

# On campus today

## SPORTS AT NMU

### Franklin, Liebner are Wildcat All-Americans

Two NMU juniors earned All-America status during the winter season: indoor track and field's Bailey Franklin and Nordic skier Andy Liebner. Franklin became the second All-American in NMU track and field history with a seventh-place finish in the triple jump, clearing 38-10.25 at the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships. She was also 11th in the high jump at 5-5. Liebner finished eighth in the 20-kilometer classic and ninth in the 10k freestyle at the NCAA Skiing Championships.

Freshman Jaime Roberts also competed at the national indoor track and field meet in the pole vault, but did not place. Franklin (high jump, triple jump and pentathlon) and Roberts (pole vault) earned all-region honors, along with junior Catherine Angeli, who was ranked in the top five in the 60- and 200-meter dashes.

The track and field squad ended the indoor season ranked No. 25 in the nation and No. 3 in the region. It broke 11 school records and had the best finish in school

history at the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships with third. Franklin won the triple jump with a GLIAC championship meet and school record of 39-3.25.

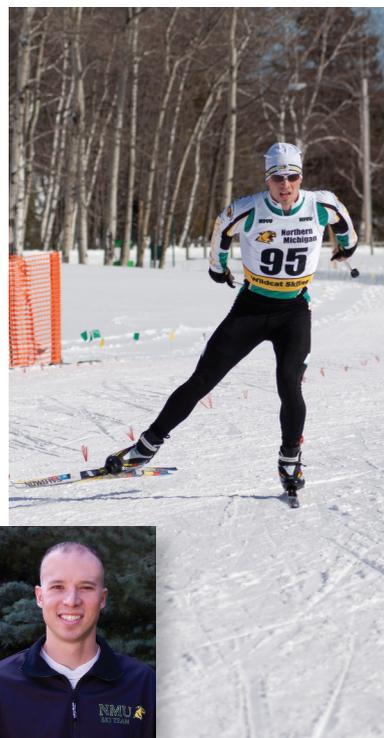
The Nordic ski team finished 12th overall at the NCAA

Championships. Along with Liebner, senior Martin Stuge Banerud was 33rd in both races and freshman Erik Soderman 19th in the freestyle and 39th in the classic. For the women, junior Marie Helen Soderman finished 13th in the 15k classic and 21st in the 5k freestyle; senior Christina Turman was 26th in the classic and 27th in the freestyle while sophomore Monica Markvardsen was 32nd in the classic and 36th in the freestyle.

Both the men and women captured Central Collegiate Ski Association Championship titles. Liebner, Banerud, both Sodermans and Turman were named CCSA all-conference first team while Markvardsen and sophomore Chris Bowler made the second team. **Sten Fjeldheim '86 BS, '92 MS** was named the CCSA Women's coach of the year. At the NCAA Regional Championships, the NMU men were first and the women second.

### Winter Wildcats

*Men's Basketball* – NMU went 9-17 overall and 4-15 in the GLIAC for seventh in the North Division in the first year under Doug Lewis. “My main focus was laying the foundation with what guys should expect as far as



discipline and my expectations for hard work and being a good teammate,” Lewis said. Junior center Jared Benson was named to the North Division second team. He led NMU with 366 points, 171 rebounds and 41 blocks while shooting 58.7 percent from the field.

**Women’s Basketball** – The Wildcats went 12-14 overall and 7-12 in GLIAC action for sixth in the North Division. Junior Chelsea Lyons, who had six 20-point performances, was selected to the North Division second team while senior Kellie Rietveld was chosen to the North Division defensive team. Lyons had 333 points, a 12.8 per-game scoring average and shot 46.9 percent from the field. Senior Steffani Stoeger finished her Wildcat career with 1,033 points, good for 22nd on NMU’s all-time scoring list. She climbed to second in career steals with 199 steals. Senior Erin Powers finished with 462 career rebounds, 20th in career rebounding.

**Golf** – The NMU golf team finished 23rd at the NCAA Great Lakes Region Championship. Junior Tony Bilich led

NMU in 70th place. Junior Adam Huss, senior Joe Hansen and freshmen Mike Murphy all tied in 104th place.

**Hockey** – Coach **Walt Kyle’s ’81 BS** Wildcats went 15-19-5 overall and 12-13-3 in Central Collegiate Hockey Association play for sixth-place. NMU hosted

Bowling Green in the CCHA first-round playoffs and won the first game 6-3 before losing 2-0 and 2-1 in double overtime. Junior forward Tyler Gron led the team in scoring with 32 (17-15)

points. Junior goalie Reid Ellingson was 10-14-3 with a 91.6 save percentage and a 2.52 goals against average.

**Swimming and Diving** – Under first-year coach Heidi Voigt, the Wildcats finished seventh at the GLIAC Championships. Top 10 finishers were sophomores Olga Budiansky (3rd, 200 back; 8th, 100 breast), sophomore Gabby Alzaga (4th, 200 back; 6th, 100 back) and Alison Black (10th, 3m dive), along with the team’s lone senior Kelli Vander Baan (7th, 3m dive). Vander Baan competed at the NCAA Championships and finished 11th in the 3-meter and 13th in the 1m diving events.

**“My main focus was laying the foundation with what guys should expect as far as discipline and my expectations for hard work and being a good teammate.”**

**—Men’s Basketball Coach Doug Lewis**

## Rewarding touchdowns

**Bart Bartkowiak ’72 BS** bleeds green and gold and has ever since he was a player on the 1968-71 NMU football teams. For the 2010 football season, he came up with a unique way to demonstrate that. He pledged to give \$100 to the Wildcat team for each of its wins, which resulted in a \$600 gift to Coach **Bernie Anderson’s ’79 BS, ’89 MAE** squad.

“I told Bernie I was hoping to have to write a check for about \$1,100. I would have been happy to do that, but as soon as (quarterback Carter) Kopach went down (Oct. 9) with a season-ending injury, I thought, ‘Oh oh. This isn’t good,’” says Bartkowiak, who owns Bartkowiak Accounting and Tax Service PC in Marquette.

The Wildcats went 5-6 overall and 5-5 in Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference play. In 2011, the ‘Cats return 23 seniors, including Kopach.



*Bartkowiak and NMU Athletic Director Ken Godfrey*

To Bartkowiak, fan support should be a matter that is simply black and white—or in his case, green and gold.

“It’s not really about wins and losses. It’s about supporting the team. These are hard economic times, and I wanted to do something for the team that would help. When I sent the check, I added a note to Bernie that I didn’t care what they used the money for; I told him to use it where it was most needed. When he called to thank me, he said he really appreciated that.”

Bartkowiak hopes other alumni Wildcat athletes give back to their alma mater.

“I try to find ways to help out NMU and Wildcat athletics whenever I can, however I can, because I came here and received a four-year football scholarship. At one point, the university gave me a job. My degree help set me up for pursuing my career. My wife worked at NMU. The university has given me and my family a lot, and we want to return that support. The ways things are going these days, the university needs our help more than ever. I think NMU will need to depend more and more on private giving just to maintain the things it has always done in the past,” he says.

“I hope other Wildcat Club members, whether they were NMU athletes or not, will consider doing something similar, something that assists the NMU teams they support and, at the same time, makes them feel great because they are helping,” Bartkowiak says.

It’s not complicated or noble, points out Bartkowiak. It’s just part of being a Wildcat fan.

# Looking back

## Tenacity in the Pool

By Ian Astle '11 BS

*There were many people involved in the creation of NMU's women's intercollegiate sports program. Northern Horizons is honoring the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, which took place in March, with one NMU alumna's pioneering moment in Wildcat Athletics.*

**Growing up** in Clarkston, **Lynne (Peters) Best '80 BS** would swim the one-mile round trip across her hometown lake and back while timing herself. She also taught herself how to flip turn in the water. Every four years, she watched Olympic swimming. Little did she know she was conditioning herself to become one of the pioneers of Northern Michigan University women's intercollegiate athletics.

When Best came to NMU in 1975 there was no women's competitive swim team. Best didn't plan to compete at NMU, but she did love to swim. One day, she asked Don Trost, the men's swim coach, if she could practice with his team. He agreed to let her do so.

But acceptance in the pool by the coach did not mean acceptance by the members of the squad. Although no outright derogatory behavior or language occurred, Best says nobody put out a welcome mat.

"For example, I was repeatedly locked out of the pool and had to bang on the door until someone would finally come to let me in," says Best.

At that time, Title IX, the federal law that makes discrimination in any type of educational programming illegal, was in its infancy, having been passed in 1972. It was not yet being

enforced at most colleges and universities across the nation.

To Best, Title IX was a way to open a closed door. In the spring of 1977, she coordinated a petition drive signed by enough women to start a women's swim team. Barb Patrick, assistant athletic director at the time, then began searching for a coach. "I called Barb nearly every day that summer to see if NMU had found us a coach yet," remembers Best. Eventually Joan (Peto) Hopkins was hired and the program was under way.

The women's team did not win any meets the first year, although Best did set some pool records. But those marks were short-lived as the team continued to improve each year due to the new coach's recruitment of seasoned competitive swimmers and divers. NMU began winning meets and five seasons after the program began, the Wildcats would finish runners-up to the AIAW Division II national title in 1982.

Best, a history and physical education major, continued swimming on the squad until her graduation in 1980. She helped the team as an assistant coach after her student teaching concluded. Graduating during the 1980s recession, Best could not find a teaching job, so she enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where she was assigned to be a photographer in California.

Now retired from the Air Force, Best stays busy substitute teaching. She has a 50-meter pool in the back-



The 1978 Wildcat women's swim team, with Lynne (Peters) Best front and center.

yard of her South Carolina home where she continues to swim. Despite having multiple sclerosis and the inability to balance while running or riding a bike, she says she enjoys competing in the swimming portion of an Armed Forces team triathlon each year at Charleston (S.C.) Air Force Base. She takes pride in the fact that, despite being in her fifties, she can still swim 500 meters in nine minutes.

Looking back at her pioneering effort at NMU, Best says of the experience, "I didn't have to swim on the men's team, but I wanted to swim competitively. It was a tough experience, but I did what I thought was right. I've always said that I dare one guy to do what I did, but I'm glad I did it. I learned that you have to be tenacious to make something of yourself. It was a lesson I've used often since my NMU days."

## 20 Years Ago: NCAA Hockey Championship

NMU Wildcat Hockey recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of its NCAA Division I Championship. In the hockey world, the title game won against Boston University on March 30, 1991 at the St. Paul (Minn.) Civic Center is still considered one of the most dramatic in NCAA Tournament history.

Why? Because the Wildcats fell behind 3-0 in the first period, then roared back to take a 7-4 lead midway through the third, only to see the Terriers go on a tear and tie the game with just 39 seconds left in regulation. The lead changes during regulation were mind-boggling to each team's coaches and fans, but the back-and-forth action in the two overtimes that followed was "nearly heart-stopping," said then NMU coach Rick Comley.

Early in the third overtime Darryl Plandowski carried the puck across the BU blueline before sending a drop pass back to Mark Beaufait. Beaufait skated wide to the left of Terrier goalie Scott Cashman then sent the puck back to Plandowski, who had slipped into the slot area. Plandowski paused for just a second before flipping it into the open net at the 1:57 mark, ending the marathon and giving NMU the national championship.

Remembering the goal, Plandowski said, "I went back to the middle of the ice. I was alone and all of the sudden the puck was on my stick and I looked up and there was just literally nothing in the net. So I remember making sure that I took an extra split second—which I



*Celebrating the NCAA Division I crown, March 30, 1991.*

know to the coaches was an eternity—just to be sure I hit the net because it was just, like, too good to be true when you're sitting between the hash marks and there's no goalie in the net. When that happens, you have to hit the net."

The title was the perfect ending to a season in which NMU went 38-5-4 overall and 25-3-4 in Western Collegiate Hockey Association play, winning the WCHA regular-season and playoff titles. The Wildcats beat Colorado College, North Dakota and Minnesota to take the WCHA crown. In the NCAA Tournament, they beat Alaska-Anchorage and Maine before facing BU. On the way to the national title, NMU set a school record 26-game unbeaten streak.



### Four Inducted into Sports Hall of Fame

**Krista Pray-Hobbins '84 BS, Andrea Gommans '94 BS, '97 MA and Chris Cook '03 BS** (pictured with NMU President Les Wong) were inducted into the NMU Sports Hall of Fame during a special ceremony on campus in April. **Peter Vordenberg '93** was also inducted, but could not attend the event.

Cook and Vordenberg were both NCAA national champions and All Americans in Nordic skiing. Gommans was a national champion and an All American on the volleyball team. Pray-Hobbins was one of the first great NMU women's basketball players.

Learn more about the inductees at [www.nmu.edu/sportshalloffame](http://www.nmu.edu/sportshalloffame).