



sports

Spring break sports recap

BREE GANNON
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For most, spring break means packing their bags and traveling with their friends to a beach somewhere sunny and warm. However, the AU athletic program was busy winning games, collecting national titles and making the Eagle name known.

Baseball

The baseball team started off their spring break with a trip down to Winter Haven, Fla. for their annual spring break trip. The Eagles started off the season with hot bats and won their first game 18-12 over Mary. That game started off with the Eagles down by three after the top of the first but they responded and cut the deficit and scored nine runs in the sixth.

That win started off the rest of the week for the team as they went on to win seven out of eight games.

The team faced Lewis in day two of the week and added the 7-1 win to their 2-2 record. Day three brought a familiar opponent to the plate as the Eagles took on the Findlay Oilers. The Oilers, who left the GLIAC tournament at the end of last year, fell to the Eagles in a close 5-3 game. Sophomore right-hander Chance Hitchcock faced 30 batters and only allowed four hits. Freshman right-hander Micah Allen earned his first save of the season after a bases-loaded situation occurred in the ninth inning.

The Eagles continued their success and beat Minnesota Duluth 14-4 followed by a 12-6 win against Saint Anselm. Thursday (Mar. 8) brought the first double-header of the season against West Virginia Wesleyan. The Eagles came out strong and aggressive in the first game and took the first win with a finishing score of 12-3. All 12 of the Eagle's runs came within the first four innings of the game. With one more game on the day, the Eagles were able to push through the Bobcat 2-0 lead and pounded out five runs in the second inning followed by one in the third, one in the sixth and two in the seventh. The Eagles 9-2 win was credited to freshman pitcher Perry Bewley and sophomore Vince Vanata who added three hits.

The team ended out the week by splitting the last two games on the schedule. The first game ended in a 11-7 game against yet another previous GLIAC opponent. Ashland dropped the game against Walsh before taking on Notre Dame (Ohio) the next day. The Eagles left their loss in the past and went on to beat Notre Dame 13-2 and improved to 8-3 on the season.

The baseball team will continue play against Gannon in a three game non-conference matchup. First pitch is scheduled for Sat. (Mar. 17) at 1 p.m. followed by a 3 p.m. start for game two.

Softball

The softball team also traveled to Florida for their annual spring break trip where they played 10

games in five days. Upon arriving in Florida, the Eagles were riding a three game winning streak that was ultimately snapped in the first game against Assumption. The Eagles recorded their second loss of the season after a close 6-5 score. The team turned around to face Wayne State (Neb.) to defeat the Wildcats 13-8. Junior third baseman Paige Summers assisted in the win with five runs and going 2-for-5 with a double followed by second baseman Camille Pollutro who added a homerun, three runs scored and two RBIs.

The next day came with two opponents in Concordia-St. Paul and Winona State and added two more losses to the record. The Eagles fell to Concordia-St. Paul with a final score of 4-1 and turned around and lost a hard fought 5-3 game to Winona State.

The third day of the week brought yet another double-header split. In the first game, the eagles took on Felician and cut down a 2-0 deficit by scoring five runs in the bottom of the sixth inning. The Eagles defeated Felician 5-2 with the help of Pollutro and sophomore short-stop Bree Gill as they both went 3-for-3. Junior pitcher Abbie Sgro added her first win of the season after allowing no earned runs and no walks. Game two brought a 6-2 loss against Saint Leo and took the team to 5-5 on the season.

The team went on to go 1-3 in their next four games. The team sought out Saint Anselm and lost 8-6 and turned around to play Northern State to and won 1-0. The last two games of the season were against Quincy and West Chester with game one ending in a close 7-6 loss and the second a close 8-7 loss.

The team will move forward with the season and will take on the Ohio Dominican Panthers in a road double-header on Mar. 17 starting at 1 p.m.

Women's Basketball

The women's basketball team continued their historic season over spring break as they competed in the NCAA Division II tournament. After clinching the GLIAC title, by defeating Grand Valley State 85-74, the Eagles secured home court advantage for the tournament and moved on to the quarterfinals to take on Hillsdale. The 104-82 win marked the team's 69th win in a row and was win number 100 for head coach Robyn Fralick. Fralick's overall coaching record for the past three years improved to 100-2 after Friday's game. The win marked the team's 19th game with 100 plus points and broke the NCAA women's basketball all-level record for one campaign.

Moving on to the semifinals, the Eagles were put up against Grand Valley State, a team they had played and beat twice already earlier in the season. The 80-68 win sent the Eagles flying into the Sweet 16 for the third time. Sophomore guard Jodi Johnson moved into the 18th place slot on Ashland's all-time scoring list with 1,078 points. Senior forward Andi

Daugherty tied her sister, associate head coach Kari Pickens, for third place on the all-time rebound list with 903.

The Eagles had made it to the championship once again where they faced the No.3 seed Drury. The intense battle happened up until the buzzer at the end of the fourth quarter and ended in the Eagles advancing to the Elite Eight. The Eagles exploded off the court and scored the game's first six points in two minutes. The second quarter brought a 25-18 lead by the Eagles as the momentum rolled with the team to lead the Panthers 35-20 going into a media timeout. Coming out of the timeout, the Panthers switched momentum into their hands and cut the deficit down to within five.

Coming out of the halftime 47-36 the Eagles struggled with turnovers and turned the ball over 14 times but forced 18 Panther turnovers. The third quarter brought a small 53-40 lead for the Eagles as they stepped up their defense and forced over 20 turnovers. With two minutes left on the clock, Drury closed the gap and tied the game at 73s. The game clock read 11.7 seconds and Daugherty picked up a foul that resulted in free throws. After the foul call, a Panther was called on a technical foul for stomping her foot to make the number of free throws increase to four. Daugherty was able to make all four free throws and helped push the Eagles through the final stretch. The Eagles defeated the Panthers 79-73 and clinched the NCAA championship.

Johnson was named as the Most Valuable Player of the tournament while senior Laina Snyder was named to the tournament team. The Eagles will now travel to Sioux Falls, S.D. to play in the Elite Eight and have another chance at a national championship. The first game is scheduled for Mar. 19 at 7 p.m. against Montana State Billings.

Men's Basketball

The men's basketball team ended their season a lot sooner than they had hoped for over spring break. The team ended the regular season with a 20-10 overall record and a 12-8 GLIAC record and advanced to the GLIAC quarterfinals. After an intense overtime game against Northern Michigan that ended in a 83-72 win for the Eagles and a chance at the semifinals. The team moved on to play Ferris State in the semifinals and had hoped for a better outcome. The two teams met twice earlier in the season with the first game ending in a 91-57 loss however, the second game ended with a much closer score. When the teams met in February, the Eagles stayed close in score against the No.3 team in the country and sent it into overtime after sophomore Drew Noble hit a 3-pointer to take the lead with a few seconds left on the clock. The Bulldogs responded with a mid-court 3-pointer themselves to tie the game just as the buzzer went off. The Eagles held on but ultimately fell to the Bull-

dogs 97-91.

This time the two teams met at Ferris State and fell to the Bulldogs 85-66 to end the season. Senior forward Wendell Davis was named to the D2CCA All-Midwest Region second team and became the first player in program history to be named to the team three times. The fifth-year senior averaged 20.3 points, six rebounds and shot 53 percent from the floor after coming back from an injury the previous season.

Track & Field

The men's indoor track and field team stood on the podium for the fifth time in the past six years and placed fourth in the NCAA Division II Championships. The team produced five All-American athletes and a few national championships. Junior Myles Pringle won the national championship in the 400-meter dash and became the fastest D-II athlete ever in the event. The win marked his third national championship in the event with a chance to win in the outdoor season. Pringle was named the national runner-up in the 200-meter dash and broke his own school record in the event with a 20.96 second time.

The 4x400 relay consisting of Pringle, Channing Phillips, Trevor

sea Myers won the doubles portion of the day and defeated their opponents 8-1.

Up next the Eagles had Davis & Elkins where they picked up their first spring season loss after falling 6-3. The next two days brought wins for the team as they beat Albany 8-1 and Albion 9-0. Junior Natalie Keron and Ogino went through the matches undefeated in single matches. Kidd also went through undefeated and fills the No.3 spot in doubles and the No.5 in singles. The team is now sitting at a 8-11 overall record and continue their season on Mar. 14 against Oberlin starting at 5:30 p.m.

Women's Golf

The women's golf team hit the tee for the first time since October and competed in the Seminole State spring break tournament. The team finished in sixth place out of the nine teams that attended. Sophomore Krystal Hu finished in a tie for seventh individually with a two day score of 156 (79-77). Junior Monica Torda also finished the two day event in a tie for 29th place.

The team is back at it starting on Mar. 17 for the Saginaw Valley State Spring Invitational in Kentucky.



Bret Romanzak and Luke Cramer are this year's national champions in their respective weight classes.

Bassitt and Brenden Archer won the silver medal. Senior Elijah Talk became a four time All-American after a shot put throw of 18.29 meters while sophomore Jake Glass placed 17th in the country with a throw of 16.81.

The women's team also consisted of more All-American winners. Senior Marie Hammer placed 13th in the pentathlon and finished in fourth place in the long jump event with a mark of 13.86 meters. Throwers Mackenzie Leigh and Natalie Helenthal also achieved their first All-American mentions as well.

The outdoor season is set to start on Mar. 23 in South Carolina.

Tennis

The tennis team also traveled during spring break and attended their annual Hilton Head trip competing in four matches. The first day the Eagles played Bridgewater and started off the spring season with a 6-3 win. Freshmen Camille Ringot, Anna Hart and Hazuki Ogino and senior Liz Kidd, all won their single matches in two sets. Ogino and junior Chel-

Wrestling

After a long season, the Eagles came out on top with two new national champions and a team fifth place finish. Sophomore Bret Romanzak and redshirt senior Luke Cramer stood on top of the podium and earned their national champion titles. Romanzak earned his in the 165 pound class while Cramer earned his in the 197 pound class. The team's fifth place finish is the best finish since 2002 where they placed fourth. The pair's national championship win also marked them as the sixth and seventh champions in program history and the first to win titles in the same season. The wrestling program saw one winner last year in Michael Labry in the 133 pound class as well as a sixth place overall finish.

Redshirt senior Jordan Murphy stood on the podium as well and finished in third place with a 5-1 record in the 184 pound class.

The Eagle athletic department never slows down and continues to show just what our teams can do.



The men's track & field team on top of the podium celebrating their fourth place win.