

sports

AU Volleyball en route to another successful season

JOHN MARGIDA
Reporter

The Ashland University volleyball team has gotten out to a quick start this season with a record of 18-4 overall and 7-2 within the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletics Conference.

The Eagles have been in this position before as last season the team also got to a good start early on. The team had a great 2018 season with a 25-5 regular season record but teetered off at the end, losing their first match in the GLIAC tournament and the NCAA tournament.

“I think last year we peaked too early and I think this year we’ve done a good job of winning matches that we needed to win,” head volleyball coach Kevin Foeman said. “We haven’t peaked yet, so I’m really looking forward to seeing us all grow and find that time where we click. Once that happens we are going to be tough to beat.”

This season’s team may not finish with the gody conference record or overall record as last years, but they are on a similar pace.

The team looks much different with the departure of three seniors that graduated in the Spring, two of whom who were especially impactful to the team dynamic. One of them was three-time All-GLIAC senior Shelby Wyochick.

“It’s a lot different position-wise and we are more scrappy this year than being all power-focused in years past,” senior Sophi Cudworth said.

With the loss of those players, the Eagles were able to feel confident with the addition of seven freshman coming into the fold. Two seasoned veterans returned also in the likes of Lexi Lambardo and Brooke Peiffer.

The Eagles have put in the hard work to overcome the loss of those

players and maybe even become a stronger team as a whole.

Foeman credits the great start to the season with the extensive work that was put in during the offseason.

“Our girls came in prepared and in shape over the summer, and we got after it every practice,” Foeman said. “We didn’t ease into the season we got straight into it. We wanted to be in midseason form going into our early season tournament, and we were able to sweep our four games. The girls put in a lot of hard work in the little amount of time we had in our preseason.”

At the midway point of the volleyball season, Foeman is pleased with where the team is at but admits that the team hasn’t reached its full potential yet.

“Our goals for the season so far

have been small, just to improve and get better every day. The other was to go into the Region Cross-over in first place. The latter took a hit with us losing two of our last three heading into it,” Foeman said.

The AU volleyball team dominated at the Midwest Region Cross-over this past weekend winning all three of there matches by a final score of three sets to one giving them a great launching point into the second half of the season.

“Our game against Northern Michigan we played a few week-ends ago was the best we looked as a team during a match so far this season,” Foeman said.

“We’ve had a lot of really good individual matches where one of our girls will just take over and I think that match was our best as



AU ATHLETICS

Junior Brooke Peiffer goes up for a spike.



AU ATHLETICS

Senior Sophi Cudworth celebrates with freshman Chelsey Farris (left) and sophomore Zoey Peck (right).

a whole team. Number one to 18, every single person helped out in that win. Some of the calls during the Northern Michigan game didn’t go our way, but we were able to win in the fifth set and that was our favorite moment this season.”

“Just being with the girls is probably my favorite memory so far and this has been my favorite team to play within my four years of being here. It is just a lot more fun this year and we are all really close,” said Cudworth.

The Eagles look to continue their season when they take on Northwood Friday, Oct. 25th at 7 p.m. and Ferris State on Saturday, Oct. 26th at 5 p.m. Both matches are being held at Kates Gymnasium.

“Our goal is a National Championship and that’s been our goal from the moment coach stepped onto campus. That is what we are aiming for this year even if it does seem far way for us but I don’t think it’s that far away from us, I think it is possible for us to do this season,” Cudworth said.

AU Winter sports season approaches

DEAN PAOLUCCI
Reporter

With the fall sports season coming to a close at Ashland University, the Eagles’ winter sports season is just on the horizon for Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference play in the 2019-20 season.



AU ATHLETICS

Junior Tristen Weirich finished sixth at the 2019 NCAA Division II Nationals.

For the AU women’s basketball team, the Eagles were able to win a fourth consecutive GLIAC Tournament title, the first program to do so since Northern Michigan during 1995-98 seasons. A fifth consecutive tournament title would result in the Eagles being the first team to do so since the creation of the tournament in 1996.

The Eagles (29-3, 18-3 GLIAC) ended the 2018-2019 season by falling in the first round of the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional Tournament to the Northern Michigan Wildcats, a GLIAC opponent, 64-57.

The team continues to be led by head coach Kari Pickens, who finished her first season as a head coach last season. Pickens boasted a 29-3 combined record and an 18-3 record against conference foes.

While the team loses guards

Maddie Dackin and Brooke Smith to graduation, the Eagles do return senior guard Jodi Johnson.

Johnson began the season off by boasting a team-high of 18.0 points per game and 2.4 steals per game. Johnson received her second consecutive First-Team All-GLIAC

an invite to the NCAA Division II Tournament as a No. 5 seed in the Midwest Region, as the second time AU was invited to the tournament since 2016. The Eagles fell in the first round of the tournament to Southern Indiana 66-60, ending the 2019 season.

The team will be led once again by head coach John Ellenwood, who will be coaching in his 11th season for Ashland. Ellenwood, while at AU, has compiled a 171-110 total record and is second in all-time coaching wins behind Roger Lyons with a 246-193 record.

The Eagles lost several key players from last season including guard Ben Haraway. Haraway scored 1,000 career points during his three seasons at AU and was awarded to the All-GLIAC First Team last season.

The Eagles do return a starter with over 1,000 career points in senior center Drew Noble. Noble averaged a career best 17.2 points per game last season, was able to grab 6.4 rebounds per game and was honored to the All-GLIAC First Team last season.

The AU men’s basketball team

starts the regular season with a home game at Kate’s Gymnasium against Lake Erie University on Nov. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

The AU track and field indoor team is also looking to start the 2019-20 season off strong, following a season last year that saw the women’s team finishing at No. 11 and the men’s team winning the 2019 NCAA Division II Indoor Championships.

The men’s team returns several national champions from a year ago, including junior sprinter and hurdler Trevor Bassitt. Though Bassitt did not compete during the indoor championship due to lingering injuries, Bassitt was vital to the 2019 outdoor season and to earning the Eagles their 2019 Outdoor National Championship.



AU ATHLETICS

Senior guard Jodi Johnson drives towards the basket.

The women’s team also returns several vital pieces for national contention, including redshirt sophomore thrower Lindsay Baker. Baker was named as a First Team All-American by the USTFCCA in both the shot put event and the weight throw event.

The AU men’s and women’s indoor track and field team begin the

season at the Kent State Golden Flash Gala on Dec. 6 and 7.

The AU wrestling team is another team that had several individuals representing the university at a national level last year. The wrestling team saw three Eagles travel to Cleveland, Ohio, to compete in the NCAA Division II Nationals, with all three returning this year for another season.

Redshirt junior Tristen Weirich, redshirt senior Brent Romanzak and redshirt senior Christian Price will all return for another season to dawn the purple and gold.

Weirich went particularly far in the tournament, finishing at No. 6 nationally and clinching an All-American status while in Cleveland. Romanzak won the NCAA Super Region Three at 165 pounds

last season, which qualified him for Nationals. While Romanzak did compete at Nationals, an injury late in the opening match sidelined Romanzak for the remainder of the tournament.

The Eagles will start the season by travelling to Kent, Ohio, for the Kent State Duals on Nov. 2 at 1 p.m.