



# sports

## Swinging into senior year

**BREE GANNON & MEGAN FURBY**  
@AUCollegian

If you were to look at the roster for the 2018 Ashland University softball team, you would see that the team mostly consists of juniors and some freshman. For the most part, the team is made up of many returners and a few fresh faces. However, two of those faces stand out from the rest.

Sadie Cunningham and Paige McMenemy are the team's two lone seniors that will be turning in their glove at the end of this season. A pitcher and catcher duo that have put a lot of hard work and effort into their time on the field.

Cunningham started softball when she was just five years old and started catching full time in high school. The game of softball taught Cunningham a love that started at a young age.

"Before coming to college to play, my career helped start my love for the game," Cunningham said.

The pair started their collegiate career under the helm of Sheila Gulas and are finishing it under Emlyn Knerem. Cunningham said that the great game brought her a tremendous learning experience and has been a rewarding journey thus far.

"I have learned how to be a better teammate," Cunningham said. "It is rewarding knowing all the year I have played before got me to this point. While here, I have learned how to be a better teammate."

Cunningham's plan after graduation is to apply for occupational therapy school and to watch her younger sister's softball career blossom. Cunningham said she is looking forward to watching her experience all the things she was able to over the years.

Much like Cunningham, McMenemy's softball career started when she was young. She started play-

ing when she was just six years old and started pitching at eight. She played travel softball from age 10-18 and played across the country from coast to coast.

During McMenemy's freshman year of high school, she pitched every other game and played in left field when she was not pitching. Starting her sophomore year, she was pitching almost every game for the entire game. She received First Team All-Ohio during her junior and senior year and was also named as the Conference Player of the Year.

Before coming to Ashland, McMenemy committed to play softball at the University of Akron and played for two years as a Zip before transferring to Ashland the summer before her junior year.

"I love that I am part of a strong program with supportive alumni, how coaches have high expectations, a positive environment and overall a family atmosphere," McMenemy said. "It can be challenging balancing such a busy schedule with school, practice, games...but at the end of the day, it is very rewarding and I feel being a college athlete I have gotten to play the game I love and also learned many

lessons that I will keep with me my whole life."

McMenemy said that along with being able to play the game she loves, she loves being able to play it at a college level and has spent years working hard for the chance to experience it. Her appreciation for the program itself has also grown over the years.

"We are a very strong competitive program and our alumni are awesome and support us throughout the whole year," McMenemy said. "Each player has an alumni mentor that we keep in contact with and they support us. Even our coach is an alumni so you know it is a great program when people stick around."

Being a college athlete has also taught McMenemy skills that she will use off the field and outside the university. Skills such as time management, discipline, responsibility, working with others and having a strong ethic.

Her goals after graduation are simple: teach and give back by coaching. McMenemy is a middle grade Education major for math and science and plans on using what she has learned in the classroom and on the field to help others.

"I would love to begin coaching at the high school level as soon as next year and maybe eventually at the college level also," McMenemy said. "I have been giving pitching and hitting lessons to kids age seven through sixteen since I was a junior in high school and it is something I love to do and do not plan on stopping anytime soon."

McMenemy said that for the past four years she has been a head coach for a traveling team which brings along a year-round commitment. She said that she loves coaching and getting to take the younger kids through the same experiences she grew up with at the softball fields all summer.

McMenemy is able to coach alongside her teammate, Katie Mitchell, and her sister Megan, who plays softball at The Ohio State University. She also added that her third coach is her German Shepherd, Simba, who loves to hang out at the fields with her.

Cunningham, McMenemy and the rest of the softball team are set to play again on Saturday April 14 with a double header against the Wayne State Warriors. First pitch is scheduled for 2 p.m.



AU ATHLETICS  
Sadie Cunningham is one of three catchers.



AU ATHLETICS  
Paige McMenemy is currently pitching with a 2.89 ERA.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

### Baseball

April. 13-145 @ Grand Valley

April 17 vs. Findlay

April 18 vs. Lake Erie

April 20 -21 vs. Purdue NW

### Softball

April 14-15. 16 @ Wayne State

April 17 @ Ferris St.

April 18 @ Purdue NW

April 20 @ Northwood

April 21 @ Grand Valley

### Track & Field

April 13 -14 @ Walsh

Invitational

April 20-21 @ Jesse

Owens Track Classic

### Women's Golf

April 14- 15 @ Ashland Invitational

### Men's Golf

April 13-14 @ Bill Blazer Invitational

April 20-21 @ GLIAC Championship

### Tennis

April 13 @ Slippery Rock

April 19 @ West Liberty

## Men's golf bracing winter weather in April

**BREE GANNON**  
@BreeGannon

While the weather continues to be in a winter state of mind, it is not stopping the Ashland University men's golf team from hitting the tee.

The team started their 2018 spring play on March 26 at the two-day Findlay Spring Invitational held in Lexington, KY.

The team picked up right where they left off from the the fall season.

During the fall season, senior Chandler Walnsch, juniors Austin Kondratick, Frank Steffen and Cole Smith and sophomore Patrick Steffen, lead the way for the team.

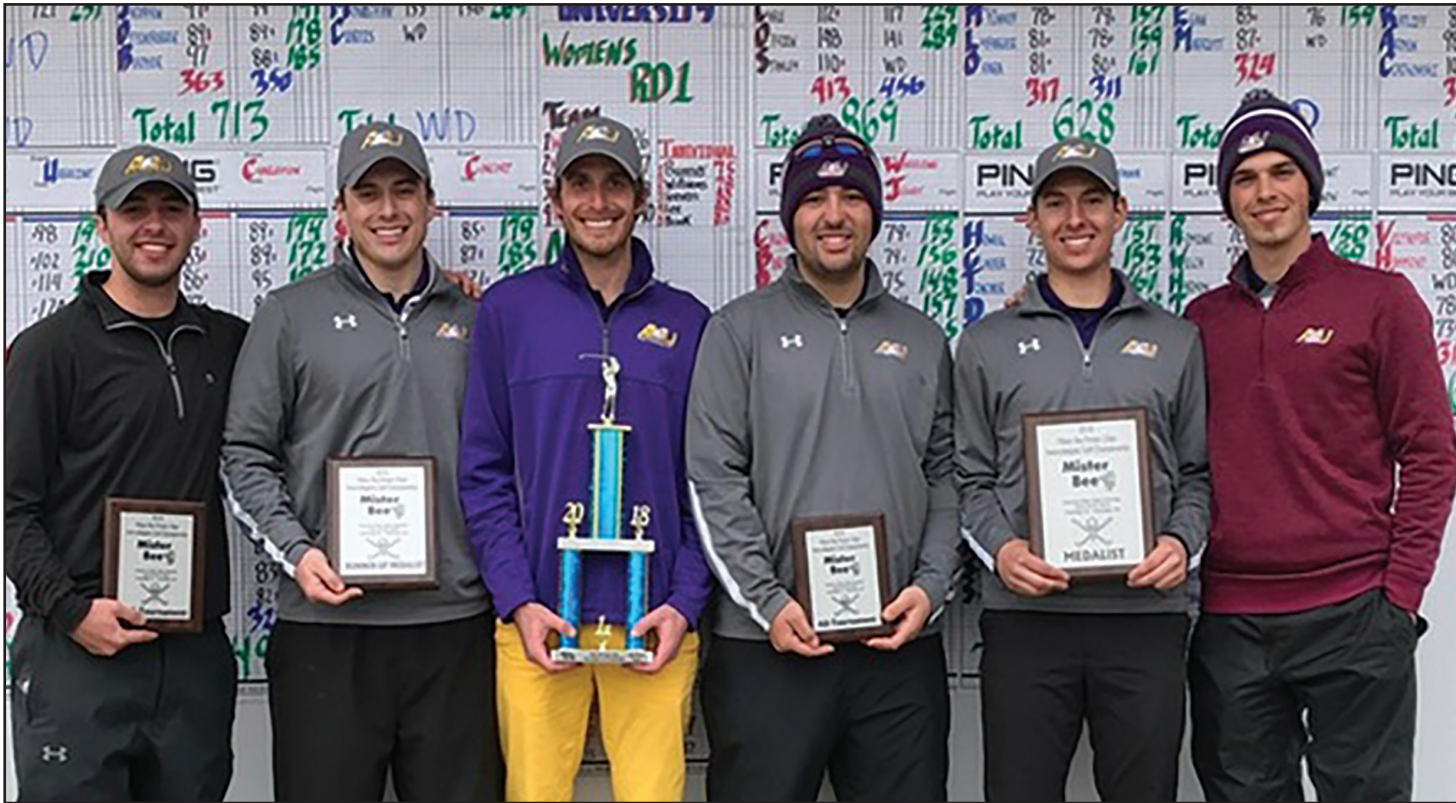
The team played in nine tournaments and finished with four top 10 finishes and over 15 top 25 individual finishes. So far, the individual finishes have not stopped and the team has even walked away with a first place finish.

The spring season started with a two day tournament where the team placed 17th, out of 23 teams, with a team score of 623.

During day one, Kondratick tied for 22nd place with a score of 74 while Patrick Steffen tied for 62nd with a 78. Day two brought brought yet another 72 score for Kondratick, who ended the tournament in 14th individually.

Up next, was the Ohio Valley Mister Bee Potato Chips Intercollegiate Golf Championships held at Cambridge Country Club. Day one of the match ended in the Eagles at the top of the leaderboard with a team score of 289. Kondratick led the team with a 4-under-par round of 68.

Freshman Ben Jones, was right behind Kondratick with a 1-under score of 71 while Walnsch ended



AU ATHLETICS  
The men's golf team placed first for the first time in five years at the Mister Bee tournament.

the line with a round of 74 to tie for seventh.

Patrick Steffen and Smith were tied for 12th with a matching score of 76.

Day two of the tournament brought the first first place finish for the team with a total score of 584.

The finish marked the team's first championship since Sept. 10, 2012.

Kondratick also walked away with a first place finish with a total score of 143.

His first round score of 68 was his third under 70 score and came close to his best score of 67 which was made in the first tournament of the 2017-2018 season.

Walnsch finished second overall with a two day score of 146 while

Jones ended in third with a 147. Smith ended the tournament at 76 and 73 for a total score of 149, landing him in the fifth place spot. Steffen rounded the day not too far behind the group with a 151 total score.

The team caught a break after their April 7 Mount Vernon Golf Invitational tournament was cancelled. Since the cancellation, the team now only have about five tournaments left to play before the season ends.

At the end of the season, the team will graduate their two seniors, Mason Berry and Walnsch.

The team is scheduled to play again on April 13 at the Bill Blazer Memorial match at Cumberland Trail Golf Club and is hosted by Ohio Dominican University.



AU ATHLETICS  
Chandler Walnsch is one of two seniors on the team.