

# sports

## “Rod with the three”

**BROOKE YOUNG**  
Reporter

Rodrick Caldwell.

A name that conjures up thoughts of offensive fire, 3-point shots, and an unmistakable presence on the court.

Yet, to those who know him best, another adjective also comes to mind: calmness. Level-headedness. Even-keeled. All of these words have been used to describe the approach Caldwell has on and off the court.

Caldwell’s passion and love for the game began early, shooting a basketball for the first time at the age of only 3-years-old alongside his father, who had played basketball throughout his life.

“My love for the game came from being around him all of the time, being in the gym all of the time,” Caldwell said.

Caldwell most recently was named the GLIAC South Player of the Week, following his monumental performance against Davenport and Grand Valley State, where he tied a school record with nine 3-pointers against Davenport. Scoring a career-high, 31 points in the game, Caldwell is a driving force in the current momentum of the AU Men’s Basketball Team.

“Not everyone can be the next LeBron and go to the NBA, these guys keep me level headed, we can just have fun and be free for now,” Caldwell said. “We all have a really good bond.”

Ever since his transfer from Division I Bowling Green State University in 2018, Caldwell has lit up the AU court with both his intense

drive for success according to head men’s basketball coach John Ellenwood.

“He’s one of those guys that is just electric,” he said.

Ellenwood stressed that Caldwell’s creativity on the court is of utmost importance. His ability to create his own shots and willingness to always try something new was an adjustment for Ellenwood, who had never coached someone “who was a scoring guard in that

said. “He just makes it really easy to play along with leadership like that.”

Caldwell may not be the tallest or largest force on the team, standing at 6-foot-tall, but he always brings heart.

“He knows how to paint his picture,” Ellenwood said. “He sees what he wants to paint before he ever puts his brush to the canvas and it has something that he has always been able to do. Everyone

son, but to stand out from everyone else,” to focus on shooting the ball and learning how to score.

“I’m not the biggest out there, I’m not the fastest, I’m not the tallest, but with my ability to score and shoot, it helps me a lot,” Caldwell said.

Another notable component of Caldwell’s game and life is his strong faith, which has grown from his teammates and experiences since arriving at Ashland.

faith, and give all of the praise to God.”

In the recent Davenport and Grand Valley Games, Ellenwood said that he caught himself emotional at what Caldwell was accomplishing on the floor, citing the moments are memories he will never forget.

“He has fun playing the game his way, and it’s something where you don’t want to overwhelm him with negativity,” Ellenwood said. “He knows how to motivate himself. You’ve just got to be even-keeled with him.”

Caldwell intends to enjoy his final season as an Eagle, and have a rewarding experience alongside his brothers.

“Although we have put blood, sweat and tears into this game, in the end it is all just a game,” Thompson said. “Sometimes we get a little turned up or irritated or frustrated but we can’t let it get to us because it is just a game, I learned that from Rod.”

Ellenwood said that Caldwell is a special part of the team, not only on the court, but off the court as well. He creates the shots when you need them and he can make it happen, feeding off the unscripted moments in the game.

Approaching the end of the season and Caldwell’s last games on the court, Ellenwood said that he “cherishes every moment he has left on the floor.”

The Eagles (16-9 overall, 9-8 conference) will play their next game against Northwood on Feb. 22 at 3:00 p.m.



AU ATHLETICS

Senior guard Rodrick Caldwell began playing for AU in 2018 after transferring from Division I BGUSU.

point guard position.”

Caldwell said that his experience at Ashland has gone beyond the basketball court, and that connecting with his teammates has provided him with an outlet.

“He’s the guy that gets us going when our energy is flat” red-shirt junior guard Aaron Thompson

knows that about him. You just want to put him in those positions as a coach where he can be creative. What he lacks in size, he makes up for in toughness and confidence. He’s not scared of anyone out there.”

Caldwell said his father told him early on that he’s “the tallest per-

When the team hits a rough patch during the season, Caldwell reminds everyone that basketball is just a game and that keeping faith is most important.

“We keep our faith in God,” Caldwell said. “We can’t let the bad things get us down. We got to stay level-headed, keep up our

## Hall of Fame exhibit to be rectified in Kates gym; softball field in talks

**EVAN LAUX**  
Sports Editor

At the conclusion of the basketball and wrestling seasons this spring, Kates gymnasium will see its next quality of life renovation after last fall’s creation of the Rinehart room: a hall of fame exhibit devoted to both past and present Ashland Eagle athletes.

The Tom Wurster Hall of Fame and Sports History Center (title subject to change) will be located

Ashland sports history, while the two on the outsides will show current athletic information.

“There’s so many more opportunities than what you’d have with a regular hall of fame wall,” King said. “Say you or your dad or mom played here, you call up their name and there’s their hall of fame plaque. But we also want to recognize all of our sports history, so we’re gonna put in stuff like great teams, great moments, national champions and championship

will guarantee its continued maintenance.

The kiosks will be located on the western wall of the gym entrance lobby, while the eastern wall is still open to suggestion. King and Vaughn are currently unsure of what will be put there, but a mural or other athletic related piece of artwork is a possibility.

The exhibit will also be able to be accessed through goashland.eagles.com.

“When the Hall of Fame class

awhile about wanting to build a softball field,” King said. “It would go alongside the baseball field since we already have the land. Softball is the one team that still doesn’t have a field on campus so I think it would be really important if we got it built.”

The athletic department currently does not have the funding to build the field, but is scouting for donors who may want to contribute.

“We have secured donations al-

terms of commitments we’ve probably made a little over \$100,000.”

Vaughn added that progress will move quicker once a lead donor is found, i.e. someone who contributes at least half of the total cost towards the project.

“We’re working on continuing to identify people who have a passion for softball and are willing to support the project,” Vaughn said. There’s definitely people out there.”

The field’s total cost sits at around

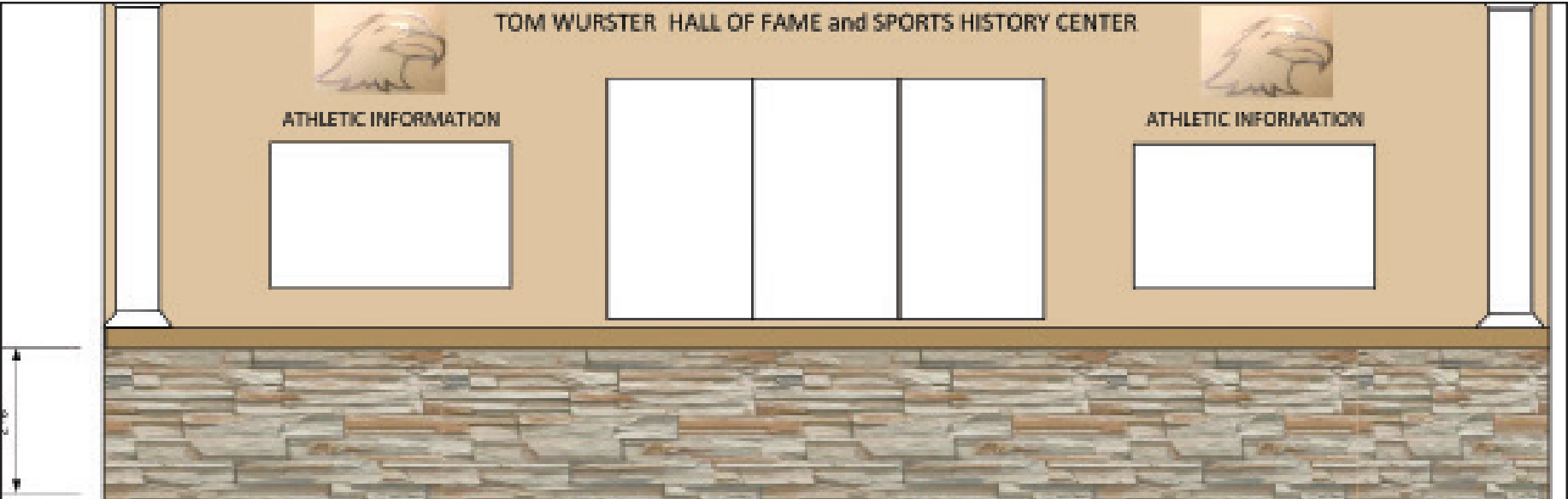


PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KYLE VAUGHN

The hall of fame exhibit will feature kiosks that allow viewers to view Eagles athletics history, past and present.

in the main lobby, directly outside of the gymnasium.

“We had talked a lot about ways that we could give more of a profile to our hall of fame for awhile,” Director of Athletics, Al King said. “It’s been upstairs for a long time now and I don’t think a lot of people see it.”

King believes that in its new place, Kates attendees will be naturally drawn to the hall of fame.

“More and more people are gonna see it through the athletic events, graduation and everything else we do here,” King said.

The main attraction of the exhibit will be its five interactive kiosks, allowing visitors to engage with AU sports history, statistics and updates. All AU sports will be featured in the exhibit.

The three kiosks in the middle will be dedicated specifically to

teams, academic all-Americans ... that sort of thing, and we can update that whenever we want. It’s going to be very interactive.”

The donors who provided funding for the exhibit, Tom (class of 1964) and Ann Wurster were adamant about also catering to current athletics as well, according to Associate Director of Athletics Development Kyle Vaughn.

“Tom really liked the whole digital idea with all of the opportunities it allowed,” Vaughn said. “The outside kiosks will allow for our live Twitter feed to go through and our current rosters among other things. Say it’s volleyball season, we’ll have a volleyball video playing – we can gear it to whatever season we’re in.”

In addition to the upfront cost, the Wurster family set up an endowment fund for the exhibit that

next year gets loaded in, I can send them the link and they can check it out,” Vaughn said. “I think that this will help to further touch base with our alumni, which will in turn have them be the next Tom and Ann Wurster. When you look around at our buildings, they’re all named after a donor. We want to continue that culture with our younger alumni and keep them highly engaged and attached to this community.”

### New Softball Field

Within the AU athletic department, there have also been talks of building a new softball field alongside the Donges baseball field.

The proposed complex has been discussed for years, according to Director of Athletics Al King.

“The university has looked for

ready and have alumni who have made major gifts towards it,” Associate Director of Athletics Development Kyles Vaughn said. “In

roughly \$1.5 million according to Vaughn.

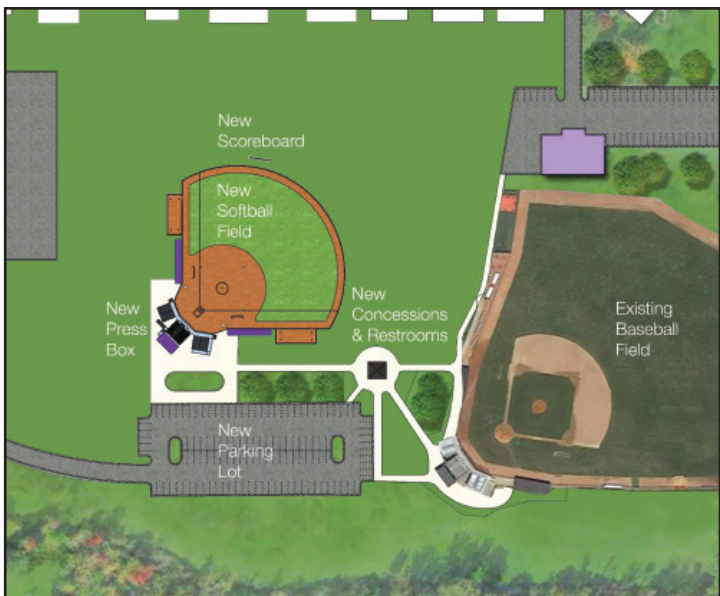


PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KYLE VAUGHN

Mock-up rendering of what a new softball field would look like.