

Madison Sports Hall of Fame Club Announces Major Award Winners *To be honored at 61st Hall of Fame banquet Wednesday, June 3rd, 2026*

For more information:

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The Madison Sports Hall of Fame Club will honor some of the areas top athletes and coaches from the past year at its annual banquet in addition to the four (4) new Hall of Fame Inductees. The awards event is set for Wednesday evening, June 3rd, 2026, at Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.

As previously announced, **Adam Burish from Edgewood High School, UW and the NHL, Anne Cooley-Piesczak from Madison La Follette and DePaul University, Wesley Matthews IV from Madison Memorial, Marquette University and the NBA, and Jay Wilson, longtime Madison television Sports Director** are the new 2026 Hall of Fame Inductees into the Madison Sports Hall of Fame sponsored by Strand Associates.

In addition, the following athletes, coaches and contributors to sports in Madison and the surrounding area are being honored for their contributions and achievements over the last year.

The Flad Development and Investment Madison Area Sportsperson of the Year is going to **Caden Van Buren**. Caden is a two-sport athlete at Middleton High School excelling at both Volleyball and Swimming. On the volleyball court, Caden led his undefeated Middleton team to a WIAA State Championship with 20 Kills in the Championship. He was named to the WSJ and WisNews All-Area Player of the Year for the 2nd consecutive year. He was named the Big 8 Conference Player of the Year and was a 1st Team All-State selection. He finished his career with 1156 Kills with 385 coming this season. He hit at an astounding .483 hitting percentage this past season. He will continue his volleyball career at Loyola Chicago in the fall. As a swimmer, Caden won the WIAA DI 50 Freestyle, the D1 100 Fly, and was part of the State Record 200 Medley Relay Team at the WIAA State Meet with a time of 1:29.81.

The Edgewood University Athletics “Friend of Sport” Award will be awarded to a longtime journalist specializing in the area of Wisconsin High School athletes, **Dennis Semrau**. Dennis has been a newspaper sports reporter for a variety of prints throughout the Madison area throughout his career. He currently is part of the ESPN family and covers a multitude of high school sporting events either by print, by blog or by doing color commentary on livestreamed events. Dennis has been a member of the University of Wisconsin Basketball Statistician team for years. As a member of the Madison Hall of Fame Club, he is the lead researcher on obtaining the Club’s Male and Female High School Athlete of the Month. Dennis will also be inducted into the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame later in 2026.

The Park Bank's Madison Sportswoman of the Year is **Nyajuacni Riak**. Nyajuacni is just completing her sophomore year at Madison La Follette High School where she led her La Follette Lancer girls to a Big 8 Conference Co-Championship. Nyajuacni was named to the WBCA's 1st Team All-State team after being Honorable Mention last year as a freshman. This season, she averaged 28.8 points per game with 11.7 rebounds per game and 3.8 assists per game with 3.1 steals and 1.2 blocks per game. Nyajuacni recorded her 1000th point in February and still has 2 years of eligibility remaining. One of Nyajuacni's goals during this past season was to dunk during a game and that also occurred in February, 2026.

The Madison Area Sports Commission's Madison Sportsman of the Year is going to **Drake Baldwin**. Drake is a former Madison West baseball and hockey player who chose baseball as a career over hockey. Drake made the opening day roster of the Atlanta Braves in April, 2025. He played in 124 Major League Baseball games during his rookie season in the big leagues with most of those games as the Braves catcher. Drake finished his rookie campaign by hitting .274 with 19 home runs and 80 RBI. The season was so impressive that Drake was named the National League Rookie of the Year on November 10, 2025, only the 7th catcher ever to be named Rookie of the Year in the National League. *(Drake's award will be accepted by his mother, Bridgette Baldwin.)*

The Andringa Family "Rob Andringa Multi-Sport High School Athlete of the Year" Award goes to not one but two impressive athletes from Madison Memorial High School, twin brothers, **Caleb Liggon and Ezra Liggon**. Twins are often written about as if they were singular athletes. This could be the same situation here. Both lettered 4 years in basketball and both won all-conference honors. Both were valued contributors to Memorials runner-up finish at the WIAA State Basketball tournament this past March. Both brothers lettered for 4 years in baseball as well and both were 1st Team All-Conference honorees. Both led their Memorial baseball team to 2 WIAA Regional Championships and both brothers are continuing their baseball careers at Bradley University next year. The comparisons of accomplishments aren't finished yet. Both brothers are excelling in the classroom also with a 3.49 GPA and a 3.5 GPA while taking AP and Honors courses, college dual credit courses at the UW and both are members of the Student Athlete Leadership Team.

The public is welcome to attend this event. Tickets for the event are \$60 and they will be sold until May 22nd. Everyone is encouraged to attend and salute this exceptional group of inductees and award winners. Go to our website at madisonsportshalloffame.org/banquet to order banquet tickets or contact Banquet Coordinator, Al Schumacher (608-395-4648) or at alschu44@gmail.com for tickets.

The Madison Sports Hall of Fame Club began in 1963 to recognize and honor great athletes and sports figures from the city. The group hosts weekly luncheon meetings from September through May and holds the induction ceremony every year. There are more

than 200 inductees in its Hall of Fame. Go to madisonsportshalloffame.org to find other information about the Madison Sports Hall of Fame Club. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in sports.