Members of Linfield’s three national championship baseball teams were honored during Championship Saturday, on April 16 at Roy Helser Field. Teammates from the 1966, 1971 and 2013 national championship baseball teams gathered to share memories, swap stories and support Linfield’s current baseball teams.

The champions return

Wildcat Erin Tauscher ’17 successfully juggled Linfield’s rigorous nursing curriculum while competing at a high level in softball.

A nursing major who both lives and learns at Linfield’s Portland Campus, Tauscher is aiming toward a career in the health care industry. She thrives on the face-to-face interaction that comes with helping people and is always looking to improve the lives of others, both physically and emotionally.

“It’s the small things that make my major rewarding,” says Tauscher. “It is satisfying knowing that I made a patient smile or that by simply talking to someone, I made their day mean something.”

Last year, Tauscher pondered whether she wanted to continue playing softball for the ’Cats despite living and attending classes in Northwest Portland. She knew commuting between the two campuses and staying engaged in both worlds would be difficult. Ultimately, the prospect of walking away from the Catball program was something Tauscher, a 2015 second team all-NWC honoree, could not face.

Her typical day is anything but ordinary. Each class lasts a little under three hours and clinical sessions can take as long as eight hours. Tauscher tries her best to attend softball practice as regularly as possible, but the time she devotes to her studies takes precedence.

“A simple two-hour practice session for the McMinnville players is usually a six-hour commitment for me due to the distance and traffic,” said Tauscher.

She is the second Linfield player over the last 10 years who has attempted to commute from the Portland Campus, according to coach Jackson Vaughan ’97, who relies on her powerful bat in the lineup. Though she competed in just three quarters of the Wildcats’ games due to two separate injuries and nursing clinicals, she finished with a solid .344 batting average, 30 RBIs and eight home runs, statistics worthy of first team all-Northwest Conference and first team all-West Region honors.

– Rhys Lendio ’17

Erin Tauscher ’17 balanced nursing classes and softball practices this year. The Linfield softball season (32-16) concluded at Super Regionals, despite a late-season surge of success that saw the ‘Cats capture the Northwest Conference Tournament and Spokane Regional championships.
Kevin Nelson ’16 is the new football play-by-play broadcaster and community partnership representative.

Nelson takes over the role as “voice of the Wildcats” from Bill Johnson, who passed away suddenly in November. Out of necessity, Nelson was called upon to fill Johnson’s seat in the broadcast booth during last season’s football playoffs as Johnson became ill.

Followers of Linfield athletic teams who tune into radio broadcasts on KPDQ-AM and KSLC-FM or watch the college’s live stream videocasts are likely already familiar with Nelson’s on-air work. Before taking over the football play-by-play, he served as football sideline reporter. During his time at Linfield, he also provided play-by-play coverage of a wide spectrum of Linfield sports offerings, including basketball, volleyball, soccer, baseball and softball.

Lawson, Schmoll tabbed for academic honors

Kenzie Schmoll ’17 of Grants Pass and Eric Lawson ’16 of Mill Creek, Wash., have earned CoSIDA Academic recognition following a vote of the region’s sports information directors.

Schmoll, a repeat selection to the CoSIDA Academic All-District 8 Softball Team, was named a third team Academic All-American. She has a 4.0 cumulative grade point average as a computer science major. Last year, she earned the Elite 89 Award, a prestigious honor given at the NCAA Finals, and was also Linfield’s female representative on the 2014-15 Northwest Conference Scholar-Athlete First Team.

Lawson, a three-peat selection to the CoSIDA Academic All-District 8 Baseball Team, was recognized as a first team honoree on the All-Northwest Conference Baseball Team and has maintained a 3.91 cumulative grade point average as a double major (marketing and psychology) and two-year co-captain for the Linfield baseball program. He was also named to the Academic All-District team at the conclusion of his sophomore and junior seasons. He is a member of the prestigious Kemper Scholar program.

Jacob Milhelich ’17

Sport: Track & field  Hometown: Fort Collins, Colo.  Major: Communication arts  Minor: Spanish

Two-time national champion in the 400 meters, winning at both the Indoor and Outdoor NCAA Division III Track & Field Championships.

Why Linfield? I knew that a smaller school with a liberal arts environment, discussion-based classes and plenty of opportunities to meet and work with professors on a more personal level was going to fit my learning style and personality very well.

Why track? Track is addicting. Once you win that first big race, you can’t get enough! I was very much a “late bloomer.” I had always wanted to run the 400, and when I finally got the chance to run it, I broke my high school’s record in my first race and haven’t looked back.

Favorite aspect of Linfield: The people. There are so many awesome people I have come to know and love. They make the stresses and difficulties of being a college student-athlete that much more bearable and make the memories and wonderful experiences that much more enjoyable.

On being the indoor national champion: Honestly, I felt relieved. One of the most important parts of winning big races like that is visualization. There wasn’t a single day that went by all year where I didn’t visualize winning nationals at least once. Needless to say, there was a lot of pressure and therefore a lot of stress going into it. But when it was time to get it done, it felt very rehearsed.

What have you learned from being an athlete? I have learned so much. If I had to pick one lesson that has taught me the most, it would be to not lower my expectations. I don’t lower my expectations for anyone or anything. It may sound sappy, but I honestly believe that I can do anything if I put the work in. I am nowhere near where I ultimately want to be as an athlete or as a person in general, but that’s exciting because that means that there is a lot I have to look forward to.

Summer 2016 LINFIELD MAGAZINE - 23