

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH 2009-2010

SEPTEMBER 2009

Rob Palumbo

5'3" 140 lbs.

Kingston, NH

Wolverine Soccer Midfielder

There was a time when Bridgton Academy soccer was a familiar name in the New England Prep School Class A playoffs each year. The team reached the final four in back to back years in '04 and '05 and looked poised to take the next step and hoist a championship banner. With several coaching changes, the program slipped a little but this year's Wolverine soccer team looks like it may be the one to return to the upper echelon of New England Prep School soccer. At the front and center of the team is this month's Athlete of The Month, Rob Palumbo.

Forget the fact that he scored 30% of the goals for the team that went 7-0-1 for the month. The manner in which he did it was the real story. In the season opener against Bowdoin College, he tallied a hat trick to lead the team to a 4-0 victory. He repeated the task 2 more times, once against Navy Prep and again against Bowdoin College. His 10 goals left him 1 behind the team lead for the month and his 25 points was second as well.

His real impact was felt in his playmaking ability. His play simply lifts his teammates to a higher plane. On any given day, you will hear in the crowd, "Did you just see what he did with the ball?!" after he has set his teammates up for an easy score. His teammates have responded by dominating the competition for the month.

The theme of "This Is Sparta" for our Athlete of The Month award this year has never been more evident in Rob's play. While you win or lose as a team, each team needs effective leadership. Rob's play and leadership for the month have earned him the inaugural Athlete of The Month award for the 2009-2010 school year.

OCTOBER 2009

Ken Brock

5'11" 215 lbs.

Burlington, NJ

Wolverine Football Quarterback

The month of October has been historically challenging for the Wolverine football team. With Parent's Weekend and the end of the first academic quarter, there are a number of distractions. This year's edition of the BA gridiron gang experienced the pitfalls of overlooking opponents and underestimating competition. Our Athlete of The Month, however, gave every ounce of himself game in and game out.

His teammates call him "Tebow" for his comparable build and style of play to the Heisman Trophy winning quarterback at the University of Florida. He makes the coaches wince at his relentless style of play and his willingness to give up his body for an extra yard or two. It's not unlikely to see Ken to be in the training room each Monday with ice packs strapped from head to toe.

You cannot argue with his stats, however. For the month, he averaged 50 yards rushing and 185 yards passing per game. Additionally he added 5 rushing touchdowns and 6 passing touchdowns for the month. His best game of the month was at Columbia where his rushing line was 95 yards on 23 carries and 2 touchdowns and 23 for 47 passing for 211 yards and 2 touchdowns.

When the dust settles at the end of the season, Ken may end up being one of the most prolific quarterbacks in a great tradition of Wolverines who lined up behind center. His never say die attitude resonates across the team and inspires his teammate to keep playing to the final whistle. In honor of his leadership of the Wolverine Football team and his inspiring play, Ken Brock is awarded Athlete of The Month for October.

NOVEMBER 2009

Wolverine Soccer Team

14-0-1 Record

The month of November was a roller-coaster of emotions for the Wolverine Soccer Team. Heading into the month, the team had an air of anticipation. If they won versus perennial NEPSAC Class A soccer power, Phillips Exeter Academy, they would certainly be awarded a spot in the NEPSAC Class A soccer tournament. This was a spot that Bridgton Academy had not been in since the 2005 season.

The win would also wrap up an undefeated season, which has not been accomplished since 1982. The team played an outstanding game vs. Exeter and outscored them 2-1 in the last 4 minutes of the game after a scoreless 86 minutes. After waiting 10 days until the selection process, word came in that the team did not earn a berth to the tournament. In an unprecedented move, the NEPSAC tournament committee passed over an undefeated team for the NEPSAC Class A soccer tournament.

The boys remained remarkably upbeat given the disappointing news. Arguably the best team in the history of the school would not be allowed to prove their worth to the rest of New England. The team outscored their opponents 84-13 for the season while shutting out 6 opponents. They went 4-0-1 against teams that would eventually be invited to the NEPSAC soccer tournaments in their respective classes.

Beyond the scores and records, the team displayed a championship attitude all season long. At the award presentation, Mr. Sawicki remarked that this was a similar team in attitude and teamwork to those Wolverine Basketball teams who earned 4 NEPSAC Championships.

This Athlete of The Month award is presented to the entire team for their teamwork, perseverance, and dedication to excellence. They are the 4th Bridgton Academy team to earn this award as a team.

EARLY WINTER 2009-2010

Alex Harris

6'1" 165 lbs.

Richmond, CA

Wolverine Basketball Guard

Though it was up down for the basketball team for the early winter, one player has been a model of consistency and leadership. Our Co-Athlete of The Month was the go-to guy and the key that drove the Wolverine basketball team.

His importance to the team was never more evident than the home game versus MCI in December. Alex was out of the game as he served a suspension due to an altercation during the previous game against Winchendon. Without him in the game, BA never really got on track and suffered a defeat at home. He is arguably the most complete player on the team and his offensive prowess was on display during the month. He led the team with 20 points per game during the month and when he was on, it usually meant a win for BA. He scored 30 in a double-overtime win against South Kent and 25 in a win over MCI in the BA Winter Classic. His best game of the month, however, was in a tough loss to a strong St. Thomas More program in which he led all scorers with 36 points.

For all Alex has done for the Wolverine basketball program, he is awarded the Co-Athlete of The Month for Early Winter 2009-2010. Not only has he been an offensive force for the Wolverines, but he is a rabid defender and his leadership on and off the floor has been the stabilizing factor during the game. He has been the driving force to the success of the basketball team and we look forward to see what the rest of the winter holds.

EARLY WINTER 2009-2010

Patrick Sen

6'0" 190 lbs.

Niles, IL

Wolverine Hockey Forward

The time preceding and immediately following break are traditionally difficult for the BA sports programs. The guys tend to look ahead to break and then lag upon returning from break. As a team, the Wolverine hockey team fell into this trap during December and January. All the while, however, Patrick was a model of consistency.

For the early winter, Patrick helped carry the team. His 5 goals and 4 assists led the team and overall for the month and he demonstrated that he is the Wolverines strongest offensive player. His 3 goals in the Northwood tournament helped the team in tough losses to Northwood and Nichols and a strong win over Rothesay. His play in the Eastern Junior Hockey League Showcase helped put in on the map for New England college coaches.

On the ice is not the only place where Pat shone in this month. He was awarded for high honors for the first semester and ranks as one of the top students in the school. Additionally, he has played a large role for the BA Hockey Goal Program in which team members volunteer at the local elementary school and help the students with schoolwork.

For Pat's contribution to the Wolverine Hockey program and to the entire Bridgton Academy community, he is awarded Co-Athlete of The Month for Early Winter 2009-2010.

LATE WINTER 2010

Tad Gold

6'1" 180 lbs.

Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Wolverine Hockey Forward

Success is not always measured on the stat sheet. The success that Tad Gold found this winter with the Wolverine hockey team was measured in attitude, hard work, and selflessness. The hockey team finished out the winter with an 8-7 record and much of the reason behind it was the play of the Bridgton Academy Co-Athlete of The Month.

It was a slow start to the season for Tad. Who could blame him for being a little sluggish entering the season? All he did was help lead the Wolverine baseball team to the finals of the New England Club Baseball League hitting an amazing .490 along the way. Once he came back from winter break with a rested body and a fresh outlook, he really took off on the ice. In basically half of a season, Tad was the second leading scorer on the team to the tune of 9 goals and 19 assists for 25 points.

It was late in the season in which Tad really started shouldering the load. In the last month of the season, Tad was an offensive machine scoring 7 goals and notching 5 assists. His best game of the month took place against one of the Eastern Junior Hockey League's best in the Bay State Breakers. Trailing 6-1 in the second period, Tad led the charge scoring 2 goals and assisting on 2 others as the Wolverines stormed back to take the game 7-6.

What stands out for most who follow the Wolverines is Tad's intangibles. Assistant Coach Mike Meserve raves about Tad's play away from the puck by saying, "He's the one of the hardest working guys we've ever had. He is first forward back on the defensive end and he's not afraid to mix it up in front of the net."

In addition to his success on the ice, Tad has been a major contributor to the Bridgton Academy Hockey Goal Program which works with kids from Stevens Brook Elementary School in Bridgton. The program, started in 2008, reaches out to classes in the elementary school by joining with teachers to help students with math, reading, and other projects.

For all his contributions to Bridgton Academy, Tad Gold is awarded Co-Athlete of The Month for Late Winter 2010.

LATE WINTER 2010

Ruben Kanya

Wolverine Basketball Guard

6'3" 190 lbs.

Hamilton, Ontario

For the past several years, the Wolverine basketball team has been the team to beat in the New England Prep School Class A division. This year was no exception. With competition among the best in the country day in and day out, there is a great deal of pressure for team to perform. None was more up to the task than the Co-Athlete of The Month for Late Winter 2010 than Ruben Kanya.

Ruben is the second Wolverine basketball player from north of the border (Dwayne Smith, Dec. 2008) to take home an Athlete of The Month award. That is about the only distinction that the two share. While Dwayne carried the team on the offensive side of the ball, it is the intangibles that set Ruben apart. This was never more evident than the last few weeks of the season leading up to the NEPSAC playoffs. Ruben came back from winter break with a fire in his belly.

Though the record doesn't necessarily indicate success, it really was a successful end of the season for the Wolverine hoopsters. With a strong home win against South Kent and a couple of really tight losses on the road, BA was poised to make some noise. And that they did. The BA Winter Classic highlighted Ruben's desire as he matched up against an underrated backcourt for St. Thomas More and made them work for every bucket. The next day he helped lead the team to a victory against in-state rival MCI.

It was the last two weeks that earned him this award, however. Number 2 ranked Brewster Academy (the eventual 2010 National Champion) came into Memorial Gymnasium thinking that they were going to walk all over the Wolverines. Ruben locked down highly touted guard Will Barton and the Wolverines knocked off Brewster 70-67. The next week in the NEPSAC playoffs, Ruben hit several buckets at key points of the game as BA moved along in the playoffs by knocking out Worcester Academy.

A highly cerebral player, Ruben has an innate sense of when to hit the key shot and he is undoubtedly the best defender for the Wolverines. Additionally, Ruben is a star off the court as he ranks near the top of his class academically.

For all his work on and off the basketball court, Ruben is awarded the Co-Athlete of The Month for Late Winter 2010.