

SPORTS AT NMU



Dana Stephens, with ball, was selected to the all-region third and all-GLIAC second teams.

Two fall Wildcat teams make NCAAs

By Maggie Iverson

Following last year's success of four Wildcat team appearances in the NCAAs, two NMU squads—soccer and volleyball—

followed suit in fall 2010. The soccer team made its first-ever NCAA appearance. NMU was the No. 6 seed facing No. 3 Northern Kentucky. The battle was scoreless in the first half before NKU got on a second-half roll and downed NMU 4-0. The volleyball 'Cats earned their third consecutive NCAA bid, traveling to Hillsdale for a second 2010 meeting with Indianapolis, the team that ended the Wildcats' 17-game unbeaten streak earlier in the year. In the tournament match, IU overpowered the 'Cats for a 3-1 victory.

Soccer: The Wildcat soccer team started the season with a 10-game unbeaten streak, going 6-0-4. NMU posted a 9-6-5 overall record and an 8-4-3 Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) mark, which was good for second place in the North Division. NMU demonstrated its tenaciousness as evidenced in the 2-0-5 record for its seven overtime games. In the GLIAC Tournament quarterfinal, the 'Cats hosted and beat Ferris State University, 4-3, but lost 2-0 to Tiffin on the road in the semifinals.

Coach Matt Granstrand loses three seniors from the squad, including forward Dana Stephens (11-2-24), who was selected to the all-region third and all-GLIAC second teams. Stephens had 29 career goals, including 10 game-winners, and six assists.

Volleyball: The Wildcat volleyball season included a 17-game unbeaten streak, 22-7 overall record, second place in the GLIAC North Division (15-4), one home loss, and the No. 23 spot in the final national poll.

At the GLIAC Tournament, Coach Dominic Yoder's squad beat Tiffin at home 3-0 before losing 3-2 in the quarterfinals to Grand Valley State on the road in the semifinals.

Four Wildcats were named to the All-GLIAC team: sophomore setter Abby Lovell and freshman outside hitter Ana Lopes to the first team and junior middle hitter Emma Wolfe and sophomore middle hitter Sami Vierk to the second team. Lopes was chosen the GLIAC Freshman of the Year. Right side hitter Katie Twardzik (64 blocks) was the squad's lone senior.

Football: Coach Bernie Anderson's team went 5-6 overall and 5-5 in GLIAC play. The defense averaged 16.6 points a game in scoring defense to rank first in the league in total defense and eighth in the country.

Ten 'Cats were recognized by the GLIAC, including junior linebacker Eddie Knoblock (83 tackles) and senior defensive back DJ Oke on the first team.

Anderson loses 12 lettermen, but returns 88, including 23 seniors, in 2011.

Cross Country: Coach Jenny Ryan's young team of Wildcat runners competed in seven meets, finishing 10th at the GLIAC Championships and 15th at the NCAA Great Lakes Regional Championships. Senior Kristen Schulz was the top NMU performer at the GLIAC meet with 39th place. Along with Schulz, the team loses three other seniors.

Golf: The Wildcat golf team enjoyed considerable improvement in the fall portion of the season. NMU finished ninth at the GLIAC Fall Championships. Junior Tony Bilich had a top 20 finish with 17th at the league meet.

Follow the NMU Wildcats in action at www.nmu.edu/Athletics.



GLIAC Freshman of the Year Ana Lopes.