

UMaine hockey lands Virginian right winger

BY LARRY MAHONEY
BDN STAFF

The University of Maine has landed its first men's hockey player from the state of Virginia. Right winger Ryan Smith, who is from Roanoke and is playing for the Green Bay Gamblers of the United States (Junior) Hockey League, has verbally committed to attend UMaine beginning in September.

He will be a three-quarter scholarship player. The 6-foot, 196-pound Smith has 12 goals and 12 assists in 58 games. He had five goals and nine assists in 57 games for the Gamblers a year ago. "He's a great athlete on and off the ice," said Green Bay coach and general manager Pat Mikesch. "He's a strong skater, and he's very physically fit. "He's a raw kid from a

non-traditional hockey area who is still developing and learning the game. But his upside is huge," added Mikesch, a former four-year standout at Michigan Tech University. Mikesch also said Smith has a good shot, is a very good penalty killer and is versatile. "He can play on your top line or you can use him on a [checking] line that is tough to play against," he said.

Smith said he decided on UMaine because he "really liked the coaching staff." "They were really nice and that made the recruiting process pretty easy. I visited the campus, and I liked it a lot. I went to prep school in Lake Placid, [New York], so being in the north doesn't bother me. I also like Hockey East. "Maine showed the most interest in me. They wanted me, and it felt good. It seemed like a good spot and a good fit

for me," added Smith, who turned 19 on Monday. Smith began playing roller hockey when he was 5, and when a couple of friends transferred over to ice hockey, he joined them and enjoyed it. He played a lot of his ice hockey in the Atlanta, Georgia, suburb of Alpharetta. Black Bears winger Malcolm Hayes is from Atlanta. Smith went to Northwood Prep in Lake Placid in his sophomore year.

He takes pride in the defensive aspect of his game, saying, "I like have a good plus-minus. And penalty-killing is something I can bring to the table." He wants to become more consistent and develop the offensive aspect of his game in preparation for next fall. His coming to UMaine is contingent upon his being accepted into the school and meeting NCAA eligibility requirements.

Portland named the Best Road City in minor leagues

PORTLAND — Portland has been named the Best Road City in minor league baseball in Baseball America's inaugural Best of the Minors list. The survey conducted by Baseball America asked minor league broadcasters and executives to identify some of the best parts of the minor league atmosphere. Every ballot from a voter in the Eastern League named Portland as the best road city, and Portland also captured votes from outside the league to claim the top honor. Portland is the home of the Portland Sea Dogs, the Double-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox. "We consistently hear how much players, broadcasters, and executives love coming to Portland," Sea Dogs Executive Vice-President and General Manager Geoff Iacuesssa said in a news release. "They love the

world-class dining, award winning microbrews, Portland's vibrant night life, and the beautiful seaside community that Portland offers. We also hear how much the players enjoy playing in front of large crowds at Hadlock." The Sea Dogs were also recognized by Baseball America for receiving votes in the Most Creative Promotions Team category. In 2014 Portland was named the Best Minor League Baseball Town in America in a study by financial technology company, SmartAsset. The study scored towns based on two scores: quality of life and minor league baseball experience. The Sea Dogs open at 7:05 p.m. Thursday against the Reading Fightin Phils in Reading, Pennsylvania, and their home opener is at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 14 against the Hartford Yard Goats.

Sea Dogs

Continued from Page B5

Salem. He is the youngest Sea Dog at age 20. Another Sea Dog with noteworthy potential will be 26-year-old Jantzen Witte, a corner infielder who was the starting third basemen in the Eastern League All-Star game at Hadlock Field. He had a league-leading 25 doubles in 85 games along with four homers, 48 RBIs and a solid .283 average before a broken wrist sidelined him for the second half. Versatile Mike Miller can play second, short and third and hit .273 for the Sea Dogs and .219 in 74 games for Triple-A Pawtucket. Catcher Tim Roberson (.300 batting average) is the top returning hitter off last year's Sea Dogs team. Injuries limited him to 57 games. The Sea Dogs will have a new manager in Carlos Febles, who spent the previous two years with the Salem Red Sox. They also have made a series of improvements to Hadlock Field including a reconfiguration of the con-



Portland Sea Dogs pitchers Mitch Atkins (from left) Chandler Shepherd and Ty Buttery sit at their lockers at Hadlock Field on Tuesday during media day. The Sea Dogs home opener is April 14.

cession stands, which will enable fans to get fried foods such as french fries in the same line as they would get other food products such as hamburgers and hot dogs. "Every year, we try to add something to help enhance the fans' experience," said Cameron. "One of the biggest complaints we

heard was fans had to stand in two separate lines [one to get burgers and another to get fries]. There also will be 12 lines instead of just four. In addition, they have replaced all the seats in the picnic area, the sky view section, the upper box and the general admission areas. Cameron added that the

field is in "excellent shape" thanks to the lack of snow this winter and the schedule is favorable because the Sea Dogs don't play their home opener until Thursday, April 14 against the Hartford Yard Goats. That gives them more time to prepare for the opener and a better chance of avoiding low temperatures.

Coach

Continued from Page B5

technic Institute in Troy, New York. Four years later, he left to become the general manager-head coach of the Dubuque Fighting Saints of the United States (Junior) Hockey League. The Fighting Saints won the Clark Cup championship, awarded to the playoff titlists, in two of his three seasons and he was recognized as the league's top general manager in those two years. His three teams went a combined 118-45 during the regular season. When the Denver and University of Maine jobs opened up after the 2012-2013 season, Montgomery was interested in both of them, but Denver had more to offer him. His Pioneers have gone 69-36-14 since then and have made the NCAA Tournament all three years. John Miller was the chairman of the selection committee at Denver. "All the things we valued matched up very well with Jimmy," he said. "He was very consistent. He was committed and had a great work ethic. He has never taken an easy path. We knew he would be successful. It was just a question of how long would it take for his players to adjust to his systems and his [expected] level of play," Miller said. Miller said Montgomery is a student of the game, makes very good in-game adjustments and has given his players a good foundation off and on the ice. "He is committed to suc-

cess at all levels," he added. Montgomery believes Gendron will revive the struggling Maine program and bears no ill will toward his alma mater. "I don't think about it at all," 46-year-old Montgomery, a married father of three, said. "One thing I learned from Shawn Walsh is to [view life] with your glass half-full. Denver gave me this opportunity. I just want to make this program elite again. I've been very fortunate to work with great people." Drawing on Maine roots Montgomery's Denver teams emulate Montgomery's Maine teams. "We play fast. We're hard to play against when we don't have the puck and when we do have the puck, we possess it with a purpose," said Montgomery, whose 25-9-6 Pioneers have gone 18-2-2 over their last 22 games. "And I took a lot of my practice preparation and how we practice directly from Shawn." When he was at Dubuque, Montgomery hired former Maine assistant coach Grant Standbrook to serve as a part-time coaching consultant. "Grant has forgotten more hockey than I'll ever know," Montgomery said. Montgomery's success doesn't surprise Standbrook. "He's confident, he's organized, he's disciplined, he's consistent and he can recruit," said Standbrook, who called him a "leader and a catalyst" when he played at Maine. Montgomery feels fortunate to have played for or worked for so many quality

coaches, and he has learned from all of them. He feels he has continually improved as a coach by expanding his knowledge. He and his coaching staff also watch a lot of NHL games and will apply things they see to their team. "You can't be stagnant or people will pass you by. This game is constantly evolving. We steal a lot from NHL teams. We'll try things, but if they don't work we won't use them," Montgomery said. "I'm not afraid to pick up the phone and call somebody if I see something that could help us. Even if we don't use it for our team, if we see another team do it to us we'll know how to stop it." "We take a lot of things from the Kings and the Blackhawks," said Denver junior left wing Evan Janssen, who has played for Montgomery in Dubuque and Denver. Montgomery is "at the top of the list" among coaches he has played for, Janssen said. "He is so detail-oriented. He is so focused and driven," he said. "He has been a winner wherever he has gone. His preparation is incredible. He knows how to get the best out of his players." University of Maine senior goalie Matt Morris played for Montgomery at Dubuque and called him a "real player's coach. "Guys love playing for him. He's a great student of the game and a terrific teacher," he said. Montgomery has been pleased with his team's progression after a 7-7-4 start, for which he shouldered blame. "I gave them too much rope. I made a mistake. We

weren't detail-oriented enough in practice," Montgomery said. "It has been great to be a part of watching this group of young men take complete ownership of the dressing room and time-outs. They're low-maintenance. It's nice to see how the chem-

istry has developed." Montgomery is a finalist for the Spencer Penrose Award given to the nation's top Division I coach, but he downplayed it. "It's nice to be mentioned, but it's a formality if you're in the Frozen Four. It's all

about the players. They're the ones who make it possible," he said. He doesn't think about coaching in the NHL. "I'm immersed in trying to win a championship," he said. "I love living in Denver and love coaching here."

MAINE'S GUIDE TO SUMMER CAMPS

Each year, thousands of Maine children enjoy the outdoor experience, thrills and fun of a summer camp. Maine's outdoor traditions and serene surroundings offer a summer camping experience like no other. Whether you own a day camp, a specialty camp, or an overnight camp, be sure to reach these kids and their parents.



April 8th
in your Bangor Daily News



Red Sox

Continued from Page B5

Betts said, "I hit a couple balls good in batting practice that didn't reach the track, so I didn't think it was going to be my day, but I got a good pitch to hit and put a good swing on it." The Indians tied it with a two-run fourth. Francisco Lindor led off the inning with a single and went to second on a one-out single by Carlos Santana. Yan Gomes rolled a single into center field, scoring Lindor to make it 2-1. Santana raced to third on Gomes' hit and scored the tying run on a sacrifice fly by Marlon Byrd. It was a 33-pitch inning for Price, but he was able to

keep the damage to a minimum. "Those kinds of innings can spin out of control, but I was able to get us back into the dugout, which was good," Price said. The Red Sox took the lead again in the sixth, which began with consecutive singles by Hanley Ramirez, Travis Shaw and Brock Holt. Ramirez scored on Holt's hit to give Boston a 3-2 lead. Shaw went to third on Holt's single and Shaw scored on a wild pitch by Kluber to extend the Red Sox lead to 4-2. In 5 1/3 innings, Kluber gave up four runs and nine hits with five strikeouts and two walks. He threw 96 pitches. Ortiz capped the Boston scoring with a two-run

homer in the ninth off Trevor Bauer. "He's smart and he's dangerous. I wish he retired this year," Francona said of Ortiz. NOTES: Indians OF Michael Brantley (right shoulder surgery) began the season on the disabled list. There is no timetable for his return, but it could be sometime in April. "Hopefully as soon as possible. I'm championing at the bit," Brantley said. ... Only 11 of the 25 players on the Indians' opening day roster were on the 2015 opening roster. ... Boston DH David Ortiz, who hit 37 home runs last season, will retire at the end of this year. The major league record for most home runs in a final major league season is 35 by Dave Kingman in 1986.