

sports

AU volleyball team determined to make it to GLIAC tournament

LEWIS MARKHAM
Reporter

On the heels of a season that was lost due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Ashland University Volleyball team has gotten off to a hot start in the early stages of their schedule. With no NCAA tournament this year, the eagles have their eyes set on a great lakes intercollegiate athletic conference championship.

“My expectations for this season are to win the GLIAC tournament,” junior Zoey Peck said. “To play as a team and do the best we can with what we were given and with the short preseason.”

With the limited practice time, the players did have a change of schedule for their offseason training as they had little time to be ready for GLIAC play.

“Practice time has changed because we are not able to go as hard and as long as normal because we haven’t been able to put in the time during a normal offseason,” Head Coach Kevin Foeman said.

“So we have had to adjust our workload during practices, a lot more film studies a lot more individual work. It’s tough at times to prepare when you miss an entire spring, miss an entire summer, and only have a half of a fall,” he said.

The current practice protocol

definitely has changed with frequent testing and reduced hours to practice.

“For practice we have to fill out this survey everyday for the GLIAC asking us about our symptoms and we can’t practice unless we fill it out,” Peck said. “Then we have to get tested about two times a week, one at the beginning of the week and one on Thursday when we would leave or the day before we would play at home.”

With the additional adversity of masks, the players and coaches also will miss out on the annual NCAA tournament that is played at the end of the season. This year, there is no tournament which was

devastating for current redshirt senior Brooke Pieffer.

“At first I was really upset about it because I have never been to the NCAA tournament, my first two years was at Lake Erie College where I did not get the opportunity to go. My first year here I was not able to play due to transfer rules, and we went to the NCAA tournament so I really was hoping that this was the year to go,” Pieffer said. “But we will just take it for what it is and we still have the GLIAC tournament, and then with the american volleyball coaches association tournament that they are putting on is something to still work for.”

The AVCA tournament is open to anyone who registers and is made up of twenty-four teams. It will take place from April fourteenth through the seventeenth in Dallas, Texas.

Though the tough news may be disheartening to some, Peiffer and the eagle team look at the positive side of the situation and continue to work hard towards a possible GLIAC tournament victory.

“My coach always says, ‘What you do in the dark shines in the light,’ so since I was a freshman I’ve taken that and just worked as hard as I can,” Peiffer said. “I try to always stay level-headed and push through anything that comes my way.”

Not only has covid-19 affected the preparation of the team, it has also changed how they play and com-

municate with each other. Covid rules and guidelines vary as the GLIAC is the only league that requires players to wear a mask at all times, even while on the court.

“We are the only league in our region that has to play with our masks on. The only time we can really take it off is if we are getting water,” Peck said.

As for the communication side, volleyball is a very vocal sport. With the addition of masks, it can be hard for the players to talk to one another. Coach Foeman says adjusting to these circumstances were difficult.

“Of course playing with masks, communication had to change. How do we better communicate without really hearing our voices? Those are the big things that we have had to adjust to.”

Through it all, the team manages to find strength and success behind Coach Foeman and Assistant Coach Remy Foeman.

“I have a great group of girls and a great coaching staff, Remy is phenomenal. We have a group of kids that believe in us who work hard, so it makes my life easier,” Foeman said.

“Since I’ve gotten here the main core has truly believed in the work we put in, the scouting reports, and I think that makes us successful because these girls work hard. At the end of the day, whether we win or lose, that work that they put in, that’s the success that we are looking for.”



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Redshirt senior Brooke Pieffer pictured above.

Bassitt gears up for big meet in Alabama

WES SEYFANG
Reporter

Trevor Bassitt of the Ashland University Track and Field program continues to make history with his record-setting performances against some of the country’s top athletes.

Bassitt recently became the second-best performer in division two history with his personal best time of 7.68 seconds in the 60-meter hurdles.

With his performance on Sunday, February 7th, Bassitt is now the owner of the men’s 400-meter dash time in NCAA Division 2 history along with the second-best 60 meter hurdles time in history.

In the mix of several current Olympians, Bassitt spoke on how he prepares to race against giants of the sport.

“I try to relax before I compete, I do a ton of visualization and positive self-talk prior. Then when it’s time, I throw on music and switch into that cold-blooded killer mentality,” Bassitt said.

“You have to find the silver lining in bad situations. With Covid, it gave all of us an extended offseason, so I used that time to let my body heal, and then better myself and attack workouts like I never had before. Now with this season, it’s helped me attack every meet like my last because it very well

could be,” he said.

Bassitt said “there were many challenges” that were in his way coming into this season and how he uses that to capitalize on the moment of his training and competition. Bassitt is in his fourth year of the track and field program and “looks forward” to leaving his mark on the division two record books.

“For this indoor season, I want to break the NCAA Division 2 records for the 60-meter hurdles, 200, and 400-meter dash. The goal for my outdoor season is to set the division 2 record in the 110-meter hurdles, and the 400-meter hurdles. Then I want to make the Olympic team,” he said.

Much of Bassitt’s success comes from the behind the scenes work he puts in when he is not even on the track. He is fueling himself with a diet that can sustain long hours of training and always looking for ways to improve his diet to maximize meet day performance.

Bassitt frequently meets with the university’s dietitian expert asking questions about “better food choices” and “gaining knowledge” of how those choices affect his body.

“I wouldn’t say I’m doing any major things differently. I’ve been prioritizing sleep, recovery, and taking care of my body by seeing the trainer every day. You can have a great workout Monday but if you can’t carry it into Tuesday or

Wednesday, then it doesn’t matter, you have to take care of yourself,” Bassitt said.

Bassitt spent his summer working with Andrew Durniat at his gym with the ability to workout daily, he came into the 2021 season with more muscle and speed.

On top of all of his workouts, dieting, and work schedule, Bassitt is a student before anything else.

“I’ve never really found it that difficult to balance school and track. You really just have to budget your time and segment your day. Once it’s time for practice I don’t think about school at all. I completely block that out and vice versa.”

You can be as fast as you want but if you’re not taking care of school and staying eligible then it doesn’t matter,” Bassitt said.

“I need to thank God, my teammates, my coaches, and my family. Without my teammates and my training partners I wouldn’t be where I am today,” he said.

Bassitt will be competing at the Division 2 National Championship on March 11 through 13 in Birmingham, Alabama.



AU ATHLETICS

Trevor Bassitt pictured above with trophy.

Miller earns athlete of the week



AU ATHLETICS

GLIAC athlete of the week Rachel Miller pictured above.

ALAYNA ROSS
Reporter

Rachel Miller earns her first recognition as the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference’s Indoor Track Athlete of the Week.

Each week, the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) chooses one male and female athlete to recognize for their exemplary performance. Last week, AU senior, Rachel Miller received that honor for the first time in her collegiate career.

“This award was very unexpected for me”, Miller said. “It has always been on my radar, but I never thought that it could be a possibility for me, so when it happened, I was extremely honored and humbled”.

Although the award was unexpected for Miller, she has been training for nearly ten years. Miller began her athletic career in the 7th grade and has been running non-stop ever since.

Likewise, with two brothers that competed in college athletics, and a father that was a collegiate athlete here at AU, it would seem that Miller was destined for a career in athletic success.

In high school, Miller won an Ohio Division II state championship in the 300-meter hurdles as a senior and set school records with 43.00 seconds in the 300 hurdles, 25.96 seconds in the 200 dash, and 56.94 seconds in the 400 dash.

She also set school records in the 4x100 and 4x200 relays, was a member of two Northern Ohio League-championship teams, a district title team, and a regional team runner-up, and won eight NOL championships individually.

Here at AU, Miller has earned a spot on the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference All-Academic Excellence Team for indoor and outdoor track for 2019 and 2020.

Miller seeks to top off her achievements as she competes in the National Championships later this month.

“My dreams have always been to be an All-American athlete, which means that I would have to place in the top eight in the National Championships”, Miller said. “By simply making it to the National Championships, it feels like a dream come true.”

As Miller’s senior season in indoor track is nearing the end, she is taking the time to reflect on her career and her team.

“My team is amazing and we are truly a tight-knit family that has each other’s back through all the ups and downs of the season”, Miller said. “The people and the overall culture of the team is unbelievable.”

Miller will compete in her final indoor season in Birmingham Alabama, in the championships on March 11, 2021.