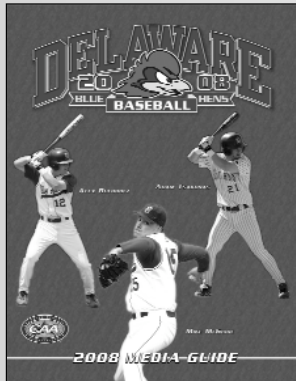




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About This Guide

The 2008 University of Delaware baseball media guide was written by University of Delaware Sports Information Intern Kenny Kline, and designed by Assistant Sports Information Director Kevin Tritt using Quark 6.5. Cover design by Kevin Tritt using Adobe Photoshop 4.1. Editorial assistance provided by UD Sports Information Director Scott Selheimer, senior editor Kevin P. Linton, and associate editor Andy Sturgill. Photos provided by UD Photo Services, Bob Merkle, Mark Campbell, and the Colonial Athletic Association.

Delaware Quick Facts

Location	Newark, Delaware	19716
Founded		1743
Enrollment	16,000 Undergraduates	
Nickname	Fightin' Blue Hens	
Colors	Royal Blue & Gold	
Conference	Colonial Athletic Association	(seventh season)

Athletics Staff

President	Dr. Patrick T. Harker
NCAA Faculty Representative	Dr. John L. Burmeister
Athletic Director	Edgar N. Johnson
Assistant Athletic Director, Internal Affairs (SWA).....	Sue Graft
Associate Athletic Director, Recreation	Kate Pohligh
Associate Athletic Director, Business Affairs	Scott Eatough
Assistant Athletic Director, Marketing.....	Curt Krouse
Assistant Athletic Director, Operations	Jennifer Chapman
Events Supervisor.....	B.J. Cashman
Sports Medicine Physician.....	Dr. Andrew Reisman
Head Trainer	Keith Handling
Associate Head Trainer	Joan Couch
Assistant Trainers	John Smith, Dan Watson, Courtney Butterworth
Baseball Trainer.....	Adam Rosen
Student Trainers.....	Megan Burger, Jonathan Hernandez
Baseball Strength & Conditioning Coach	Kevin Stewart

Athletics Media Relations

SID Office Phone/Fax	302-831-2186/8653
Assistant Athletic Director, Media Relations	Scott Selheimer
Assistant Sports Information Director	Kevin Tritt
SID Interns	Kenny Kline (Baseball SID), Kenny Riedel
Kline's Cell Phone	484-464-5729
Kline's E-mail Address.....	kkline@udel.edu
Blue Hen 24-Hour Sports Hotline	302-831-8139
Internet Address	www.udel.edu/sportsinfo

Baseball Information

Head Coach.....	Jim Sherman (Delaware '82)
Record at Delaware	223-171 (seven seasons)
Overall Record	441-299 (14 seasons)
Office Phone	302-831-8596
Email Address.....	sherman@udel.edu
Associate Head Coach	Dan Hammer (Delaware '96)
Pitching Coach	Brian Walker (Miami (FL) '05)
Assistant Coach.....	Steve Harden (Delaware '03)
Assistant Coaches' Office Phone	302-831-3097
Home Field	Bob Hannah Stadium
Dimensions (Capacity)	LF 330, CF 400, RF 330 (1,300)
Hannah Stadium Press Box Phone	302-831-4122
2007 Record	32-23, 18-11 Colonial Athletic Association (1-1st place)
All-Time Record	1,821-1,121-27 (.617) (120 seasons)
Conference Championships	29
NCAA Regional Appearances	15 (last, 2001)
NCAA College World Series Appearances	1 (1970)
Letterwinners Returning/Lost	14/13
Position Players Returning/Lost	10/4
Pitchers Returning/Lost	5/9
2008 Captains	Alex Buchholz, Mike McGuire, Adam Tsakonas

What is a Blue Hen?

University of Delaware's athletic teams have one of the most unique nicknames in all of college athletics – "The Fightin' Blue Hens."

It is a name they carry with pride that stretches back over 200 years of history of the state of Delaware.

The Blue Hen nickname has been continuously used by all University of Delaware intercollegiate teams since 1911.

On December 9, 1775, the Continental Congress resolved that a military battalion was to be raised from the lower three counties along the Delaware River. Thus was born the Delaware Regiment, a group of eight companies representing New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties.

The second company was composed of men from Kent County and was under the command of Captain John Caldwell, an avid fan and owner of gamecocks. The militia often amused itself by staging cock fights with these birds which were of a breed known as the Kent County Blue Hen, having some blue plumage.

The renown of these chickens spread rapidly during that time when cock fighting was a popular form of amusement, and the "Blue Hens' Chickens" quickly developed a reputation for ferocity and fighting success.

Captain Caldwell's company likewise acquired a considerable reputation for its own fighting prowess in engagements with the British at Long Island, White Plains, Trenton, and Princeton, and was soon known as "the Blue Hen Chicken" company.

One version of the story states that Caldwell's company rushed into battle screaming "We're sons of the Blue Hen and we're game to the end!"

Captain Caldwell's company was part of Col. John Haslet's first Delaware regiment that formed near the outset of the Revolution in January, 1776, and in August, 1781, remnants of the regiment were still battling at Eutaw Springs, SC.

Although often referred to as "The Fighting Delawares," Haslet's regiment also won the sobriquet, "The Blue Hen Chickens," which has become the nickname for all Delawareans.

The name was formally adopted by the Delaware General Assembly in April, 1939 when the "Blue Hen Chicken" was named the official state bird. UD's College of Agricultural Sciences maintains a breeding group of the Blue Hen Chicken on its campus farm.



YoUDEe

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Note to media: Please schedule all interviews within 24 hours. No game day interviews will be given prior to the game unless prior authorization is given.





2008 Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Year	B/T	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown/Last School
1	Zach Costello	Fr.	OF	R-R	6-1	180	South Riding, VA/Paul VI Catholic
2	Josh Dean	So.	OF	R-R	6-1	190	Dagsboro, DE/Indian River (UMES)
3	Steve Spiese *	Sr.	RHP	---	6-3	209	Newark, DE/Newark (Wilmington College)
4	Scott Shockley **	Jr.	OF	L-L	6-1	200	Milton, DE/Cape Henlopen
5	Ryan Reed *	Jr.	C	R-R	5-10	195	Milton, DE/Cape Henlopen (Winthrop)
6	Jon Duvall	Fr.	IF	R-R	6-0	195	Fredericksburg, VA/Mountain View
8	Danny Overcash *	So.	OF	R-R	6-0	188	Wyndmoor, PA/Germantown Academy
9	Kyle Davis **	Jr.	INF	R-R	5-11	170	Ewing, NJ/Ewing
10	Ryan Cuneo *	So.	INF	L-R	6-3	215	Freehold, NJ/Freehold
11	Brian Rorick	So.	RHP	---	6-1	195	Trooper, PA/Archbishop Carroll (Coastal Carolina)
12	Alex Buchholz **	Jr.	INF	R-R	6-0	190	Millersville, MD/Old Mill
14	Dan Richardson ***	Sr.	RHP	---	6-2	200	Bear, DE/Caravel
15	Mike McGuire ***	Sr.	RHP	---	6-7	240	Swarthmore, PA/Ridley
16	Pat Dameron	Fr.	RHP	L-R	6-1	200	Dublin, PA/Pennridge
17	Matt Harden	Fr.	RHP	R-R	6-0	185	Wilmington, DE/St. Mark's
18	Matt Greco	Fr.	OF	R-R	6-2	190	Westport, CT/Staples
19	Bill Merkler **	Jr.	C	R-R	6-4	215	South Plainfield, NJ/South Plainfield
20	Greg Caskey	Fr.	RHP	---	6-3	212	Abington, PA/Abington
21	Adam Tsakonas ***	Sr.	IF/OF	R-R	6-0	195	Pottstown, PA/Boyetown Area
22	Alex Dalsey	Fr.	RHP	---	6-2	180	Woodbury, NJ/West Deptford
23	Jared Olson	Jr.	IF/RHP	L-R	6-4	215	Chambersburg, PA/Chambersburg (Frederick CC)
24	Chris Nehl	Jr.	C	R-R	6-2	225	Hemdon, VA/Herrndon (Frederick CC)
25	Steve Ulaky	Fr.r	LHP	---	6-4	215	Silver Spring, MD/Good Counsel
27	Chris DiLullo *	So.	C	R-R	5-11	190	Havertown, PA/Lower Merion
30	Corey Crispell	Fr.	RHP	---	6-4	180	Hatboro, PA/Hatboro-Horsham
31	David Slovak *	Sr.	RHP	---	6-0	170	Louisville, KY/Eastern (Shelton State CC)
32	Todd Menchaca	Fr.r	OF	R-R	5-11	190	Wilmington, DE/Concord
33	Michael Londino	Fr.	RHP	---	6-3	190	Annandale, NJ/North Hunterdon
35	Brad Miller *	So.	RHP	---	6-5	195	Ellicott City, MD/Mount Saint Joseph
36	Joe Tebaldi	Fr.r	C	R-R	5-11	180	Seaford, NY/Seaford
37	Mark Lawrence	Fr.	IF	R-R	6-0	165	Bear, DE/Caravel

Head Coach: #13 Jim Sherman (Delaware '82) eighth season
Associate Head Coach: #7 Dan Hammer (Delaware '96) 12th season
Pitching Coach: #34 Brian Walker (Miami [FL] '05) second season
Assistant Coach: #29 Steve Harden (Delaware '03) second season

* Letters Earned

Delaware at Bob Hannah Stadium All-Time Record (634-210-1, .751)

1960's (20-14, .588)	1980's (163-38, .811)	199522-5
19664-3	198015-2	199621-5
19674-5	198117-3	199718-3
19686-4	198215-2	199821-1
19696-2	198324-1	199917-11
	19846-3	
1970's (119-29-1, .802)	198524-5	2000's (138-73, .654)
197012-1	198614-3	200017-5
197110-2	198716-7	200123-3
19725-7	198818-5	200220-8
197311-0	198914-7	200311-10
197412-2-1		200419-10
197515-0	1990's (194-56, .776)	200515-16
197615-3	199014-3	200617-13
197718-7	1991* 26-1	200716-8
19786-3	199219-9	
197915-4	199317-10	
	199419-8	

* 23 consecutive wins to start the season





Coming off arguably Delaware's finest season in CAA play after tying for the regular season conference championship and placing second in the postseason tournament, the Blue Hen baseball team heads into the 2008 campaign with high expectations for the new season.

Although the Hens feature plenty of new faces and returning players filling new roles, the goals of the team remain unchanged.

"Our goal is always the same," said head coach Jim Sherman. "We never go into the season just wanting to make the tournament. We want to win the championship and move on to the Regionals."

With such lofty goals, Delaware will rely on the experienced members of the team to lead the squad and provide a strong veteran presence for the younger players.

Junior Bill Merkler will anchor the team behind the plate, handling the bulk of the team's catching duties. After splitting time with Ryan Engelhardt during his first two seasons, Merkler assumes the full-time starting role.

"He has a big frame and a strong arm," said Sherman. "He'll be a leader for us behind the plate."

Vying for time to spot Merkler will be junior Ryan Reed, sophomore Chris DiLullo, redshirt freshman Joe Tebaldi and transfer Chris Nehl.

Of the players returning, Reed played the most, appearing in 13 games as a freshman. DiLullo also saw action in two games, while Tebaldi retained his freshman eligibility following a redshirt season.

Nehl, who arrives in Newark via Frederick Community College, has two years of eligibility remaining. As a Cougar, he was a two-time All-Conference and All-Region selection while hitting .407 with eight home runs and 102 RBI. He also ripped 25 doubles and two triples during his 92 career games.

In the infield, sophomore Ryan Cuneo is expected to hold down first base. The only true freshman to play for last year's squad, he appeared in 21 games and started 10 as a first baseman and designated hitter. Over that time, he smacked 11 hits, including a double and triple against No. 4 Virginia in his first career start.

Cuneo will be challenged by transfer Jared Olson. Another new addition from Frederick Community College, Olson will also see time as the designated hitter and should be a strong addition to the middle of the lineup.

In his two seasons at Frederick, he notched a .428 batting average with 19 home runs and 108 RBI. A two-time All-American selection, he was picked by the Texas Rangers in the 27th round of the 2006 Major League Draft.

Freshman Jon Duvall and junior Kyle Davis will solidify the center of the infield, anchoring the Hen defense up the middle. Delaware hopes that Duvall will hold down second base — a position at which the Hens have seen five different players start at least 10 games and four start 25 during the last three years.

Davis, who has spent the majority of his career at second, will move over to shortstop where he has started 16 games during the past two seasons. The Hens also hope he can fill the void left by Ryan

Jablonski at the top of the lineup. After finishing second on the team in on-base percentage as a freshman and notching a combined .378 mark over the last two years, he has the skills that should serve him well as the team's leadoff hitter.

Third base will be manned by All-American and junior co-captain Alex Buchholz. Entering his third season with the Hens, Buchholz has already compiled one of the finest resumes in Delaware history.

A Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American in 2006 and third-team selection by PingBaseball.com in 2007, Buchholz has been named to three pre-season All-American lists this season. He enters his junior season with a career .383 batting average, which ranks ninth on Delaware's all-time list.

Freshman Mark Lawrence will serve as the top reserve in the infield. An All-State selection as a shortstop in high school, he will add depth up the middle.

A former infielder on the team, co-captain Adam Tsakonas, who is the most experienced Blue Hen having played in 148 career games, makes the transition to the outfield after playing three seasons bouncing between the corner infield spots. An intelligent player with good instincts and a strong arm, he projects well to the outfield.

"Tsakonas is a good athlete who can play any of the three outfield positions," said Sherman. "We're confident he'll be able to make the switch to the outfield. And offensively, we're looking to slot him into the two hole to help secure the top of the lineup."

At the plate, Tsakonas has been a steady hitter almost everywhere in the lineup throughout his first three years at Delaware. Although he has spent time at every position in the lineup from the three through the nine hole, he has been consistently productive recording a .306 batting average with 23 home runs and 104 RBI.

Incumbents Scott Shockley and Danny Overcash have the inside track for the other two starting positions in the outfield. Shockley enters his third season with the Hens and has played in 92 career games with 69 starts. During that time, he has hit .278 with 22 extra-base hits and 34 RBI.

Overcash enters his sophomore season with a full year of experience after starting 37 games for the Hens as a redshirt freshman. Over that time, he roped seven home runs, including five over a 10-game stretch in the beginning of April.

Jockeying for playing time behind the three veterans will be sophomore Josh Dean, redshirt freshman Todd Menchaca, and true freshmen Zach Costello and Matt Greco.

Although none of the candidates have played a single game for Delaware, Dean is the most experienced of the group after earning MEAC Rookie of the Year honors as a freshman last season with Maryland-Eastern Shore. With the Hawks, he roped a team-best three triples and finished third on the squad with a .277 batting average, 31 runs scored, and 12 stolen bases.

Todd Menchaca, the younger brother of former All-American centerfielder Brandon Menchaca, also should see playing time after sitting out last season as a redshirt. Costello and Greco, two highly-decorated high school outfielders, also will provide important depth for the Blue Hens.

With the return of offensive stalwarts like Buchholz and Tsakonas along with the expected contributions of the incoming transfers and freshmen and the other experienced starters, the Delaware offense looks to continue its dominance that produced top-20 finishes in the NCAA in home runs-per-game and slugging percentage during each of the last two years.

With the bulk of the offensive load falling on captains Buchholz and Tsakonas, it seems only fitting that the team's other captain, Mike McGuire, will be counted upon to carry the pitching staff.

"From McGuire, we're looking for big things," said Sherman. "We're looking for him to have his best year. And coming off his last start against Old Dominion, we're hoping he can build on that."

After falling just two outs shy of throwing a no-hitter in the conference tournament against the Monarchs and being picked by the Cincinnati Reds in the 46th round of the Major League draft following a successful junior campaign, the 6-7 righty opted to return for his senior season.

CAA Baseball
Winning Percentage Last 10 Seasons

Team	W	L	T	Pct.
VCU	389	209	0	.651
Delaware	341	226	0	.601
UNC Wilmington	343	240	0	.588
James Madison	303	265	0	.533
George Mason	257	229	0	.529
Northeastern	284	255	0	.527
Old Dominion	251	235	0	.516
William & Mary	299	283	0	.514
Towson	265	267	0	.498
Georgia State	241	317	0	.432
Hofstra	193	369	0	.343

The remainder of the 2008 rotation will be relatively inexperienced as four freshmen and two sophomores will battle with outfielder-turned-starter Dan Richardson to round out the staff.

Corey Crispell, a freshman from Harboro-Horsham High School, is the front-runner for the No. 2 slot behind McGuire. A former 'Faces in the Crowd' selection by Sports Illustrated, he has a live arm and is expected to make a quick transition to the college game.

After Crispell's spot in the rotation, the remainder will be determined based upon health and performance.

"Our No. 1 is McGuire, and our No. 2, coming out of the gate, is Corey Crispell," said Sherman. "Then the three, four, and five is subject to change on how healthy arms are and how well they do. That order will probably be determined over the first 10 games."

Sophomore Brad Miller, who posted a 1-2 record with a 4.70 ERA last season as a mid-week starter and long-man during conference games, will face stiff competition for the final spot in the weekend rotation from fellow sophomore Brian Rorick and senior Dan Richardson.

Rorick sat out last season with an elbow injury but is healthy to make a run at a starting spot. Richardson, who spent much of the last three years as a starting outfielder for the Hens, is also expected to make the transition over to full-time pitcher this year and will contend immediately for a place in the rotation.

Lefty Steve Ulaky also should be in contention for a starting spot after redshirting last season.

Those who make up the starting rotation will once again depend on David Slovak to shut down the opposition in the late innings as the second-team All-CAA selection last year returns for his senior season.

In 2007, the first-year transfer from Shelton State Community College utilized his deceptive submarine-motion and sensational slider to post a program-record 12 saves. He also set a new Delaware mark with 35 appearances.

Bridging the gap between Slovak and the starters will be a host of middle relievers led by senior Steve Spiese. In limited action last season, Spiese made eight appearances including three straight in April during which he struck out 12 batters and walked only one.

Joining Spiese and Slovak in the bullpen will be a talented crop of freshman pitchers. Pat Dameron, Matt Harden, Greg Caskey, Alex Dalsey, and Michael Londino all will have the opportunity to see action in relief. Olson, who closed for Frederick Community College, also will see work out of the pen.

This year's team will once again face stiff competition in the conference as Old Dominion, Virginia Commonwealth, and UNC Wilmington all have strong teams returning for 2008.

"It's a balanced league again," said Sherman. "Any of the top-four teams can win the league. You look at Old Dominion, VCU, UNC Wilmington, and us, and we all have our strengths, and we're all good teams. We all have a chance to win the championship this year."

And the Blue Hens enter the season aspiring for nothing less than a title run.

2008
Colonial Athletic
Association
Preseason
Coaches' Poll



1. Old Dominion (9)	99
2. Virginia Commonwealth	87
3. UNC Wilmington	77
4. Delaware (2)	69
5. George Mason	58
6. Georgia State	56
7. James Madison	48
8. William & Mary	38
9. Northeastern	35
10. Towson	26
11. Hofstra	12

