



2003 SEASON PREVIEW

In his first season at the helm of the Villanova baseball program in 2002, head coach Joe Godri brought the Wildcats back to the 30-win plateau for the first time since the 1995 season.

Despite major losses at the infield corners and in the pitching staff, Godri has brought in some of the nation's top recruits in each of the last three seasons and has a young Villanova team primed for even more success this season. Teaming with a solid nucleus of returning players, these young Wildcats have the Villanova program headed in the right direction. With a strong blend of starting and relief pitching, a technically sound defense, and an unproven but potentially potent offense, the 'Cats will look to take the Big East by surprise in 2003

Pitching:

Villanova lost two weekend starters from last season in Brian Slocum and Bob Grzenda, who both went on to pitch at the next level. Slocum was drafted in the second round of the 2002 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft by the Cleveland Indians, while Grzenda played professional baseball for Regensburg Legionaere of the German Professional Baseball League. Despite the losses, the Wildcats still return a solid corps of pitchers in 2003.

Seniors John Yeager and Tom Kandybowicz will anchor the Villanova rotation, with sophomore Nick Allen looking to continue the success he had as a freshman last season.

Before running into some injury problems that nagged him during the second half of the season, Yeager was a dominant force on the mound for the 'Cats. He finished the season 3-3 with a 3.21 ERA, striking out 24 and walking only seven in 42.0 innings of work.

Kandybowicz won four games for the Wildcats last season and was second on the team with 71.0 innings pitched. Through three seasons, he now has 13 victories and 193.2 innings pitched to his credit.

Allen had a magnificent rookie season for Villanova in 2002, as he earned Louisville Slugger Freshmen All-America Honorable Mention. Allen fin-



Junior Dan Farino has developed into one of the top middle relievers in the Big East Conference.



Tom Kandybowicz has won 13 games over his first three seasons on the Main Line.

ished the year with a team-high six wins, going 6-1 with a 5.28 ERA.

Another hurler battling for a spot in the starting rotation is junior Adrian Schau. Schau is an excellent middle reliever and will be one of the Wildcats' top pitchers in either a starting or a relief role. Schau was 4-1 with a 3.00 ERA in 2002, striking out 26 batters in 21.0 innings. Another top pitcher for the 'Cats is junior Dan Farino, who was usually the first pitcher out of the pen for Villanova last season. Farino saw time as a starter and a middle reliever in 2002, finishing the season 2-2 with a 3.41 ERA.

Villanova will have an outstanding group of sophomore relievers in Michael Grodecki, James Baxter and Joe McCoy. Grodecki and McCoy look to emerge as strong right-handed relievers, while Baxter will serve as one of the team's top lefties out of the bullpen. Grodecki and Baxter will battle for starting roles in the Wildcats' mid-week rotation.

Senior right-hander Mark Rocca and junior left-hander Mike Ciccotelli will offer Villanova good bullpen balance, as they bring the team both right-handed and left-handed relief help.

Freshmen Jake Wolff and Ted Aust give Villanova talented youngsters with potential to make immediate contributions as either starters or middle relievers. Wolff is a power pitcher who throws a variety of pitches and possesses good command. Ranked among the top prospects in the nation, he was named a third team All-State performer last season. He will battle for a spot in the mid-week rotation as well. Aust comes to the Main Line all the way from Phoenix, Ariz. Possessing a good arm and a great deal of potential, he should contribute right away for the Wildcats.

Villanova has the Big East's best closer and one the nation's top closers in senior right-hander James Russell. Russell has accumulated a number of prestigious awards during the preseason, including being named a preseason first team All-American by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA), a Louisville Slugger Preseason All-America third teamer, and a Big East Preseason All-Conference first team performer.

As a junior this past season, Russell was named a third team All-



2003 SEASON PREVIEW



The Wildcats' 2002 postseason award winners: Nick Allen (Louisville Slugger Freshman All-America honorable mention), James Russell (NCBWA All-America third team), and Chris Graziano (All-Big East second team).

American by the NCBWA, as well as an ABCA/Rawlings first team All-East Region honoree. He led the Big East in saves last year for both overall games (15) and conference games (8). Russell finished the season tied for third in the nation in saves. He ended the 2002 campaign with a 2.33 ERA in 22 appearances, allowing just 12 runs (seven earned) on 25 hits in 27 innings pitched, striking out 35 and walking eight. Russell broke the single season Villanova save record in 2002, as well as setting a new Wildcat career mark. In May, 2002, he was named to the All-Big East Conference second team.

Catcher:

Greg Fater, who graduated in 2002 and is back at Villanova working on his Masters Degree in Business Administration, returns for another season as the team's starter at catcher. Fater had his best season in 2002 batting .277 with three doubles and 11 RBI. Another senior who will also see time behind the plate is Marshall Canosa. Canosa hit .269 last season, ending the year on a hot streak with nine hits in his final 21 at-bats.

Freshman Jim Gillin will battle for time in a backup role. A local standout from Archbishop Carroll High School, Gillin was an All-County and All-Catholic League performer for a nationally ranked Carroll squad. Fellow freshmen, Tom Rinaldi and Dan Clark, will add depth for the 'Cats behind the plate. Rinaldi, who will push for time at catcher as well as in the infield, was a second team All-State player for Holmdel High School in New Jersey.

Infield:

The Wildcats will have to overcome two huge losses at the corner positions with the graduation of first baseman Rob Cafiero and third baseman Brendan Mannix. Both had tremendous senior campaigns combining for 33 doubles, 24 home runs, and 89 RBI, and each went on to play at the next level with Cafiero getting drafted in the 32nd round by the Philadelphia Phillies and Mannix signing

a free agent contract with the New York Mets.

At first base, freshman Freddie Thon and senior Ryan Crammer will battle for the starting nod. Thon, a native of Puerto Rico and nephew of former major leaguer Dicki Thon, was drafted in the late rounds by the Houston Astros but bypassed the pros to come play college baseball on the Main Line. Thon has tremendous power potential and will make an immediate impact for the 'Cats in the middle of the lineup. Crammer is a solid defensive player who batted .266 last season with nine RBI.

A pair of transfers, Danny Poydenis and Mitch Mitchell, will look to take over third base duties. Poydenis joins the Wildcats after transferring from Brevard Community College in Florida where he put up outstanding numbers as a sophomore this past season despite missing 16 games due to a wrist injury. He batted .384 with 23 stolen bases and a .500 on-base percentage in 2002. In addition to a starting role at third base, Poydenis will add depth at second base as well. Mitchell came to Villanova from Oklahoma State where he batted .273 (12-for-44) with two doubles, one home run and six RBI in 2002 and helped lead the Cowboys to a 37-21 overall record.

At shortstop, junior Brian Trotta returns as the incumbent starter. Starting off the season slow offensively in 2002, Trotta came on late to bat .275 (28-for-102) in the final 33 games of the season. A talented infielder from San Juan, Puerto Rico, freshman Omar Saade possesses tremendous athleticism, is a good defensive player with an above-average arm, and can play any of the three infield positions.

Sophomore Mark Cardillo returns to take over the full-time second base duties in 2002. Splitting time with senior Brendan Trainer last season, Cardillo showed outstanding potential both offensively and defensively. He batted .268 and recorded a .952 fielding percentage.

The Wildcats possess solid depth in the infield as well, with senior Dustin Downs able to play several positions. Downs saw time at third base, shortstop and second base in his first season with the 'Cats in 2002, and batted .221 with 11 RBI.

Outfield:

The Villanova outfield is one of the team's biggest strengths in 2003. Senior centerfielder Chris Graziano returns for his final season and gives the Wildcats one of the nation's top baserunning threats. Last season, Graziano stole 38 bases to break his own single season record, and also became the school's all-time stolen base leader by breaking Brian Fili's record of 61. A second team All-Big East selection as a junior last season, Graziano was selected to the 2003 Preseason first team All-Conference squad.

The starter in left field will be Schau, who is one of the conference's best offensive players as well as a top-notch relief pitcher. In his first season as a starter in 2002, Schau batted .310 with 11 doubles, seven home runs and 30 RBI.

Senior Brian Newbold and freshman Darren Griffith will battle for the starting right field position. Newbold is a solid offensive player, hitting .349 as a sophomore in 2001 and following that up with a .282 average one season ago. Griffith is deadly on the basepaths as well as in the field as he will bring speed to every area of the Wildcat game.

Villanova has good outfield depth as Mitchell, sophomores Alan Day, Pat Krieg and Pete Riccio, and freshmen Nick Castelli and Frank Cirone give the Wildcats a number of options. Day is rehabbing from Tommy John surgery and when healthy has tremendous potential both offensively and defensively. Krieg is a talented youngster with above average speed and solid offensive potential. A redshirt freshman, Riccio earned a redshirt year after battling injuries last season, and has moved from the infield to the outfield. Castelli adds speed and a plus-arm to the Villanova outfield, while Cirone will give the 'Cats another right-handed bat off the bench.

Designated Hitter:

Mitchell is the odds on favorite to be the team's everyday designated hitter in 2003. His power potential will give Villanova pop in the middle of the lineup. Coming from one of the nation's best baseball programs in Oklahoma State, Mitchell has the talent to make quite an impact in the Big East Conference.

Schau, Newbold and Crammer may also see action at the designated hitter spot this season, as head coach Joe Godri has a number of options to go to offensively.



2003 ROSTERS

Numerical Roster

NO	NAME	CL	POS	HT	WT	B/T	HOMETOWN/HIGH SCHOOL
1	Dustin Downs	Sr	IF	6-0	195	R/R	Staten Island, N.Y./St. Joseph by the Sea
2	Brian Trotta	Jr	SS	6-1	185	R/R	Levittown, N.Y./W.T. Clarke
3	Greg Fater	Gr	C	6-0	180	R/R	Newport, R.I./Rogers
7	Mark Rocca	Sr	RHP	6-1	175	R/R	Andover, Mass./Andover
8	Alan Day	So	OF/RHP	6-1	190	R/R	Lake Ridge, Va./Woodbridge Senior
9	Ryan Crammer	Sr	1B/DH	6-4	190	L/R	Columbus, N.J./Bordentown Regional
11	Mark Cardillo	So	IF	5-8	165	R/R	Naples, Fla./Barron Collier
12	Danny Poydenis	Jr	IF	6-0	205	R/R	Vero Beach, Fla./St. Edward's (Brevard CC)
13	Tom Kandybowicz	Sr	RHP	6-1	210	R/R	Massapequa, N.Y./Massapequa
14	Pete Riccio	So	IF	6-3	190	L/L	Warren, N.J./Watchung Hills Regional
15	Darren Griffith	Fr	OF	6-2	180	R/R	Edison, N.J./John P. Stevens
17	Brian Newbold	Sr	OF/DH	6-2	185	R/R	Newington, Conn./Newington
19	Dan Farino	Jr	RHP/DH	6-2	205	R/R	Mt. Holly, N.J./Rancocas Valley Regional
20	John Yeager	Sr	RHP	6-2	210	R/R	Kimberton, Pa./Phoenixville Area
21	Nick Allen	So	RHP	6-0	190	R/R	Green Lane, Pa./Boyetown Area
23	Chris Graziano	Sr	OF	6-0	195	L/L	Hamilton, N.J./Notre Dame
24	Jake Wolff	Fr	LHP	6-3	210	L/L	Randolph, N.J./Delbarton
25	Jim Gillin	Fr	C	6-2	200	R/R	Broomall, Pa./Archbishop Carroll
26	Frank Cirone	Fr	OF	5-11	188	R/R	Arlington Heights, Ill./St. Viator
29	Tom Rinaldi	Fr	C/IF	5-11	185	L/R	Holmdel, N.J./Holmdel
30	Omar Saade	Fr	IF	6-1	160	R/R	San Juan, P.R./Colegio San Ignacio
31	Mitch Mitchell	Sr	OF/IF	6-7	235	R/R	Brownsville, Pa./Brownsville Area (Oklahoma St.)
32	Michael Grodecki	So	RHP	6-7	200	R/R	Northbrook, Ill./Loyola Academy
33	Adrian Schau	Jr	RHP/OF	6-1	195	R/R	Novato, Calif./Marin Catholic College Prep
35	Joe McCoy	So	RHP	6-2	185	R/R	Dallas, Texas/Highland Park
36	James Russell	Sr	RHP	6-7	240	R/R	Rochester, N.Y./Greece Athena
37	Pat Krieg	So	OF	6-0	190	R/R	West Chester, Pa./West Chester East
38	James Baxter	So	LHP	6-0	195	L/L	Pt. Pleasant, N.J./Monsignor Donovan
40	Mike Ciccotelli	Jr	LHP	6-0	190	L/L	Hartsdale, N.Y./Iona Prep
42	Ted Aust	Fr	RHP	6-0	190	R/R	Phoenix, Ariz./Brophy College Prep
44	Freddie Thon	Fr	1B	6-2	205	L/L	Guaynabo, P.R./Baldwin School
47	Marshall Canosa	Sr	C	5-9	200	R/R	Pine Bush, N.Y./Pine Bush
50	Nick Castelli	Fr	OF	6-0	175	R/R	Staten Island, N.Y./St. Peters Boys H.S.
52	Dan Clark	Fr	C	6-1	185	R/R	Unionville, Conn./Farmington

Alphabetical Roster

NO	NAME	CL	POS	HT	WT	B/T	HOMETOWN/HIGH SCHOOL
21	Nick Allen	So	RHP	6-0	190	R/R	Green Lane, Pa./Boyetown Area
42	Ted Aust	Fr	RHP	6-0	190	R/R	Phoenix, Ariz./Brophy College Prep
38	James Baxter	So	LHP	6-0	195	L/L	Pt. Pleasant, N.J./Monsignor Donovan
47	Marshall Canosa	Sr	C	5-9	200	R/R	Pine Bush, N.Y./Pine Bush
11	Mark Cardillo	So	IF	5-8	165	R/R	Naples, Fla./Barron Collier
50	Nick Castelli	Fr	OF	6-0	175	R/R	Staten Island, N.Y./St. Peters Boys H.S.
40	Mike Ciccotelli	Jr	LHP	6-0	190	L/L	Hartsdale, N.Y./Iona Prep
26	Frank Cirone	Fr	OF	5-11	188	R/R	Arlington Heights, Ill./St. Viator
52	Dan Clark	Fr	C	6-1	185	R/R	Unionville, Conn./Farmington
9	Ryan Crammer	Sr	1B/DH	6-4	190	L/R	Columbus, N.J./Bordentown Regional
8	Alan Day	So	OF/RHP	6-1	190	R/R	Lake Ridge, Va./Woodbridge Senior
1	Dustin Downs	Sr	IF	6-0	195	R/R	Staten Island, N.Y./St. Joseph by the Sea
19	Dan Farino	Jr	RHP/DH	6-2	205	R/R	Mt. Holly, N.J./Rancocas Valley Regional
3	Greg Fater	Gr	C	6-0	180	R/R	Newport, R.I./Rogers
25	Jim Gillin	Fr	C	6-2	200	R/R	Broomall, Pa./Archbishop Carroll
23	Chris Graziano	Sr	OF	6-0	195	L/L	Hamilton, N.J./Notre Dame
15	Darren Griffith	Fr	OF	6-2	180	R/R	Edison, N.J./John P. Stevens
32	Michael Grodecki	So	RHP	6-7	200	R/R	Northbrook, Ill./Loyola Academy
13	Tom Kandybowicz	Sr	RHP	6-1	210	R/R	Massapequa, N.Y./Massapequa
37	Pat Krieg	So	OF	6-0	190	R/R	West Chester, Pa./West Chester East
35	Joe McCoy	So	RHP	6-2	185	R/R	Dallas, Texas/Highland Park
31	Mitch Mitchell	Sr	OF/IF	6-7	235	R/R	Brownsville, Pa./Brownsville Area (Oklahoma St.)
17	Brian Newbold	Sr	OF/DH	6-2	185	R/R	Newington, Conn./Newington
12	Danny Poydenis	Jr	IF	6-0	205	R/R	Vero Beach, Fla./St. Edward's (Brevard CC)
14	Pete Riccio	So	IF	6-3	190	L/L	Warren, N.J./Watchung Hills Regional
29	Tom Rinaldi	Fr	C/IF	5-11	185	L/R	Holmdel, N.J./Holmdel
7	Mark Rocca	Sr	RHP	6-1	175	R/R	Andover, Mass./Andover
36	James Russell	Sr	RHP	6-7	240	R/R	Rochester, N.Y./Greece Athena
30	Omar Saade	Fr	IF	6-1	160	R/R	San Juan, P.R./Colegio San Ignacio
33	Adrian Schau	Jr	RHP/OF	6-1	195	R/R	Novato, Calif./Marin Catholic College Prep
44	Freddie Thon	Fr	1B	6-2	205	L/L	Guaynabo, P.R./Baldwin School
2	Brian Trotta	Jr	SS	6-1	185	R/R	Levittown, N.Y./W.T. Clarke
24	Jake Wolff	Fr	LHP	6-3	210	L/L	Randolph, N.J./Delbarton
20	John Yeager	Sr	RHP	6-2	210	R/R	Kimberton, Pa./Phoenixville Area

Head Coach: #5 Joe Godri (second season)

Assistant Coaches: #10 Rick Clagett, #18 Doc Kennedy, #34 Rod Johnson

WILDCATS BY CLASS

Graduate Students (1) - Greg Fater.
Seniors (10)- Marshall Canosa, Ryan Crammer, Dustin Downs, Chris Graziano, Tom Kandybowicz, Mitch Mitchell, Brian Newbold, Mark Rocca, James Russell, John Yeager.
Juniors (5)- Mike Ciccotelli, Dan Farino, Danny Poydenis, Adrian Schau, Brian Trotta.
Sophomores (8)- Nick Allen, James Baxter, Mark Cardillo, Alan Day, Michael Grodecki, Pat Krieg, Joe McCoy, Pete Riccio.
Freshmen (10)- Ted Aust, Nick Castelli, Frank Cirone, Dan Clark, Jim Gillin, Darren Griffith, Tom Rinaldi, Omar Saade, Freddie Thon, Jake Wolff.

WILDCATS BY STATE

Arizona (1)- Ted Aust.
California (1)- Adrian Schau.
Connecticut (2)- Dan Clark, Brian Newbold.
Florida (2)- Mark Cardillo, Danny Poydenis.
Illinois (2)- Frank Cirone, Michael Grodecki.
Massachusetts (1)- Mark Rocca.
New Jersey (8)- James Baxter, Ryan Crammer, Dan Farino, Chris Graziano, Darren Griffith, Pete Riccio, Tom Rinaldi, Jake Wolff.
New York (7)- Marshall Canosa, Nick Castelli, Mike Ciccotelli, Dustin Downs, Tom Kandybowicz, James Russell, Brian Trotta.
Pennsylvania (5)- Nick Allen, Jim Gillin, Pat Krieg, Mitch Mitchell, John Yeager.
Rhode Island (1)- Greg Fater.
Texas (1)- Joe McCoy.
Virginia (1)- Alan Day.
Puerto Rico (2)- Omar Saade, Freddie Thon.

WILDCAT BASEBALL PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Ted Aust(rhymes with COST)
 Mark CardilloCar-DILL-o
 Mike CiccotelliChick-o-TELL-ee
 Frank CironeSir-OWN
 Ryan CrammerCRAMM-er
 Michael GrodeckiGro-DECKI
 Tom KandybowiczCandy-BOW-itz
 Pat KriegKREEG
 Danny PoydenisPoy-DENNIS
 Peter RiccioREACH-e-o
 Mark RoccaROCK-a
 Omar SaadeSaa-DEE
 Adrian Schau(rhymes with HOW)