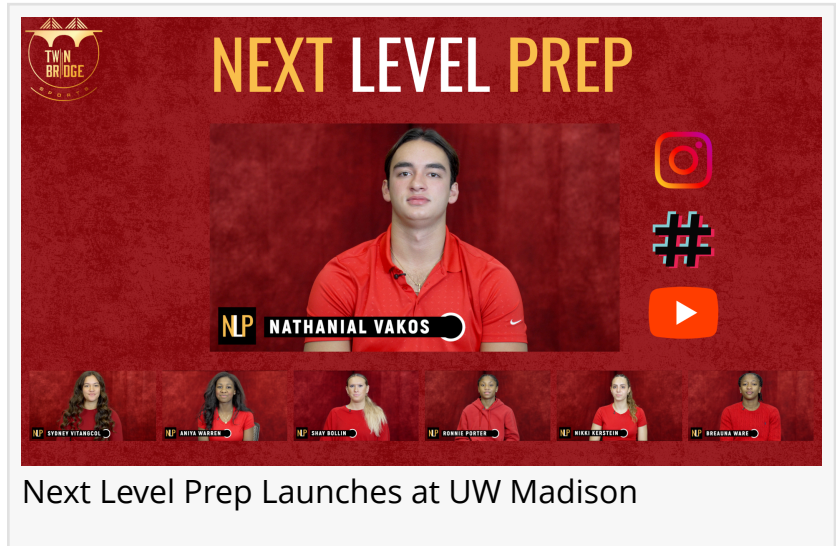


Next Level Prep Expands to UW-Madison NIL in Collaboration with Twin Bridge Sports

Next Level Prep launches at UW-Madison, offering student-athletes a platform to share candid stories, build personal brands, and inspire the next generation.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Student-athletes at the [University of Wisconsin–Madison](#) recently participated in an innovative NIL initiative called [Next Level Prep](#), created by [Twin Bridge Sports](#) to highlight athletes' authentic voices and elevate their personal brands. Twin Bridge describes Next Level Prep as “more than a campaign — it's a platform that empowers student-athletes to inspire the next generation”.



The Next Level Prep program featured 17 Badger student-athletes across multiple sports, each engaging in an in-depth on-camera interview that explored the defining moments, challenges, and motivations that shaped their rise to Division I competition. The initiative goes beyond traditional NIL activations by producing high-quality video content that prioritizes authenticity and impact. By pairing professional production standards with candid, heartfelt storytelling, the program creates content that resonates deeply with fans, younger athletes, and potential brand partners alike.

The initiative was coordinated in partnership with Tyler Britz, NIL Partner Services Manager for Wisconsin Athletics via Altius Sports Partners. In a recent interview, Mitchell Pinta, UW Deputy Athletic Director and Chief Revenue Officer, emphasized the university's ongoing commitment to life-after-sport preparation by offering “transformative real-world experiences.”

Among those featured was senior football kicker Nathanial Vakos, who reflected on his path through college athletics just days before making headlines with a game-winning field goal that secured an upset victory over nationally ranked Washington.

“Some of the best advice I've been given is just to cherish every moment... it goes astronomically

fast," Vakos said. "You only have sports for such a long time... So cherish those moments and take it all in." He also spoke on the value of community and career readiness: "The universities you go to have a lot of connections that can help you move forward in your life after sport."

Other Badger athletes echoed similar themes of purpose, growth, and legacy:

Aniya Warren (Volleyball), the nation's No. 1 libero in her class, spoke directly to younger athletes: "Don't let anyone dictate what you can do in life or what you will do in life... Believe in yourself because if you don't have the ultimate belief in you, then you shouldn't expect anyone else to." Warren detailed her path to becoming the top-ranked libero and the experience of competing with the USA national team.

Breauna Ware (Basketball) offered a grounded reminder about NIL decision-making: "With NIL being very big and driving the NCAA right now, do not go somewhere because of the money." Ware reflected on her experience navigating the transfer portal and the transition from her hometown in New York to Madison, where she's grown to love the Midwest college-town atmosphere.

Julia Herring (Diving) delivered a powerful message about perspective in recruitment: "You shouldn't ever commit to a coach—you should commit to the school." Herring opened up about the emotional toll of being directly affected by NCAA vs. House roster limitations, calling it "one of the hardest things I've ever been through." Still, her story is one of perseverance, as she reinforces that nothing is out of reach with hard work and determination.

Lucas Daniels (Diving), who has built a growing online following, stressed the value of resilience: "Stay disciplined on your bad days. You've fought through too many bad days to give up..." Daniels discussed his transition from gymnastics to diving, the evolution of his social media presence, and how those efforts have led to exciting NIL opportunities and brand partnerships.

Nikki Kerstein (Basketball) reflected on a mindset shift that has shaped her early experience as a freshman: "A big thing that our coach talks about is 'I get to do something' vs. 'I have to do something'... So just putting things into perspective can change a lot for your journey." She discussed how gratitude, confidence, and perspective play a critical role in standing out during recruitment and managing pressure.

Riley Matz (Rowing), who made the team as a walk-on sophomore after being cut his freshman year, shared a message of perseverance: "Surrender is worse than defeat. Even if everything looks like it's coming down on you... keep fighting until the bitter end." Matz described how the disappointment of being cut fueled a year of hard work that ultimately earned him a spot on the team. Now, he mentors aspiring walk-ons with similar goals.

Sydney Vitangcol (Softball) encouraged authenticity during the recruitment process: "I would just reassure people just to be themselves... coaches want to know who you are as a person and you

will find the right fit no matter what." She also shared her journey to becoming a top high school pitching prospect after throwing a state-record nine no-hitters.

These stories—personal, powerful, and inspiring—demonstrate the full impact of NIL when paired with purpose-driven media and mentorship. As Evan Waldman, Co-Founder of Twin Bridge Sports, put it: "Each athlete brings a perspective that's worth hearing. Next Level Prep helps them express it in a way that resonates with both their peers and the future generation."

Justin Waldman, also Co-Founder, added: "This isn't just about exposure. These interviews help athletes take control of their narrative, grow their personal brands, and give back to the next generation of student-athletes."

Beyond personal brand development, Next Level Prep also serves Wisconsin Athletics' broader goals. By showcasing the real voices of current athletes, prospective recruits gain an unfiltered view of the values, culture, and community behind Wisconsin Athletics. In an era where authenticity drives connection, these stories carry more weight than any traditional recruitment material.

Full interviews from Wisconsin's Next Level Prep campaign are available on the Next Level Prep YouTube channel. Highlight clips and remixes can be found on Twin Bridge Sports' Instagram and TikTok pages. As Twin Bridge Sports and University of Wisconsin Athletics reported, the collaboration not only enhances NIL opportunities for current Badgers, but also strengthens the community's connection across generations.

As Next Level Prep expands to more universities nationwide, its mission remains the same: to empower student-athletes through storytelling—and ensure their greatest asset, their voice, is heard.

For more information about Next Level Prep and Twin Bridge Sports, contact info@twinbridgesports.com.

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