

# Mya Hooten, Breezy Burnett — Gopher stars off the field

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New sports reporters Regan Guirguis and Sophia Bablitch talk about their recent stories on Gopher sports, including emotional features on standout athletes like Mya Hooten and Breezy Burnett and news from football's spring practice with P.J. Fleck.

**SOPHIA BABLITCH:** Sophia Bablitch.

**GUIRGUIS:** With the Minnesota Daily, and you're listening to the Gold Standard, a podcast dedicated to the University of Minnesota sports. First, we're gonna start off with talking about our stories for this past week, the process of them, how we feel about them. Do you wanna start us off?

**BABLITCH:** Yeah, sure. So I report on gymnastics and baseball, and I got the honor to chat with Mya Hooten for the gymnastics team and also speak with her mother. So a lot of people know about the name Mya Hooten who is a six time Big 10 champ, national qualifier. Many accolades.

But I gotta write a [feature piece on her](#) where I gotta learn a lot more about her backstory. And let me just say, it was not what I was expecting. Both her and her mother are very amazing people, but I found out a lot of hardships her and her mom went through. I just applaud her. You'd never know all of that with how successful she is today.

**GUIRGUIS:** I did a [feature story on our softball team's Breezy Burnett](#). She's awesome. She's just a very well-rounded person and I think I was able to learn more about her as a person on and off the field.

I talked to her mom and her hitting coach, which is also the out fielding coach, which was really convenient because she's in the outfield.

It's just so nice being able to do a feature story on athletes because, you know, you see the stats, the wins and everything of the games and what the team acts like and works like in general.

But being able to really dive deep into a particular player and what they do to get to what they want to be for the season is just super important. I think it's good for fans of the sports or even people who aren't fans of the sports to humanize players more. And I feel like that's like an important part of sports in general and journalism.

**BABLITCH:** Yeah. That's awesome. I'm excited because coming up I have a feature story on Cole Selvig, and he's been having a stellar season as a pitcher. So I'm excited to learn more about him and meet him face to face.

**GUIRGUIS:** The other story I did, it was amazing and it was such a great opportunity. It was just less fun and exciting for the University in general. I reported on [our loss against Wisconsin](#) last Friday in the women's hockey NCAA Frozen Four semifinals.

It was a great time being there and watching the games and just seeing how hard our team works and how hard Wisconsin's team works as well. But you know it was definitely a bit difficult. I've never been in a press conference room when we've lost a game as big as the Frozen Four semi-finals.

**BABLITCH:** Emotions are pretty high.

**GUIRGUIS:** Yeah. Emotions are high. But it's just one of those things where you really get to see the behind the scenes of a team and know that this game means so much to these players and coach.

It was a great game for Wisconsin. They ended up winning it all against Ohio State, so that's awesome for them. They're a good team. They're dedicated team, their fan base is incredible. There were more Wisconsin fans in the crowd for a Minnesota game than there were Minnesota fans.

It was just such a great dynamic. It was so amazing to see that many people showing up for women's hockey.

**BABLITCH:** Yeah that's awesome. One of my favorite stories I gotta do was a day-in-a-life with [three top performing Gophers](#). I did a feature on three athletes and one of them was outside of my realm. It was like a golfer. So that was fun to get to interview someone that I don't normally focus on and learn more about golf.

I spoke with Bella McCauley and Drew Berkland and Jordan Lyden. So those were the three.

**GUIRGUIS:** That's a good trio for a story. That's awesome.

**BABLITCH:** They're all having fantastic seasons, so I'm like, "Yes, I picked good."

**GUIRGUIS:** Yeah. I mean, the story that I think I'm most excited to write is the football story that I was working on yesterday. They had a media open practice yesterday.

P.J. Fleck is such a well-spoken person, I got to interview him afterwards. And just like he just loves this team. And he loves basketball. He talked a lot about Medved because he was actually there at the start of the practice and it was awesome. Just super cool to see, you know, the coaches of different sports supporting each other, looking out for each other.

But, softball is this weekend is their first home weekend against Northwestern it looks like, which is exciting.

**BABLITCH:** Baseball also has been having some upsets here and there. They recently got a win over High Point University, so that's exciting. And at the beginning of the season they appointed a new head coach, Ty McDevitt, so I'm sure they will just keep developing and getting stronger over the next few games.

**GUIRGUIS:** Well, other than Gopher sports, we got general Minnesota sports. The Vikings are still possibly thinking about Aaron Rodgers. I just think it's interesting. I know that the Steelers were interested in him as well. I think it'd be really funny if Aaron Rogers went to the Vikings, especially because of the Packers and the Vikings rivalry.

**BABLITCH:** No that's true, that's true.

**GUIRGUIS:** It's intense.

**BABLITCH:** That would've been really rough in my family. We have one Vikings fan and she's very obnoxious, and then if Rogers joins her side that would be unfortunate.

**GUIRGUIS:** Well, you know, he might not do very well, so, you know, you do have that. I do think that it looks like here that they were also looking at JJ McCarthy, but he hasn't been told that he's starting yet.

Which makes me think that they are thinking about Rogers a bit more. If he does end up playing, I'll be really excited to see those Packers v. Vikings games and to see the chants and what the fans say.

**BABLITCH:** This episode was written by Sophia Bablitch and...

**BABLITCH:** And produced by Kaylie Sirovy and Ceci Heinen. As always, we appreciate you listening in, and feel free to send a message to our email inbox at [podcasting@mndaily.com](mailto:podcasting@mndaily.com) with any questions, comments, or concerns. I'm Sophia Bablitch.

**BABLITCH:** And this has been the Gold Standard.