically translated to the recruiting landscape.

The Black Knights boast a three-game winning streak against the Midshipmen and have captured the coveted Command-

er-in-Chief's Trophy two years in a row. Army posted the first 11-win season in program history in 2018 and is 21-5 over the past two seasons. Meanwhile, Navy is coming of its worst season since 2001, having struggled to a 3-10 mark. The Midshipmen are 5-16 since mid-October of 2017.

One would think the competitive disparity would give Army a huge advantage in the head-to-head recruiting battles between the two service academy rivals. Navy head coach Ken Niumatalolo said that was not evident during this 2018-2019 cycle.

Niumatalolo acknowledged the Black See NAVY, page B4



COURTESY PHOTO/HANDOUT

Signing Day photo for Jayden Umbarger, Archbishop Spalding - US Naval Academy



STEVE RUARK/FOR CAPITAL GAZETTE

St. Mary's swimmer Patrick Hayburn starts the 200-yard medley relay at the MIAA B Conference swimming championships on Wednesday. The Saints won for the fifth straight year.

SWIMMING MIAA B CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Saints cruise to fifth straight title

St. Mary's captures MIAA B Conference honors

BY KATHERINE FOMINYKH
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TOWSON — The 200-yard medley relay and the 400 freestyle relay proved to be tidy bookends to cap off St. Mary's historic victory.

Saints coach Allyson Reiter had predicted they would be.

The Saints claimed all three relays — and another six individual wins — to sail to their

fifth Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association B championship crown in as many years. Never before has St. Mary's boys swimming strung together so many titles in a row.

That you could see in the gleeful faces of the six seniors who made sure that happened.

"At this point, I'm relieved. I wanted this for the boys all year long," Reiter said. "I didn't want anything to get in the way. I'm proud of the way they've conducted themselves up to this point."

Sophomore Patrick Hayburn, just like his brother Jimmy last year, proved essential to

the Saints' bid. After leading off the triumphant 200 medley relay, Hayburn ruled the 200 freestyle — beating his own teammate by about nine seconds — and the 100 butterfly, where he edged Severn's Andrew Campbell by almost three seconds. He sealed the Saints' title anchoring the 400 freestyle relay.

Though Jimmy and his sister, Annie, both Loyola swimmers, stamped their own major legacies in St. Mary's swimming lore, Patrick Hayburn wanted to both carry the torch for the family name and leave his own mark.

"It's nice to follow in my siblings'

footsteps — they've done such great things here — but also create my new path," he said. "I've been swimming different events than them. It's been really fun."

Jonathan Edwards, too, walked out of Calvert Hall with a bunch of first-place finishes. The Saints junior swam the third stroke of the winning 200 medley relay and then went on to sweep his other two events, 100 and 500 freestyle, back-to-back. After teammate Patrick Streyle jumped to an early lead, Edwards caught up and then passed him as the "13" card sank into the water. He then closed out the night aiding See SAINTS, page B3

No. 24 Terps top Cornhuskers



NATI HARNIK/AP

Maryland's Anthony Cowan Jr. tries to control the ball as he drives past Nebraska's Thomas Allen (12) during the first half in Lincoln, Neb., Wednesday. No. 24 Maryland defeated Nebraska, 60-45. See story, Page B2.

MEN'S BASKETBALL NAVY 77, AMERICAN 67

Abdullah leads Mids over red-hot Eagles

BY BILL WAGNER
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The Brigade of Midshipmen turned out strong to support the Navy men's basketball team on Wednesday night, bolstering an otherwise sparse crowd at Alumni Hall.

The boisterous contingent of mids, who were all seated in the end zone behind the home basket, saw Navy play an inspired ballgame that produced a critical win over one of the hottest teams in the Patriot League.

Senior point guard Hasan Abdullah reached a career-high with 23 points and delivered a superb all-around floor game with six rebounds and six assists to lift Navy to an impressive 77-67 victory over American in front of an announced crowd of 1,413 at Alumni Hall.

Senior forward Luke Loehr provided a big lift off the bench with nine points, five rebounds and three assists, which moved into sixth place in the 10-team Patriot League. Top six teams receive a first-round bye in the Patriot League Tournament.

Freshman point guard Josiah Strong hit a couple clutch shots down the stretch in See MIDS, page B2

NAVY @ LEHIGH
Saturday, 4:30 p.m.
Radio: 1430 AM

(8-14, 5-6), which has won two in a row at home after losing six of its previous seven. Freshman swingman John Carter Jr. contributed nine points, five rebounds, two steals and two assists for the Midshipmen, who led for almost 37 of 40 minutes.

Sophomore forward Luke Loehr provided a big lift off the bench with nine points, five rebounds and three assists, which moved into sixth place in the 10-team Patriot League. Top six teams receive a first-round bye in the Patriot League Tournament.

Freshman point guard Josiah Strong hit a couple clutch shots down the stretch in See MIDS, page B2

MARYLAND FOOTBALL

Terps flexing signing muscle

UM's Locksley lands four-star dual-threat quarterback for 2019

BY JONAS SHAFFER
The Baltimore Sun

COLLEGE PARK – The Maryland football team had landed perhaps its most important recruit of coach Michael Locksley's short tenure, meaning the adhesive nameplate could finally join the others. Offensive coordinator Scottie Montgomery, celebrating with the Terps' staff inside their recruiting war room, walked over to a wall with 16 other stickers. The new name would go at the very top.

Lance LeGendre might not be the program's immediate answer under center, nor is he even the class' top-rated recruit. But at about 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, on the last of two signing days for the Class of 2019, the four-star dual-threat quarterback's announcement at his New Orleans school that he was signing with Maryland reverberated 1,000 miles away.

Locksley was hired for recruiting victories such as this. LeGendre (pronounced Luh-ZHON) didn't have an offer from Maryland until last month. He hadn't visited College Park until this past weekend. But he picked the Terps over Florida State nonetheless, a surprise addition to a 17-member class that, with a string of other recent signings, no longer ranks as the Big Ten's worst.

"Just like what happens to most people, when they get there on this campus, they see the vision, you see the investment that the administration's made with the facilities that we're building, and then the opportunity," Locksley said Wednesday. "That's the one great thing we had to offer, was an opportunity with the new staff coming in, to have the opportunity to come in and compete."

In two months, the size of Locksley's inaugural recruiting class nearly tripled. After signing six players in mid-December, Maryland added commitments from 11 players and lost pledges from three others. Six of the Terps' nine highest-rated pledges were finalized Wednesday, including outside linebacker Cortez Andrews, a top-500 prospect from Florida, and defensive end Anthony "Tank" Booker, an Ohio standout who chose Maryland over Cincinnati.

The Terps' class, rated No. 59 in the nation as of Wednesday afternoon by the 247Sports.com Composite rankings, ahead of Rutgers' and Illinois', could grow Thursday. DeMatha safety Nick Cross, a Florida State commit, did not sign with the Seminoles on Wednesday and is reportedly also considering Maryland and Penn State. Rated the state's top player and No. 55 overall prospect by 247Sports.com, he'd be the Terps' top incoming recruit, ahead of Wise four-star wide receiver Isaiah Hazel, the state's fifth-best prospect.

"This is an ongoing recruiting process for us," Locksley said. "We hope we're not done yet."

They hadn't even started with LeGendre until two weeks ago. At Alabama, where Locksley served as offensive coordinator last season, the former Kansas commit was "on our board for quite some time." As a



COURTESY PHOTO

Four-star dual-threat quarterback Lance LeGendre committed and signed with Maryland.

senior at Warren Easton High School, he helped lead the Eagles to the Class 4A state final — the state's second-biggest classification — and finished with 1,707 passing yards and 27 touchdowns along with 577 rushing yards and seven scores.

Then Locksley got word that he was still available, and his whirlwind recruitment took off. With Kasim Hill coming off his second straight knee injury, Alabama graduate transfer Jalen Hurts picking Oklahoma and Maryland's staff parting ways with quarterback recruit David Summers, the Terps offered LeGendre on Jan. 26.

Locksley joked that he knew there was mutual interest when LeGendre started texting Locksley while visiting another school. Locksley and Montgomery, also the team's quarterbacks coach, visited him last week and convinced LeGendre and his mother to come to College Park for an official visit.

"Our whole staff surrounded them," Locksley said. "We were able to show them what being a Maryland football player, being a part of our Maryland football family, was all about."

Late signers:
Three-star CB Deonte Banks (Edgewood)
Three-star DE Anthony "Tank" Booker (Cincinnati)
Three-star LB Kameron Blount (Walpole)
Three-star CB Erwin Byrd (Powder Springs, Ga.)
Three-star S Trevor Collins (Fairburn, Ga.)
Three-star TE Tyler Devere (Oradell, N.J.)
Three-star OT Marcus Finger (Fort Myers, Fla.)
Three-star G Parris Heath (Spring Valley, N.Y.)
Three-star DE DeShawn Holt (Waldorf)
Four-star QB Lance LeGendre (New Orleans)
Three-star DE Sam Okuyanorou (Virginia, Minn.)

Early signers:
Three-star DB Lavonte Gater (Washington, D.C.)
Four-star WR Isaiah Hazel (Upper Marlboro)
Four-star TE Malik Jackson (Fort Meade)
Three-star OT Mason Lunsford (Olivey)
Three-star WR Dino Tomlin (Pittsburgh)
*Notes junior-college recruit

NAVY

From page B1

Knights have beaten the Midshipmen for prospects more often than in the past, but believes there has not been a significant change. Speaking to The Capital in advance of National Signing Day, Niumatalolo said Navy is still winning the majority of turf wars with Army.

"I think kids recognize the long-term success of our program. They see the overall body of work," Niumatalolo said. "We had one bad season. I think the kids we are recruiting are smart enough to look at the big picture and see that Navy has been a consistent winner."

Indeed, Navy posted winning records and earned bowl berths in 14 of 15 seasons from 2002 through 2017.

Niumatalolo said the prestige of the Naval Academy as an institution does not change. Also, the appeal of Annapolis is another factor the coaching staff sells to recruits that are also considering West Point.

Lastly, the competitive level of the American Athletic Conference, which has consistently placed multiple schools in the Top 25, is attractive to prospects picking between the two service academies. Army plays an independent schedule that next season includes Morgan State, Texas-San Antonio, Georgia State, Massachusetts and Virginia Military Institute.

"I feel good that we got most of the players we wanted," Niumatalolo said in reference to recruiting directly against Army.

Georgia defensive back BJ Gibson and New Jersey quarterback Maasai Maynor are two top prospects that Navy beat Army to land.

Maynor broke most of the St. Peter's Prep passing records that were set by Brandon Wimbush, who started for Notre Dame and recently transferred to Central Florida. The 6-foot, 180-pound dual-threat quarterback was a four-year varsity letterman and two-year starter.

"Maasai had a very productive career here and helped us win a lot of games," longtime St. Peter's Prep head coach Rich

Hansen said. "Maasai was a staple around here and a very important part of the program."

Maynor held offers from Rutgers, Boston College and Connecticut among others. The North Brunswick resident threw for 4,521 yards and 48 touchdowns over the past two seasons.

"Maasai is extremely athletic and has a big arm. He can make all the throws and has the speed, quickness and instincts to escape the rush," Hansen said. "Maasai is also a very dynamic runner who is extremely dangerous in the open field. I think what Navy does offensively fits his talents."

Assistant coach Justin Davis served as lead recruiter for Maynor, but offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ivin Jasper was obviously involved. Hansen hinted that Navy spoke to Maynor about opening up the offense and presumably throwing the ball a bit more.

"One of the things that sold Maasai on Navy was their desire to add some things into their offense that would suit his abilities. They did a great job of selling him on those points," Hansen said. "Maasai is a special kid who is very gregarious and always upbeat. Navy is getting a very intelligent young man who is a fierce competitor."

Hansen is entering his 32nd year as head coach at St. Peter's Prep and has sent several football players to the Naval Academy over the years, including former offensive lineman Anthony Gaskins (2009) and current nose guard Dave Tolentino.

"I think the biggest challenge from this end was getting Maasai to see the big picture about what a Naval Academy education and degree could do for him. His parents were instrumental in highlighting that as well," Hansen said.

Maynor, who is slated to come directly to Annapolis, agreed he could not pass up the opportunity provided by the Naval Academy.

"What I can get out of going to a service academy compared to any other school is mind blowing. The campus is beautiful, and I really enjoyed the coaching staff," Maynor told *The Jersey Journal*. "I really hit it off with Ivin Jasper, and I felt like we will have a good relationship. Navy was the best fit for me."

Navy is also getting Maynor's favorite

target from the 2017 season in wide receiver Mark Walker, who had 34 receptions as a senior. Walker spent this past school year taking college preparatory courses and working on his academic profile.

"Mark Walker is a spectacular player with legitimate game-changing type of talent," Hansen said. "He's a crazy athlete who can jump through the roof."

Gibson is the son of a United States Military Academy graduate. Byron Gibson was recruited to West Point to play football, but left the program after one year in order to focus on academics.

BJ Gibson is a rare 6-foot-4 cornerback who used his height and length to record seven interceptions as a senior at George Walton Comprehensive School in Marietta, Georgia. Niumatalolo said assistant coach Robert Green did a superb job of recruiting Gibson, who was pursued relentlessly by Army.

"BJ is bit of a unicorn because you don't see many 6-foot-4 cornerbacks. He's a playmaker who picks off passes and blocks field goals," Walton head coach Daniel Brunner said. "BJ possesses tremendous physical attributes in terms of size and speed, but what might be more impressive is his football IQ. He just has a great understanding of the game."

Brunner said Byron Gibson let the recruiting process play out and did not push his son toward his alma mater.

"I think it broke Byron's heart a little, but I know he is very happy to see his son go to Annapolis," he said. "BJ will do well at Navy because he is in constant pursuit of excellence."

Defensive end Jacobi Rice (Whitehaven High, Memphis, Tenn.), offensive guard Nicholas Rowan (Madison-Ridgeland High, Ridgeland, Miss.) and outside linebacker Max Sandlin (Chandler High, Chandler, Ariz.) are three other top recruits that chose Navy over Army and Air Force.

Kip Frankland, an offensive center from Houston High in Germantown, Tennessee, held a scholarship offer from Virginia of the Atlantic Coast Conference in addition to Air Force. Several American Athletic Conference schools also recruited the 6-foot-1, 280-pounder.

Frankland is one of 10 players signed by running game coordinator Ashley Ingram,

who recruits Alabama and Tennessee for Navy. Ingram has signed some of the finest players in recent Navy history, including record-setting quarterback Keenan Reynolds and standout defensive end Jabaree Tuani.

"Ashley is the best recruiter I've ever been around and it's not even close," Niumatalolo said. "Ashley has single-handedly changed our program. If you look at the productivity and accomplishments of the players he's brought in, it's off the charts."

Niumatalolo said Ingram is the complete package as a recruiter in terms of being organized, passionate about pitching prospects, building relationships with high school coaches and knowing how to work with guidance counselors with regard to transcripts.

Ingram also signed twin brothers Joshua and Terrell Adams out of Ramsey High in Birmingham, Alabama. They both play safety and are identical in terms of size at 6-foot, 190 pounds.

Khalil Crawford is a hard-hitting linebacker out of Lakeland Senior High, a perennial prep powerhouse in the Florida town of the same name. Southern Mississippi was the most prominent school to offer the 6-foot-1, 220-pounder.

"Khalil is a real downhill type of player – very physical and explosive with excellent speed and range," Lakeland High head coach Bill Castle said. "Khalil is a top-notch individual who has the discipline to deal with the regiment at the Naval Academy."

Navy did extremely well in Hawaii during this recruiting campaign, signing four prospects. Niumatalolo credited former defensive line coach Sione Po'uha, who is now at Utah, with the impressive haul that featured outside linebackers from a pair of perennial powerhouse programs in Kahuku (Tausili Fiaota) and Kamehameha (Akalea Kapono).

Billy Ray Stutzmann, who was recently hired as an offensive assistant after spending last year at the University of Hawaii, closed on those recruits after Po'uha departed the program.

"It all started with Sione, who really killed it in Hawaii," Niumatalolo said. twitter.com/BWagner_CapGaz

NAVY 2019 FOOTBALL RECRUITING LIST

The following student-athletes announced on social media or contacted the Capital Gazette that they committed to play football at the Naval Academy. It is not known at this time if the student-athlete is going to the Naval Academy Prep School or going directly to the Naval Academy.

Joshua Adams, S, 6-0, 190, Birmingham, Ala./Ramsey

Terrell Adams, S, 6-0, 190, Birmingham, Ala./Ramsey

Derek Atwaters, LB, 6-1, 185, Pompano Beach, Fla./Cardinal Gibbons

Donald Bernard Jr., DL, 6-0, 280, Baton Rouge, La./University Laboratory

Jason Betts II, S, 6-1, 190, Pickerington, Ohio/Pickerington

Dalton Boswell, DT, 6-3, 310, Gordo, Ala./Sipsey Valley

Ahmad Bradley, OG, 6-3, 300, Harvey, La./John Ehret

John Brand, DT, 6-3, 255, Flower Mound, Texas/Marcus

Terrance Bridgers, OT, 6-2, 305, Washington, D.C./Landon School

Braylen Brooks, CB, 5-10, 170, Rowlett, Texas/Sachse

Jacob Cusik, DL, 6-4, 250, Westminster, Md./Westminster

Joseph Carter, WR, 6-2, 205, Plano, Texas/Plano East

JJ Copeland, OG, 6-2, 315, Lakeland, Fla./Lake Gibson

Jake Cossavella, OT, 6-4, 250, Orange, Calif./Lutheran

Khalil Crawford, LB, 6-1, 220, Lakeland, Fla./Lakeland Senior

Aaron Davis, LB, 6-2, 202, Upper Marlboro, Md./Gonzaga

Tazman Davis, CB, 5-11, 182, Lusby, Md./Patuxent

Tausili Fiaota, LB, 6-3, 230, Kahuku, Hawai'i/Kahuku

Kip Frankland, C, 6-1, 280, Germantown, Tenn./Houston

Jordan Geter, CB, 5-10, 174, Columbus, Ga./Columbus

BJ Gibson, CB, 6-4, 184, Marietta, Ga./George Walton Comprehensive

Ajani Gillis, S, 6-0, 170, Ashburn, Va./Stone Bridge

Sam Glover, OT, 6-3, 265, Pickerington, Ohio/Pickerington

Dre Grace, CB, 6-0, 165, Port Saint Lucie, Fla./Centennial

Antonio Greer, DE, 6-2, 240, Grand Prairie, Texas/Bowie

Trevor Harris, DE, 6-3, 245, Bethlehem, Pa./Liberty

Colton Higgins, LB, 6-1, 195, Mobile, Ala./Theodore

Colby Jacques, SB, 5-8, 175, Novato, Calif./Marin Catholic

Laderick Johnson, S, 5-11, 160, Jackson, Ga./Jackson

Daniel Jones, CB, 5-9, 175, Lauderdale, Fla./Calvary Christian

Dylan Jones, CB, 6-1, 186, West Chester, Ohio/Lakota West

Justin Jones, SB, 6-0, 185, Bessemer, Ala./Bessemer Academy

Mike Jones, S, 5-10, 170, Staten Island, N.Y./Tottenville

Akalea Kapono, LB, 6-1, 215, Kailua, Hawai'i/Kamehameha

Tyler King, LB, 6-2, 215, Gibsonia, Pa./Pine-Richland

Zachary Kuhlman, SB, 6-1, 180, Cincinnati, Ohio/Roger Bacon

Tai Lavatai, QB, 6-2, 220, St. Johns, Fla./Creekside

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Florida State, Miami try to flip narrative on signing day

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

Florida State and Miami were hoping signing day could help put to the negativity of 2018 to rest and provide a push toward better times.

Coming off a 5-7 record in their first season under coach Willie Taggart, the Seminoles landed a top 20 class but struck out on a much-needed quarterback Wednesday.

Miami, coming off a 7-6 season and coach Mark Richt's surprising retirement, managed to finally provide some good news for Hurricanes fans. New coach Manny Diaz bolstered the Canes recruiting class with some high-profile transfers.

This is the second year for college football's early December signing period and it's made the traditional signing day in February something of an afterthought. More than 80 percent of the scholarships in FBS were scooped up in December, and the vast majority of the highly touted prospects were off the board.

Still, the usual suspects made some noise, especially in the Southeastern Conference. Alabama, which had already pretty much locked up another recruiting national title, had a couple of four-stars flip to other schools, but the Tide also pulled 330-pound defensive tackle Ishmael Sopsher out of Louisiana and away from LSU.

Georgia had the day's biggest surprise, getting five-star receiver George Pickens to drop his Auburn verbal commitment to sign with the Bulldogs.

Florida State didn't make that big of a splash, but the Seminoles held on to their commitments, including defensive end Quashon Fuller from Fort Myers, Florida. Nick Cross, a four-star defensive back from Maryland, put off his signing but didn't flip to another school.

The Noles bolstered an offensive line that desperately needed depth with three more signees on the offensive front. Taggart's class of 22 players has five offensive linemen, plus the Noles added a transfer from Northern Illinois.

Year one under Taggart produced the first bowl-less season at Florida State since 1981, and the Seminoles are trying to keep pace in their own division with national champion Clemson. Heading into his second season, Taggart is already facing pressure in Tallahassee.

"We've got young men here that believe in our vision and understand what we're trying to build," Taggart told reporters. "I think that's more important than anything."

The problem was at quarterback. Lance LeGendre selected Maryland over Florida State, leaving the Seminoles with no quarterbacks in the signing class and only one eligible on the roster this season in James Blackman. Deondre Francois was dismissed from the program last week. Taggart hopes Louisville transfer Jordan Travis will be granted a waiver to play immediately.

That could lead Florida State to look at the transfer database some more. Diaz has done plenty of work in that area.

The former 'Canes defensive coordinator and Miami native has re-energized a program that was looking bleak when Richt stepped down in January.

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