

sports

Women’s soccer advance to NCAA Tournament

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Sports Editor

For the second year in a row, the Ashland University women’s soccer team has received an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament. On the evening of Monday, Nov. 17, the announcement was made live on the NCAA Division II Women’s Soccer Selection Show on NCAA.com. The bid comes after the Eagles were eliminated from the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament by Saginaw Valley State (2-0) in the semi-final on Nov. 15. “I think it’s super exciting for us because we have this second opportunity to get into the NCAA tournament,” junior goalkeeper Hannah Lee said. “We have players who were injured last year, and players who were freshmen last year have another year under their belt now.” The Eagles achieved a record of 10-5-5 in the 2018 season, the first year under head coach of women’s

soccer Taylor Clarke. After being eliminated from the GLIAC Tournament on Nov. 2, 2018, the team received an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament as the No. 7 seed in the Midwest Region. They were knocked out in the first round of the tournament on Nov. 8 by the Ohio Valley Fighting Scots, who entered the tournament as the Great Midwest Athletic Conference champions. This season, the team improved their record to 14-4-1, taking an early lead by winning 12 of their first 14 games. “It’s everything to this group to get to the [NCAA] tournament again, it’s something we’ve talked about since our loss last year,” Clarke said. “We knew we had the opportunity and the resilience to come back and they put in the hard work since that day and throughout this season.” The Eagles will play No. 5 seed McKendree on Friday (Nov. 22) in Allendale, Mich. Kickoff is at 10 a.m. The region’s No. 1 seed Grand Valley State will play No. 8



The women’s soccer team watches the NCAA Division II Women’s Soccer Selection Show.

seed and Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament champion Southern Indiana in the bracket’s other game. “It’s super exciting for us and we just need to regroup from what happened at the conference tournament, we know what to expect now,” senior forward Deajah Swi-

hart said. “We get to play new teams now which will be a good refresher as well.” The other teams in the Midwest Region include No. 2 seed Walsh, No. 3 seed Findlay, No. 6 seed Rockhurst and No. 7 seed Indianapolis. “I think more than anything,

we’re just kind of gonna work on the same thing leading up to the (NCAA) tournament,” CLarke said. “At this point, to get to where we’re at, you don’t really need to change much at this point. We’ll just kind of keep fine tuning the stuff we’ve been doing all season.”

Goodbye Ben, hello Brandon: A new Haraway hits the court

JUSTIN DAVIS
Reporter

It is written on the hairband pulling back his locks. It is advertised on his nostalgically high basketball shorts, reminiscent of basketball’s golden years of Bird and Magic. It is undeniable in his slow walk. A walk of assurance and calmness. A walk that has been developed over the years from preparation, playing with the big boys and dominating the court no matter who steps on it. A walk shared by his brother who strutted up and down the floor at Kate’s gymnasium for the past three years. A brother who took over Wayne State’s home arena with a fade away at the buzzer and who consistently wowed Ashland University basketball fans with his finesse at the rim. Brandon Haraway, one of nine freshmen to join the men’s basketball roster this year, has big shoes to fill this season. Ben Haraway, his older brother, graduated one season prior and left his mark on AU athletics. “Our uncle was our trainer and he said ‘you have to step on the court thinking that you are the best player’ so that’s how we try to do it every time we play,” Brandon said. “We step on the court and nothing’s going to stop us.” Brandon’s confidence, along with his unique ability, is what forced him into the limelight at Norwalk

and established a name for himself at Norwalk, but eight months later he now competes for the same college basketball program his brother played for, under the same coach, 35 minutes away from home. Ashland University men’s basketball head coach John Ellenwood and his staff started recruiting Brandon when he was a sophomore in high school and monitored his progress in the following years. “As we watched him grow from his freshman to sophomore to junior year, it was just amazing how his athleticism and his body had formed,” Ellenwood said. “We were excited to go after him once we knew what his talents were and his skill sets on the basketball floor, then you put into account his body, it was something we had to recruit and go after.” Brandon stands at 6-foot-2 carrying 180 lbs of physicality and athleticism to the basketball court. As a kid he claims he was ‘chubby’ and played offensive line on the football team. Brandon equally prioritized basketball and football until he suffered a torn tricep during his sophomore football season. “I tore my tricep completely off the bone, so that kind of set me back in football and made me have my doubts about it,” Brandon said. They continued as he decided whether or not the physicality of

It was the final day of the tournament and the seniors were finished playing, therefore, the majority of college coaches left, Ellenwood said. Ellenwood and associate head coach Rob Gardiner stayed and watched Brandon establish himself as ‘the best player on the floor’ amongst Division I talent. “We kept looking at each other like ‘holy cow this is amazing’ and we kept looking around for other coaches making sure we were the only ones there,” Ellenwood said. Brandon’s performance showed glimpses of what he said put him into the lineup as a freshman in his first year at AU: his defense. “His defensive ability is the best I’ve ever seen for a freshman,” Ellenwood said. “Brandon is a special, elite defender because he has the strength to get through screens, and he’s got this anticipation that you either have or you don’t.” Brandon garnered scholarship offers from Urbanna University and Walsh University along with Ashland, but Ellenwood said the high-level, D-I loaded AAU team he played on put him in front of several Division-I coaches posing as a threat to AU’s top prospect. However, Ashland had leverage over all of these schools in the form of Ben Haraway. Over the course of Ben’s AU career from 2016-2019, he hit many different milestones. He scored over 1,500 points, earned a Master’s degree in business administration, held the position as treasurer of the accounting club, and developed close relationships across campus. “The way that Ben recruited Brandon was through the success he had here academically, athletically and socially,” Ellenwood said. Brandon said he often visited campus to watch his brother play and was drawn to the family atmosphere he experienced at AU. “The biggest thing that pulled him was the culture we have in our program – it’s a winning program, [and] we have a team full of great guys,” Ben said. Brandon and Ben grew up with a complementary relationship, Brandon said. Ben was a mentor and coach to Brandon, motivating him on the court and in the classroom. “I want to strive to be as good as he’s done in college basketball and in education,” Brandon said. Despite the five-year age difference, Ben admires Brandon as the “cool brother.” “He always has that swag about him and even as an older brother I look at him like dang, he’s a really cool dude,” Ben said. Ben credits Brandon with having the epitome of the Haraway “swagger” since he demonstrated early on his confidence and aggressiveness as a kid playing sports with his older siblings and cousins.

“When he was younger, he would come play with the big boys like he wasn’t worried at all,” Ben said.

“Ben was a guy that would make one move, you might cut him off, he’d make a second move and then all of a sudden he’s making a third



Ben Haraway graduated in 2019 with with over 1,500 career points.

Brandon’s biggest asset is that he is a true competitor according to Ben. To Ellenwood, it is his knack for embracing the moment. Although Ellenwood urged Ben to help in landing Haraway, Ben passively guided his brother through the recruiting process. “I really didn’t push AU on him at all,” Ben said. “I kind of sat back, let him go through his recruiting process – if he asked questions about Ashland I was there to answer.” Brandon’s first question was about academics. An aspect of his recruitment that caused him to commit to AU before working out for the coaches at Division I Gardner-Webb University. Brandon is a nursing major following the career path of his parents. “I wanted to go into a field where I could interact with people on an everyday basis and impact them,” Brandon said. Before he was committed to AU, Brandon met with Carrie Keib, dean of the Schar College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and concluded she is one of the nicest women he has ever met. “Everyone here is so welcoming and they love to see people come here with a goal and that’s what I’m here to do -- I’m here to accomplish goals,” Brandon said. Brandon also asked his brother about Ellenwood’s coaching style and his offensive philosophy. Ben averaged 12 points per game during his career at AU, but Brandon’s success cannot be predicted based off of Ben’s. The brothers resemble each other closely in many ways, but aside from a shared sense of confidence, they are significantly different on the court.

and a fourth move and you’re just like holy cow,” Ellenwood said. Ben used finesse to out-manuever defenders and get separation. Brandon on the other hand, describes his play like that of LeBron James, a player who uses strength and physicality to get to the rim. “He just uses strength to his advantage all the time, if he wants to go right, he’s going right. If he wants to go left, he’s going left and that’s how I want to be too,” Brandon said. “I want to decide where I want to go with the ball and make the defenders stay on their heels.” From a shooting standpoint, Ben was a more developed shooter coming out of Norwalk, Ellenwood said. Ben shot nearly 40 percent from the three-point line in his three years for Ashland. Meanwhile, Brandon received a lot of attention from opposing defenses and found more success attacking the rim and as a result, he’s more of a “streaky shooter,” Ellenwood said. As Brandon gains more repetitions and becomes adjusted to the speed of college basketball, his shooting ability will continue to develop, Ellenwood said. When each brother was asked who was better, Ben replied: “I think we’re both great at what we do and I think depending on the team, situation and the team’s needs you might pick me in certain situations and you might pick Brandon in others. I’ll leave it at that.” While Brandon, after he chuckled upon hearing the question, charismatically answered: “We’ll see after the season, we’ll see what the stats say.”



SUBMITTED BY BRANDON HARAWAY

High School despite the shadow cast by his older brother. Brandon was crowned the All-Northwest District Player of the Year in Division II for his senior season. That season included an average of 20.5 points, a 24-4 record, a district championship, and a First Team All-Ohio selection. “Ben made a state run his senior year, so I kind of personally wanted to match that and my team was right behind me,” Brandon said. Brandon came after his brother

football would reduce his longevity as an athlete. He walked away from football his junior year of high school and shifted his focus onto basketball, he said. The physicality he developed on the football field, however, carried over to the court. Coincidentally, during his junior year at an AAU tournament in Louisville, Ky. Ellenwood came to the conclusion that Brandon was the caliber of player he wanted at AU.