

sports

AU baseball has unforgettable 2019 season

LEAH BURTSCHER
AU-Live Assistant Editor

It is no secret Ashland University's baseball team had a successful season this past spring.

From matching the school record of 48 wins (set in 2002) overall during the season and breaking the school record for strikeouts, to ultimately making it to the World Series, the AU baseball team had a season for the books.

"Our guys just never quit, always believed we had a chance, competed hard and battled to the end, it was just a great mental approach" head baseball coach John Schaly said.

Schaly was named for the fifth time Regional Coach of the Year by the American Baseball Coach Association for the 2019 season.

AU won the majority of their most crucial games by making comebacks final innings of said games. This trend began in the 2018 season when the team had 13 with the wins last at bat.

The most substantial comeback



AU ATHLETICS

AU baseball team ends record-breaking season at Division II World Series.

After winning 17 consecutive games in a row, the Eagles broke the previous school record of 13 set in 2007.

"Honestly it just came down to how bad as a team we want to win every day and play as best as we can for each other. Everyone's happy when we're playing well and that keeps the momentum and positive energy constant.

According to AU Director of Athletic Communications, Brendan

Amongst the multiple broken records and titles achieved, the Eagles concluded a season for the books.

The AU baseball team lost seven seniors after the 2019 season including the likes of Chris Slavik, who was a First Team All-American. However, Schaly is looking forward to the upcoming season as the majority of the fairly young team's starting lineup will return.

"I think the moment when we



AU ATHLETICS

Junior Austin Efrid making his way to home plate against Central Missouri at the World Series.

happened against Bellarmine in the regional tournament where AU was trailing 7-0. With the help of senior pitcher Josh Smith who threw almost seven innings, the Eagles came back to win the game with a final score of 8-7.

AU then went on to host the 2019 Super Regional Championship, and later advance to the College World Series.

Bittner, the "well balanced" nature of the team contributed most to their great success on the field.

Schaly and Efrid both described how important it was that everyone not only worked on improving as an individual, but also as a team.

"The mindset as a team was to play for each other... I think the thing that made this team so special was the amount of unity and brotherhood we had," Efrid said.

realized how good of a season we were having sunk in was right after we won the super regional at home with such an amazing crowd supporting us," Efrid said. "There is only one word that could describe this past season, and that's unforgettable," Efrid said.

Martinelli Field gets fresh turf prior to 2019 football season

LEAH BURTSCHER
AU-Live Assistant Editor

Ashland University athletic facilities recently replaced the turf on the Jack Miller Stadium-Fred Martinelli Field.

The installation process started the first week of June and was completed before summer football camps began in July. This is one of multiple renovations AU athletic facilities has in store for this year. Others being the dedication of the Reinhart Room and Mary C. Miller Room according to AU Athletic Director, Al King.

The field was primarily funded by emergency funds the university saves for renovations and quality of life updates to infrastructure.

According to Director of AU Athletic Communications, Dusty Sloan, a turf football field should be replaced about every ten years. With the old turf going into its 11th season, it was seamlessly perfect timing for a fresh field.

Turf fields typically have tell-tale signs that indicate a replacement is needed. According to AstroTurf.com, these include: frequently loose inlays that pose tripping hazards, splitting and shedding turf fibers, tired field appearance, infill on the sides of the field, and worn inlays and lines more worn than the turf in the body of the field.

"It was a safety issue for us," King said. "Each year our trainers give me a list of new shoulder injuries, and you always look at your turf



LEAH BURTSCHER

AU Football begins pre-season training on the new and improved Martinelli Field

and what kind of condition it is getting in."

The recent renovation is considered not only a worthwhile investment for the safety of players, but also for the image of the stadium.

"It looks sharp and dresses up the whole stadium. We put a lot of money into that stadium and we want to show it off. We have a lot of events there and it needs to look first class," King said.

"As opposed to grass, turf will not

only benefit athletes in terms of reducing injury, but also increasing speed and agility" Sloan said. "It could possibly be the difference between a win and a loss."

Senior middle linebacker Clay Shreve explains that most fields are different in various minute details. However, improving the field will make it more consistent with what the team plays on a week to week basis.

"The turf feels good," Shreve

said. "It's really high quality and feels softer and more modern than before."

The new turf can be seen in action at the football team's home opener on Sept. 5 at 7 p.m. against Indianapolis.

In the Coming Weeks

Women's Volleyball

Sept. 6-7 @ Ashland University Invitational

Sept. 12 @ Hillsdale (MI) (6 p.m.)

Sept. 13 vs. Palm Beach Atlantic and Clarion @ Hillsdale (MI) (11 a.m.) (5p.m.)

Sept. 14 vs. Findlay @ Hillsdale (MI) (10 a.m.)

Football

Sept. 5 vs. Indianapolis (7 p.m.)

Sept. 14 @ Walsh (1 p.m.)

Women's Soccer

Sept. 6 vs. Lewis @ (7 p.m.)

Sept. 10 @ Tiffin (1 p.m.)

Sept. 13 @ Findlay (4 p.m.)

Sept. 15 @ Ohio Dominican (3 p.m.)

Men's Soccer

Sept. 5 @ Lake Erie (7 p.m.)

Sept. 11 vs. Walsh (7 p.m.)

Sept. 14 @ Cedarville (7 p.m.)

Women's Tennis

Sept. 7 vs. West Virginia Wesleyan and Notre Dame (OH) (9 a.m) (4 p.m.)

Sept. 8 vs. Walsh (1 p.m.)

Sept. 10 @ Edinboro (4 p.m.)

Sept. 14 @ Davenport (10 a.m.)

Sept. 15 @ Purdue Northwest (1 p.m.)

Men's Golf

Sept. 9-10 @ Don Underwood Invitational (The Meadows Golf Course - Allendale, MI.)

Women's Golf

Sept. 8-9 @ Michael Corbett Fall Classic (Gannon)

Men's and Women's Cross Country

Aug. 31 @ Beaver Dam Invite (Bluffton) (10 a.m.)

Sept. 7 @ Northwood Invitational

Sept. 13 @ Michigan State Spartan Invitational

