

PURDUE ALUMNUS

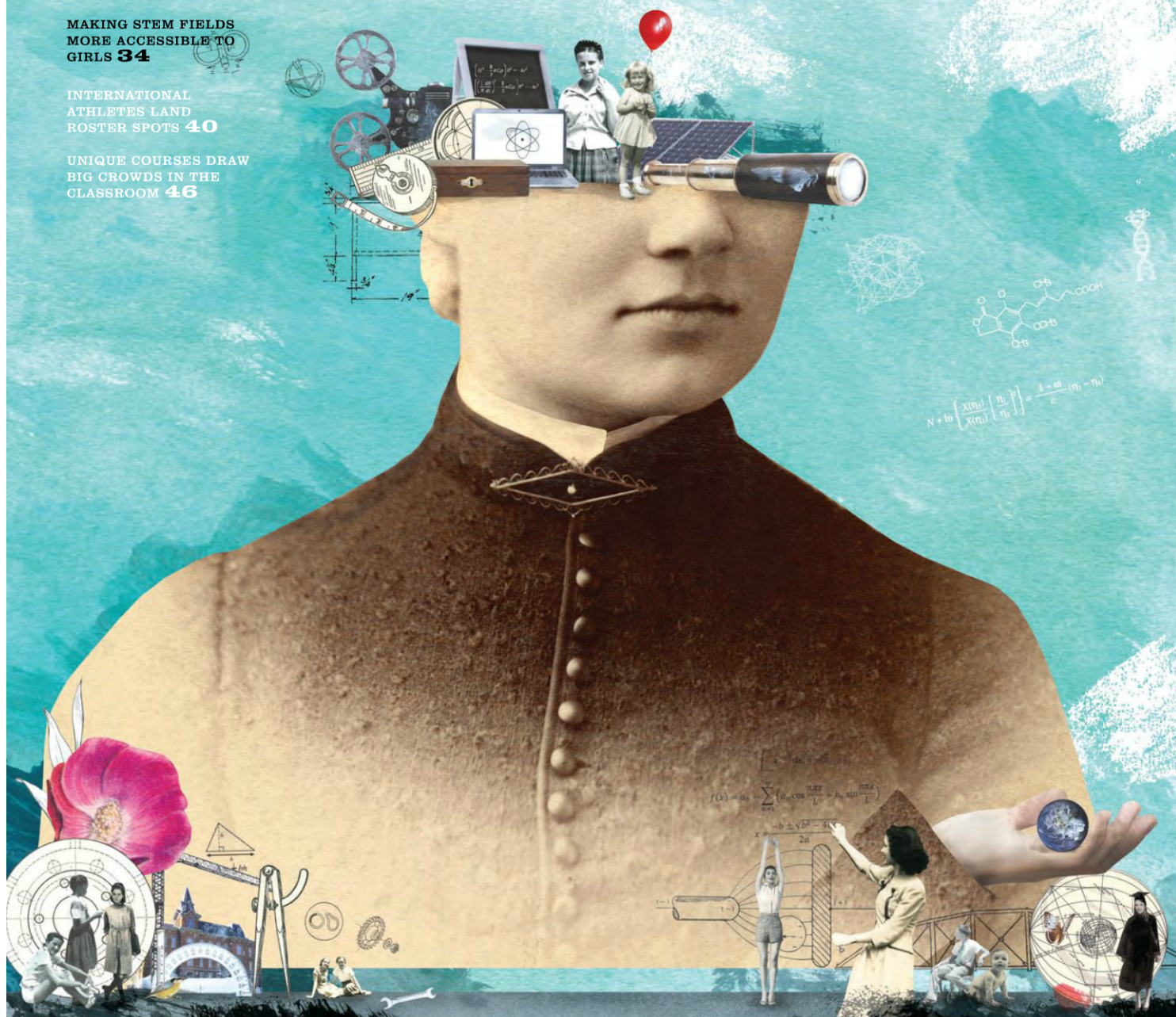
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OPENMINDED

MAKING STEM FIELDS
MORE ACCESSIBLE TO
GIRLS **34**

INTERNATIONAL
ATHLETES LAND
ROSTER SPOTS **40**

UNIQUE COURSES DRAW
BIG CROWDS IN THE
CLASSROOM **46**





Fadde has tested hundreds of college and minor league baseball players, which can be used for both talent identification and development.

ALUMNI PROFILE

PETER FADDE

WHEN A BASEBALL IS THROWN, the batter has a split second to decide what type of pitch is being thrown and whether he should swing or not. Having a good eye at the plate is an important skill to have. But unlike some of baseball's other talents — like power and speed on the base paths — Peter Fadde (MS EDU'90, PhD EDU'02) says that you can train to have this skill.

In fact, he's developed the technology and techniques for it. For over 15 years, Fadde has been conducting research on testing and training pitch recognition. A player will look at a screen and watch a pitcher facing him. A variety of video pitchers will throw hundreds of pitches that are cut off at different points. Some pitches are cut off during the ball flight, and some pitches are cut off right as the pitcher releases the ball. Based on this split second, the player needs to judge what type of pitch is being thrown. This technology is then used to quiz players or is utilized for other forms of training — such as batting cage drills — to improve skills. The results have proven successful, as those who have used this video training have seen their statistics significantly rise.

"It is an increasingly valued skill in high-level baseball," says Fadde, who is a professor of learning systems design and technology at Southern Illinois University, of

the importance of pitch recognition. Fadde has tested hundreds of college and minor league baseball players, which can be used for both talent identification and development.

"There are guys who aren't really as athletic but can succeed because they have this skill," says Fadde, who began working on this subject as his dissertation while he was finishing his PhD at Purdue. Settling on pitch recognition technology was a natural choice, Fadde says. From 1990 to 2003, he served as athletic video coordinator at Purdue, where he worked with both the baseball and football teams. Additionally, his daughter played college softball and his son was a baseball player in college, so he says that he was drawn to the idea of using video technology to improving hitting abilities.

Since then, his pitch recognition technology has grown in popularity. Fadde has consulted with college and MLB teams, and he was also a speaker at the MIT Sloan Sports Analytics Conference, a yearly event that brings in some of the most important names in the sports world.

In recent years, Fadde has also worked on video training for other areas, including football, tennis, and military training. He says video technology has the ability to make an impact on those who use it, whether it is a college linebacker or a major league outfielder.

"There's an extra advantage with anticipation," he says. "It allows people to react a lot faster, sometimes faster than humanly possible."

—ANDREW CLARK