

# Meet Tri-County standout Amber Baehman

Scott A. Williams, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 9:22 p.m. CST February 1, 2016



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PLAINFIELD - When she stepped on the court for her first varsity basketball game Dec. 1, 2014, then-freshman Amber Baehman may not have been a household name in Wisconsin prep circles. The 5-foot-10 guard/forward spent the next three months announcing her arrival on the court in rather emphatic fashion.

Early indications suggested a star was emerging for the Penguins, and on the small-school landscape around central Wisconsin. Baehman averaged a team-high 12.6 points and 7.8 rebounds, along with 3.2 assists — as a FRESHMAN.

"Amber loves basketball and is always ready to play," Tri-County coach Mike Vesperman said. "Amber's height and ball-handling skills are some of her strengths (as a player)."

It's no coincidence the Penguins enjoyed one of their most successful seasons on the hardwood in school history, finishing 19-6 overall.

Meanwhile, Baehman caught the attention of the rest of the state and was selected to participate in the inaugural 3-point Challenge at the WIAA state tournament, reaching the final five.

Baehman has taken her game to another level. She has increased her production to 18.9 points and 9.2 rebounds a game for the Penguins (14-2) who sit atop the CWC 10 with an 11-1 record.

"This year she really has grown and has become a great team player," Vesperman said. "This year she has a higher percentage (from 3-point range) than last year, but she hasn't shot enough threes to qualify."

**Why did you get involved in basketball and what about the sport appeals to you?** I was mostly just interested in sports and my sister and I always played basketball out back when we were younger. I really love the adrenaline the sport gives me. Working together as a team is a big favorite of mine, and in basketball, it is much needed to be successful.

**Where do you feel you've made the greatest strides as a player over the past year and a half of varsity competition?** I'm getting better at seeing the whole court and getting everyone involved in the play that is set to run. All of my teammates push me to get better.

**How do you psyche yourself up or prepare for a game in the time leading up to the start?** After school I always eat a meal at my friend's (house) and rest up a bit. At halftime of the JV game, I will go into the locker room and listen to music to get me pumped up and mentally focused. I never pay attention to the audience and fans, I always keep my head in the game.

**What was it like competing in the 3-point shooting contest at the WIAA state tournament last spring, especially being a freshman?** It was very nerve-racking, that is for sure. I asked all the players what year they are and they were all seniors and juniors, which put even more pressure on me. I had my family, friends, and my coach there to support me, so that brought my confidence up. When we were warming up before the start of the contest, I didn't even remember what the basket looked like I was so nervous. After the first round got done and I realized I was one of the top shooters, then I said to myself, 'I got this.'

**What has been the highlight of your basketball career up until this point?** I would have to say the 3-point contest because it gave me the view of being independent. It gave me a different perspective of being under pressure and to rely on myself more. It brought my confidence level up more and made me realize to myself that I can do great things and never give up on the small things.

**Who has been your role model growing up and what lesson have they taught you that you'll take with you the rest of your life?** My grandpa (Lonnie Buskirk) has been my role model growing up for many reasons. Mostly to be myself and to do what makes me happy. He taught me to be independent and to always stay positive and to never give up. He brought out a person in me that I never knew I was before. He taught me to not take the easy way out of things. To always take the best road for me to succeed and to never give up on anything.

**If you could choose to meet one person in the history of the world, dead or alive, who would you want to meet, and what would you like to find out about them?** I would love to meet LeBron James. The way he plays the game is fantastic. I would like to know how he goes into every game thinking and what his goals are walking into a game.

**Name something on your bucket list that you absolutely have to get done by the time you turn 40:** I really want to go scuba diving.

**What is your greatest fear?** I am always scared of driving a truck on the ice and falling through and drowning. Another thing like that I hate is backing a boat into a boat landing. I'm scared it won't stop and the truck will roll right into the water with me in it.

**Tell us something about yourself the average person may not know about you:** I hate ladybugs. I can't stand them at all. They are scary and they just creep me out.

**How would you define happiness in your life?** Happiness in my life is having the greatest family and friends there for one another. Spending time with them and making great memories and a lot of laughter.

**What can't you live without?** I could never live without my family. They have done so much for me. They have been there for me through thick and thin, and I have no idea what I would do without them.

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Tri-County sophomore Amber Baehman is averaging a team-high 18.9 points and 9.2 rebounds for the Central Wisconsin Conference 10 leading Penguins. (Photo: Megan McCormick/USA TODAY NETWORK - Wisconsin )

## **Amber Baehman**

**School:** Tri-County

**Class:** Sophomore

**Sport:** Basketball

**Family:** Father, Jeff Baehman; Mother, Terry Buskirk; Brothers, Cohlten (5), Jake (10), Blake (13); Sisters, Lyndee (4), Abby (18), Alyssa (22)

**Favorite subject:** Biology

**Favorite food:** Watermelon

**Favorite all-time movie:** "Where the Red Fern Grows"

**Favorite TV show:** "Jerry Springer"

**Favorite cartoon character:** SpongeBob SquarePants

**Favorite super hero:** Spider-Man

**Favorite musical group/artist:** Cole Swindell

**Favorite pro athlete:** LeBron James

**Favorite team:** Green Bay Packers

**Favorite place in Stevens Point:** Buffalo Wild Wings

**Favorite vacation spot:** At my cabin in Shiocton

**Facebook, Twitter or Instagram:** Facebook

**iPhone or Android:** Android

**Fantasy job/career:** WNBA