

## Athletics: Baseball

### 2011 Review

The Muhlenberg baseball team displayed a flair for the dramatic during the 2011 season.

Of the 38 games on the Mules' schedule, 24 were decided by three runs or less, with the margin in 12 games just a single run.

And it was a three straight one-run wins that helped Muhlenberg get into the middle of the Centennial Conference playoff race with a week to play in the regular season. But the Mules hit a rough patch at the end of conference play and missed out on the postseason with a record of 11-26-1.

After opening the season with a sweep at Gallaudet, Muhlenberg went 0-11-1, including five losses to eventual NCAA Tournament teams, during its next 12 games.

Returning home from Spring Break, the Mules snapped their skid with a 3-2 win over Lehigh Valley rival Moravian, which had been receiving votes in the national polls at the time.

After dropping the next four games, Muhlenberg opened the Centennial Conference season at Washington and used four runs in the top of the ninth to win the nightcap, 9-6, and earn a split.

The Mules followed that up with five-run rally in the bottom of the eighth to beat Ursinus, 9-8, and then split with McDaniel.

Muhlenberg lost its next five games before hosting Swarthmore, which was riding a four-game winning streak, including a sweep of then-nationally ranked Johns Hopkins.

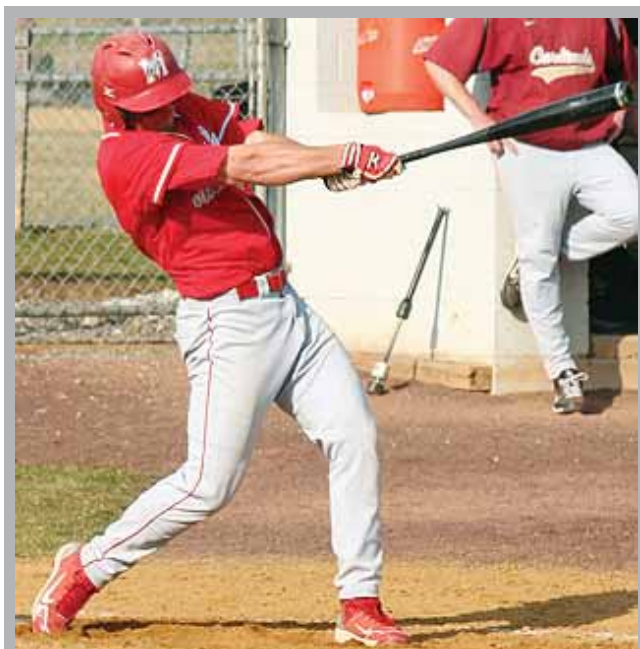
The Mules fell behind early and trailed, 7-2, in the top of the eighth before clawing back and winning on junior **Nick Busillo's** walkoff three-run homer with two outs in the bottom of the ninth. The two teams squared off less than 24 hours later, and the Garnet led, 9-8, after seven innings. But the Mules used five straight bunts to score three in the top of the eighth and win, 11-10.

Muhlenberg then swept Gettysburg to stay alive for a Centennial Conference playoff spot. Senior **Joseph DiCecilia** delivered a walkoff RBI single for a 5-4 win the opener, and sophomore **Rob Shannon** fired eight innings of four-hit ball as the Mules shutout the Bullets, 10-0, to complete the Senior Day sweep.

But four straight CC losses knocked Muhlenberg out of the post-season. The Mules were not finished, however, as they closed out the year in record-setting fashion with a 29-0 win over Baptist Bible.

The 29 runs tied the school record, while the 29-run margin of victory was the largest in team history. The Mules also set new marks for runs in an inning (13), 10-run innings (2), doubles (8) and extra-base hits (12), and tied the records for hits in a game (27) and an inning (11).

DiCecilia was named second-team All-CC after leading the Mules in hits (51), doubles (10) and steals (15), and finishing second in RBI (23). He became just the third player in school history to record two 50-hit seasons.



*DiCecilia is second all-time in batting (.377) and fifth in slugging percentage (.578). He also ranks 21st on the school's career hit list (124) and is tied for sixth in home runs (12), 13th in RBI (80) and 17th in doubles (20).*

Sophomore **Joseph Vila** became the second player in Muhlenberg history to finish a season with five doubles, triples and home runs when he belted a long ball in the season finale. He also led the Mules with 25 RBI to go along with 35 hits.

Freshman **John Scuderi** led the Mules with 28 runs in his first season, and classmate **Max Litvak** batted .289 with 16 runs scored and five doubles. Sophomore southpaw **Tim Velys** finished 3-0 with a save in 13 appearances out of the bullpen.



*Daniels closed out his career second in all-time appearances (49), tied for ninth in wins (13) and ninth in career strikeouts (143).*

On the hill, senior **Jason Daniels** led Muhlenberg in wins (4), complete games (4) and saves (3). He was the first Mule to lead the team outright in all three categories since saves became an official statistic in 1969.

Sophomore **John Muha** received all-conference honorable mention after finishing second on the team with a .352 batting average. He only struck out four times in 91 at-bats and finished with a .438 on-base percentage, the best among Mule regulars.

Senior **Bobby Spindler** won the team batting title with a .358 average and finished his career 12th on the Mules' all-time hits list (136) and tied for 14th in doubles (21). Also in his final campaign, **Jeff Puklin** picked up 27 hits and scored 22 runs.

For the second year in a row, senior catcher **Clint Lynch** led the CC with nine pickoffs. Senior **Chris Harper** picked up the win against Moravian, while classmate **Adam Scarzafava** earned the first save of his career against Gallaudet.