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Student Broadcaster Leads Pro Baseball Telecasts

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Student Broadcaster Leads Pro Baseball Telecasts

Surrounded by bunting and a sellout crowd, Swan was sitting behind a microphone with a TV camera to his right ready to call play-by-play for a live television broadcast of the San Rafael Pacifics' independent minor league season-opening game on June 3. Figuratively speaking, he was about to hit a home run in his young broadcasting career as the lead announcer in professional baseball.

Swan's rise into the television broadcast both comes less than a year after he transferred to Dominican. He was drawn to the University by Brad Van Alstyne, chair of the [Communications and Media Studies Department](#). Van Alstyne listed the number of opportunities Swan would have to host his own radio show and call play-for-play for games on the campus radio station and work with prominent faculty, including veteran sports broadcaster Barry Tompkins, the voice of Showtime boxing and now a host and regular guest on Comcast SportsNet Bay Area. "I'm in. I'm definitely in," Swan said. "That's where I want to go. That caught my ear. Brad was really passionate about his department and he really sold me."

In his first radio class at Dominican, Swan met his instructor, Stuart Horne, and immediately connected. He also started making friends with fellow students.

"That was my first step toward comfortability then I learned these professors develop worthwhile student-teacher relationships with you unlike a lot of colleges," Swan said. "And all the students with the diversity on campus are very open and nice."

One of them, Mike Temple, quickly became Swan's broadcast partner. Within weeks they created the concept for their own two-hour talk show – The Temple of Swan – on [Penguin Radio](#), Dominican's campus station. One night, when their show was rescheduled out of its normal Thursday night slot, Horne happened to tune in and was so impressed by their knowledge of basketball that he recruited them to be his student broadcasters for Penguins basketball.

The only previous broadcasting experience Swan had coming to Dominican was announcing 3-on-3 basketball games involving his junior high school friends in his own driveway. Yet, Swan had longed to be a broadcaster from the day when he was 10 and his father took him to a San Francisco Giants' game at Candlestick Park and encouraged him to listen to Hall of Famer Jon Miller's play-by-play account of it on radio.

"Man, I'm falling in love with this," Swan recalled. "Foul balls are coming back and I'm not even noticing. I thought 'I want to do what Jon Miller is doing.'" Horne gave him that chance.

"Alex is an absolute natural," Horne said. "He has a true passion for radio. He's constantly refining his craft by working as many events as I will assign him to - sporting events and otherwise. He's worked several 'campus visit days', simply for the experience and to better his on-air interviewing skills. He constantly takes notes and observes the way I approach people,

make them feel comfortable and research them so he asks the right questions at the right time - all so that each time he's on the air, he is a little better than the time before."

In fact, just 10 games into his radio play-by-play career with the Penguins last season, Swan showed award-winning potential. His exciting description of a thrilling last-second, buzzer-beating, game-winning basket by Dominican senior guard Myles Carrillo in overtime against Azusa Pacific in the Conlan Center on December 5 was nominated for the Stretch Internet Call of the Year and was selected as one of the three finalists nationwide.

[CLICK HERE TO HEAR ALEX'S PLAY-BY-PLAY CALL OF THE GAME-WINNING SHOT](#)

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH REPLAY OF JUNE 27 TELECAST FEATURING PACIFICS' PLAYERS WEARING PINK DRESSES](#)

Swan remembered the advice that Tompkins offered him about capturing such a rare moment in broadcasting and not missing it.

"Alex's ability to vocalize the magnitude of certain situations is that of a broadcaster well beyond his years. He has a great feel for when to step up the tension and knows how to do it," Horne said. "A good example is the game-winning shot by Myles. That call was no accident; Alex left a little room just in case and it paid off. He's as good in the booth as any student we've had on Penguin Radio."

Now he has moved into the TV booth. In April, Swan, as part of [Dominican's Summer Sports Broadcast Camp](#), presented two demo tapes to Pacifics President and General Manager Michael Shapiro. They were creative one-inning play-by-play accounts of a mock Red Sox-Yankees game – one in 1967 the other in 2014 – that Swan visualized in his mind and called off the top of his head.

Swan was notified in May that the job as lead student broadcaster for the 11 Pacifics' games airing this summer on cable station CMCM.TV was his.

"I keep saying it's a dream come true, but it just seems like this journey just keeps on building," Swan said. "These building blocks continue to happen."

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