

sports

New transfers hope to make a big impact on AU football

JOHN MARGIDA
REPORTER

The Ashland University football team has received some added help this year with the likes of impactful transfers that are contributing early in the season. Defensive tackle Ja'Merez Bowen, wide receiver Dakota Hobbs, cornerback Jacob Williams and safety Jordan Swett are just a few names who have high expectations for the season.

"We are really excited to have these transfers on the team. Bowen and Williams in particular are both impact players that make our defense better has a whole unit," head coach Lee Owens said.

Bowen is a graduate transfer from Indiana University. He began his collegiate career at the University of Cincinnati where he

I wanted to be closer to my mom. Cleveland is only an hour away from here so it worked out good," Bowen said.

Within the first two games this season, Bowen has three tackles overall, two solo, and one assisted. Even though Bowens stats aren't gaudy, he is a force to be reckoned with on the defensive line and puts pressure on the opposing offense.

"He had a heck of a game against Indianapolis University. They couldn't block him and they couldn't run the ball up the middle. They gave up on running the ball in the middle of the field after the first couple drives of the game," said Owens.

Junior cornerback Jacob Williams is a transfer from Tiffin University. A former alumnus of Copley High School, Williams is now reunited with his former classmate, AU quarterback Austin Brenner.

"Ashland had already recruited me out of high school. I'm really excited to be here because they have one of the best defenses around that I have seen, I can't wait to get back out on the field," Willisams said.

Shortly before the Eagle's home opener against Indianapolis on Sept. 5, Williams was injured during practice. Owens is hopeful that Williams will return to the field in the coming weeks.

"If we had Jacob out there he probably would have had just as big an influence in the game," Owens said. "We might not have been sitting here talking about a loss if Williams was there because they attacked the boundary corner where he would have been playing."

"We had to start a new player on the boundary corner and Indianapolis threw the ball over to where Williams would have been playing 16 times and that hurt us," said Owens. He is very confident



AU ATHLETICS
Junior wide receiver Dakota Hobbs.

that when Williams returns, he will aid the team's defense greatly.

Junior wide receiver Dakota Hobbs is a transfer from Malone University.

After the 2018 football season, Malone's football team was disbanded due to a restructuring process designed to eliminate a \$2.5 million structural deficit leaving Hobbs without a team.

Hobbs was able to come to AU and play immediately without sitting out a year because of the disbandment. Hobbs is also the Eagles' primary kickoff returner for this season.

Hobbs served as the main kickoff returner for the season opener against Indianapolis with four returns and netting 82 return yards against Indianapolis. Within his first two games for AU as wide receiver, Hobbs has accrued five receptions, 25 receiving yards, and two touchdowns.

Redshirt freshman safety Jordan Swett is a transfer from Middle Tennessee State. Although Swett has not gotten a lot of playing time this year so far, he is expected to be a big part of the Eagle defense down the road.

Within limited playing time, Swett has one assisted tackle.

All four transfers are expected to produce positive seasons and benefit the football team in their own way. The Eagles will take the field for the third time this season against Ferris State at home on Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.



AU ATHLETICS
Senior defensive tackle Ja'Merez Bowen.

was redshirted and then eventually transferred to Indiana to finish his undergrad.

Bowen's decision to transfer to AU is a story in itself.

"I played three years at Indiana University and I was told I wasn't going to be drafted. I was told I still had a year of eligibility but it had to be at a Division II school to boost my draft stock. That started my recruiting process again and I originally was committed to Davenport. But I looked here because I knew the defensive coordinator coach Kingsdale when I was at UC. I'm from the Cleveland area and I recently had a death in the family so

In the Coming Weeks

Women's Volleyball

Sept. 20 vs. Purdue Northwest (7 p.m.)

Sept. 21 vs. Parkside (2 p.m.)

Sept. 24 vs. Wayne State (7 p.m.)

Sept. 27 @ Davenport (7 p.m.)

Sept. 28 @ Grand Valley State (2 p.m.)

Football

Sept. 21 vs. Ferris State (7 p.m.)

Sept. 28 @ Northwood (1 p.m.)

Women's Soccer

Sept. 27 @ Northwood (1 p.m.)

Sept. 29 @ Ferris State (12 p.m.)

Men's Soccer

Sept. 20 @ Northwood (4 p.m.)

Sept. 22 @ Saginaw Valley (3 p.m.)

Sept. 27 vs. Northern Michigan (7 p.m.)

Sept. 29 vs. Parkside (2:30 p.m.)

Women's Tennis

Sept. 22 @ Ursuline (10 a.m.)

Sept. 28 vs. Michigan Tech (10 a.m.)

Sept. 28 vs Lourdes (4 p.m.)

Sept. 29 vs. Lake Superior State @ (10 a.m.)

Men's Golf

Sept. 23-24 @ Second Annual Doc Spragg Fall Invitational (Findlay Country Club Findlay, OH) (9 a.m.) (9 a.m.)

Women's Golf

Sept. 21-22 @ Cumberland Trail Classic (Ohio Dominican) (11 a.m.) (9 a.m.)

Sept. 28-29 @ Bulldog Fall Invite (Ferris State)

Men's and Women's Cross Country

Sept. 28 @ All-Ohio Championships (Cedarville) (1 p.m.)

A new "birdie" joins the Eagles

NIKO SCARLATOS
REPORTER

Transferring from one school to another is always tough for the individual making the change, especially as a student athlete. Choosing to leave your former teammates and then attempt to fit in well with your new ones is always a challenge. While most may shy away from a task like that, senior Megan Pollock had no problem tackling it.

After playing two seasons of golf at the varsity level for Medina High School, Pollock decided to take her talents to a Division I school, finding herself at the University of Dayton.

Pollock, who was named to the All-Northeast Ohio second team in her senior year at Medina, spent three years as a member of the Dayton women's golf team. While there, she carded a career low (at the time) of 83 in her junior season participating at the Dayton Flyer Invitational.

One of Pollock's biggest fans had his eye on the golfer for a while. Head coach of the Ashland University women's golf team, Gene Grabiec, knew about the future eagle since she was in high school. "I had seen her play five years

ago and when I talked to her father Bill, he told me she had a year of eligibility left. My chin dropped," Grabiec said.

Grabiec, who is in his first year coaching the Eagles, jumped all

success has been in large part to Megan's newfound leadership role which helps to bring together the other four women on the team. Grabiec calls the five women golfers the "Fab Five."



AU ATHLETICS
Senior Megan Pollock working on her chip shot at practice.

over the opportunity to bring Pollock with him to Ashland University for her senior season. He also made it clear that the team's

"She's brought to my attention stuff that I would sometimes forget about. She'll say 'hey coach, we need to do this,' it's wonderful. We

are all building off one another, we are all learning and we are all getting stronger," Grabiec said.

Grabiec believes that Pollock's inclusion in the team has already led to a lot of success so far this season for the Eagles. Pollock is already blending in well with her new teammates despite spending the first three years of her collegiate career at a different school.

"I love the team chemistry. I feel like the five of us have such a strong bond and just the supportiveness of everybody around is great," Pollock said. "Even the athletics staff who emailed us and reached out to us after we won was outstanding and was definitely something new to me."

The performance on the golf course for the senior has improved as well since making the switch to AU. In the season opening tournament, the Michael Corbett Fall Classic, Megan carded a new career low, shooting a 76 on day two.

One of Pollock's teammates, junior Sophie Hemleben, also has positive things to say about the transfer.

"I think her personality fits in really well with all of us and we get along really well," Hemleben said.

"She has definitely shown that she has been through undergrad and has played on a Division I team before and has used that expertise to help us here. I think her just being older than us and being through the ropes of playing at a Division I school, she has really made us better already."

Hemleben did not hold back when talking about how important the acquisition of Pollock has been for the entire team moving forward as they continue to improve each and everyday.

The Ashland University Women's Golf team will continue the 2019 fall season with two more tournaments this month, followed by three more in the month of October. The "Fab Five" cannot wait to get out on the course and play alongside their newest member.

The Eagles will get their next chance to do so at the Cumberland Trail Classic hosted by Ohio Dominican. In her final year of eligibility, Pollock plans to carry forward the idea of leaving her mark at Ashland University. Not just for herself, but also for the teammates she is honored to play beside.