

# Wisconsin Hodags

Volume I Issue I

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***“The Hodag program has the responsibility of building better people and growing the sport of Ultimate.”***

## What is this newsletter all about?

This is the first of four newsletters this year. The newsletter is a way for the alumni, parents, and fans to stay apprised of the team with which we all share a special connection, and for new members to familiarize themselves with the expansive Hodag Community.

Expect to see a link to the most recent highlight video, write ups of recent tournaments, bios of each class of players, a figure tracking our endowment, and an update about the recent activity of the board.

## A Message from The Alumni Board

The Hodags have created an Alumni Board with 7 representatives voted in by the Hodag community. The purpose of the board is to offload some of the long-term program responsibilities from the current team. In the first year, we will work on creating the infrastructure to ensure the sustainable success of the board. The initial projects include a tax deductible program endowment, a regular newsletter, and the completion of the database of Hodag contacts.

The Board will ensure the integrity of the Hodag brand, which represents the Ultimate community, engenders sportsmanship, and the commitment to excellence. The Hodag program has the responsibility of building better people and growing the sport of Ultimate, and the Board is lending their experience to ensure that perennial achievement.

### The Official Alumni Board:

Dean Bolton '03

Tom Burkly '06

Ben Feldman '11

Jim Foster '09

Jon Gaynor '09

Bert Kang '03

Chris Scottto Divetta '11



Alumni Game 4/28

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## Alumni Contributions By Ben Feldman

Hodag alumni John Bergen (2011) and Jon Gaynor (2010) will be donating funds to cover the cost of two round-trip flights. These two flights will be awarded to two different current players based on Grade Point Average improvement over the course of the school year. These Alumni join the longstanding tradition of Hodags going the extra mile to help the team out and are the paragon of Hodag Love.



Jon Bergen

Former Captain  
Currently an Engineer at  
Watlow in Columbia, Missouri

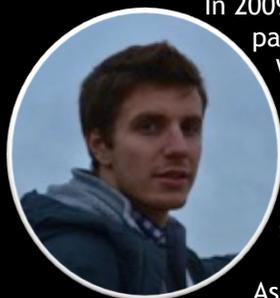


Jon Gaynor

Former Officer  
Currently a Senior Associate at McGladrey  
in Madison, Wisconsin

# The Endowment

By Jake Smart



In 2009, Dean Bolton (2003) worked with the University to establish an endowment that allowed parents and alumni to make tax deductible donations to the Hodags through the UW Foundation. When the fund reaches \$10,000, we will be able to access the interest. The funds are managed by UW Foundation and administered by the Club Sports Program.

With the newly appointed board, there are now measures in place to ensure that the money contributed to the fund will be directed responsibly, with an eye on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the team.

As former players know, each season is incredibly demanding, and the financial requirement is an additional part of the many challenges on the road to a Regional and National championship.

The Hodags have shown longevity over the past two decades and are poised to establish a permanent place at the top of the college firmament. The program is also giving back to the community and supporting players academic efforts in a concerted fashion. We are looking to enrich both the community and our players lives.

If we can get the endowment to that critical value, the potential for growth is boundless. The yearly interest and stability of the funds make these first steps so important.

Keep in mind that contributions to the Hodags via the UW Foundation are tax deductible, as it has a 501.3c classification, and all of the money goes towards the team as long as you designate it on the form.

If you would like to financially contribute to the future success of the team, you can either:

**Make an online donation through the UW Foundation at:**

<http://www.supportuw.org/giving?seq=14140>

**The donation form can be found at:**

[http://www.supportuw.org/wp-content/uploads/uwf\\_printable\\_form.pdf](http://www.supportuw.org/wp-content/uploads/uwf_printable_form.pdf)

**Mail a donation form to the UW Foundation at:  
UW Foundation**

**U.S. Bank Lock Box**

**Box 78807**

**Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807**

# Hodag Advising and Academics

By Dave Wiseman



We are excited to share a renewed focus on academics! The players and leaders of the Hodags have invested time and energy into ensuring the academic success of every player on the team. For the first time, the Hodags have the luxury of having a team academic advisor, Noel Howlett (thanks to a personal connection with Kelsen Alexander). All returning players on the team have already met with Noel to discuss their current status and future at the UW-Madison. Noel has availed himself to the team every week and is a resource for the current players to draw from in order to enable their academic success.

The team has also implemented a new early morning workout schedule. Our players get a jump on the day and no longer have to endure late night workouts, and it affords them the ability to maintain a healthy sleep cycle.

Hodags are students first, and the team is working to maintain that as a prominent feature of the Hodag lifestyle.

# The Official 2011-2012 Roster



**Name:** Aaron Speiss  
**Age:** 20  
**Hometown:** Platteville, WI  
**Year:** Sophomore  
**Intended Major:** Kinesiology or  
Biology  
**High School Sports:** Football,  
Basketball, Track, and XC

This is Aaron's first year playing competitively and has already established himself in the top 3 fastest Hodags during a dominant performance at the first combine of the year.

*"I love being part of a team, having the opportunity to work year-round towards a common goal, and the excitement and upbeat pace of frisbee."*



**Name:** Sam Loveland  
**Age:** 20  
**Hometown:** Milwaukee, WI   **Year:**  
Junior  
**Intended Major:** Biology  
**High School Sports:** Soccer, Tennis,  
and Kicker

Sam transferred Milwaukee and played for the Pimpdags last year, making the Hodags after a year of hard work. He is a smart cutter looking to translate his soccer skills, height, and speed to the field. He's also huge FC Barcelona fan.

*"I don't do something without trying to become the best at it."*



**Name:** Brian Novotny  
**Age:** 23  
**Hometown:** Stevens Point, WI  
**Year:** Junior  
**Intended Major:** Medical  
Microbiology and Immunology  
**High School Sports:** Football, and  
Wrestling

Brian wrestled for 2 years at UW-River Falls. He is making a bid for hardest working rookie and his maturity is helping him adapt to the systems quickly.

*"I put nothing less than 100% into everything I do, because I don't want to have any regrets when I'm done."*



**Name: Shane Saddison-Bradford**

**Age: 18**

**Hometown: Stevens Point, WI**

**Year: Freshman**

**Intended Major: Political Science  
and Spanish**

Shane is the youngest addition to the team, and makes up for inexperience with unmitigated enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. He's an Eagle Scout and may have better manners than Jerry.

*"I have wanted to be a Hodag since the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and I am honored to be able to play on such a talented team with a rich tradition of winning."*



**Name: Craig Cox**

**Age: 18**

**Hometown: Madison, WI**

**Year: Freshman**

**Intended Major: Pre-Med**

**High School Sports: Basketball,  
Baseball, Soccer, and Ultimate**

Craig is the tallest addition to the team at 6'6" and is the only rookie handler. He can solve a Rubik's cube in under a minute and is a valuable addition to the D-Line handlers.

*"I have a passion for the sport, and even if I just sit on the sidelines, I still cheer on my team and have a positive attitude."*



**Name: Peter Guerin**

**Age: 19**

**Hometown: Verona, WI**

**Year: Sophomore**

**Intended Major: Biomedical  
Engineering**

**High School Sports: Basketball,  
Soccer, Track, and Ultimate**

Peter broke his fibula skydiving Turtle in the second round of tryouts. He demonstrated an elevated level of athleticism and commitment, and has gone above and beyond as a sideline presence. Look for him to make an impact as a D-Line Cutter when he gets his leg back under him.

*"I am ultra competitive and am always pushing my teammates to be better AND then even better than that!"*



## Team Goals

By Dayu Liu

After a promising fall season the Hodags have high expectations for this upcoming spring. With the amount of skill and experience this team possesses, we plan on putting ourselves in a position to win every game we play this spring. That being said, Wisconsin has historically placed the most emphasis on preparing our team to peak at Regionals, and carrying on our momentum to the College Championships at the end of May.

Off the field we are setting high goals as well. The importance of our academic success has been mentioned already in this newsletter, and we plan on bringing this mentality of a STUDENT athlete into the spring. In recent years we have started volunteering with projects such as Habitat for Humanity and Food for Haiti. Additionally, we send players across Madison to help coach at local High School Ultimate practices. This season we plan on increasing our outreach as a means to make a real difference in our community. If you have any volunteer opportunities that could make a positive impact feel free to contact us and hopefully we can arrange something.

Our main goals:

- Win Regionals and a fourth National Championship
- Continue to improve academically and be the best students possible
- Use our 27 able bodies as a means to give back to the community and a better society



## Upcoming Tournaments

By Alex Simmons

**Stanford Invite:** March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>: Palo Alto, California

After a dismal 2-4 showing last year, the Hodags are excited for a chance at redemption, and the opportunity to make a run at winning the Stanford Invite for the first time since 2008. For the last few years Wisconsin has underperformed in California, and this is the year we hope to turn it around. With the level of competition looking to be quite impressive, this is a great test for us early on in the season.

**Centex:** March 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>: Austin, Texas

This will be the first time since 2008 that Wisco is heading back to Austin. With teams like Carleton, Colorado, Oregon, Iowa, Harvard and Texas already committing, Centex looks to be one of the premier tournaments of the year. We're excited for both the high level of competition and temperature for this tournament!

**Warm Up:** Late January or Early February

There is also a tournament in the works proposed for the end of January, which would be held in Florida. This would be similar to the "Warm Up" tournament held last year in Tampa in which we finished tied for 3<sup>rd</sup>. If this happens it would be a great opportunity for us to shake the rust off after not having been able to play outside for almost three months.



# A Letter From the Coach

## By Hector Valdivia

We start this season laden with the weight of egos inflated by the mighty wind that felled us in the finals of last year's championship game. We start among the favorites for the title, and rightly so. We return 19 players, a number higher than many other teams' rosters, from a team that found its identity during Nationals of last year and stormed through, putting on a dominant clinic over the host team in semifinals.

But we didn't win the tournament. The sting of that finals loss to CUT, those cursed Tybalts to our Romeos, has to stay dagger-sharp in our memory. Regardless of any expectation we or anyone else have for us, we are going to have to work. We're not winning any games from any of last year's scores, and our record doesn't carry over. Top Dog visas are given out during and expire at the end of each May. Every year we have to re-earn it.

That's a hard concept to always keep in mind, and past success can breed a touch of complacency if you're not diligent. That's why I'm so excited about the players that we picked up for this year. Each one comes with personalized strengths in Ultimate, and strong fundamental skill sets that helped them immediately keep pace with the returners. But what I'm most excited about is that, from a deep pool of even talent, we chose those with boundless energy, and a positive presence that will help the team to gel and unify our efforts. Already this has bore out on the field, where in practice they've more than had their share of plays where they tool a more senior teammate, and their effort pushes the veterans to keep giving their best so as to continue to hold their spot at the top of the food chain.

And at the top of the food chain our veterans sit. Our depth is unrivaled nationwide. Our receivers' jerseys have a surgeon general's warning on the back so defenders know the risk; sooner or later, these guys will kill you. Our handling core is unflappable, seasoned, and accurate even at range. Make no mistake, we have incredible talent. Awareness of our talent is good, and will allow us to tailor use of our myriad strengths to each opponent. But awareness of our pride is also good, and necessary to keep it in check. A giant mountain of work lies ahead, but this team has the capacity, and I believe the heart, to get it done. Though still far from our goal, we are definitely on track.

This also marks my 3rd year as the head coach of the Hodags, and every year has been a privilege and pleasure. I speak often of the defining importance of one's 3rd year on the team. Rookie year is spent ingesting knowledge full-time, and your second year you begin to work out the kinks as you consolidate your knowledge. By your third year your level of analysis should have progressed to a point where you can begin to play fundamentally sound while honing intuition, and you become a veteran. As I begin this year I reflect on all the lessons I've had to learn along the way, and feel better prepared than before.

I have meant to ask Opie O'Connell ('01) if he'd ever have imagined me in this role. As the captain and incredibly organized driving force of the program during his tenure, he steered team dynamics, goals and expectations in a path that has yielded incredible success and the best program performance of the decade, and I observed in admiration. I credit his leadership with a substantial portion of the success the team has since enjoyed. Now we begin the season a full decade after his final year, and I hope that I can also provide the leadership and guidance necessary for Hodags present and past to enjoy another decade of unequalled success. With this team, and its enthusiasm, you can bet that at the very least we're on the right track.

Hodag Love,  
CoachHh

MLC Highlight Vid: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQOL8RjywKg>

Blue Black Highlight Vid: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6vQIPomABU>