

# Men’s soccer gearing up for GLIAC tournament play

**WES SEYFANG**  
Reporter

The Ashland men's soccer team looks to continue to push through adversity this season and put together a strong finish to the year. The team is currently two and four with one game left in the regular season and have faced several games that came down to the winning goals being created in overtime.

Team captain Kieran Patterson is confident in his team and believes they can push to finish strong and push to make the GLIAC tournament with a win over Davenport on April 18.

Patterson believes “the key to victory is a strongly knit team that plays for each other but also acknowledges the challenges that are in place for the team to be truly unified.”

“Regarding team chemistry, we still have a few kinks to work out on the field. With new players coming in and others playing in different positions, this may take a little time. Off the field, the team has bonded well and welcomed in the new freshman/transfer students as well as a new coaching staff,” Patterson said.

The team has had its moments in which they struggled but with games kept so close throughout the entirety, opportunities to turn them into wins have been available.

“We’ve not had the best start to this season, however we are looking to turn it round for the next games and carry it on into the tournament,” he said.

The biggest hardship of the season for the team is the length of

the season. Instead of the season being eighteen games like it was in the 2019 season, the 2021 season is only seven games before the GLIAC tournament begins. The Margin for errors are increasingly short as there are not many games for the team to continue to build the chemistry and teamwork that it would need.

Yet another obstacle the team faces in this season along with the short season, and new players being added into the mix, they are also faced with adjusting to a brand new coaching staff.

“Welcoming in a new coaching staff can always be a process for many teams and players. Being used to one style from previous years and then having to adjust to a new system or environment is something a few players have taken time to get used to.”

“As a whole, the team responds well to the coach. He understands the college game and the players he is working with. He demands a high standard every day and the team is slowly buying into his culture,” Patterson said.

When looking at all the challenges the team has faced this year and were still able to find ways to win, the future looks bright regarding what next season will entail for the team.

The men will be bringing back the same starting cast with a longer season and will be in the second year of the new coaching system. The Ashland men's soccer team is on the rise.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY: HAKEEM METZGER

Members of the men’s soccer team pictured above.

# Kelly continues to prove her talents despite injuries



AU ATHLETICS

Junior forward Makenzie Kelly photographed above.

**NIKO SCARLATOS**  
Reporter

Diligent. A term used to describe someone who shows care and consciousness in their work or duties.

For Ashland University Women’s Soccer player Makenzie Kelly, that was the word chosen when asked about what makes her so great.

The junior from Pickerington, OH currently leads her team in goals this season, despite only playing in half of the games. Kelly has only played in four of the eight games this season as she continues to struggle to say on the field due to injuries. “I know I am not going to give up if there is a challenge in

front of me,” said Kelly. “This injury is probably one of the biggest challenges I have had to face, going off of a year and a half of nothing due to Covid-19 and then coming back for a few games this season before getting hurt.”

Putting in the effort to make her way back to the field while also showing support for her teammates is what makes Makenzie so important to the team.

Being a good teammate always goes a long way in a team’s success and Kelly has shown that this season for the Eagles. Her teammates are always supportive of her and she makes sure to return the favor whenever the opportunity is given.

“She is always someone that you can count on and whenever she is on the field, you know that she is someone who is going to give it her all,” said teammate Brianna Fourman.

“She puts in effort like no other and that has been shown from freshman year all the way until junior year this season.”

Of course, nobody is perfect and for Kelly, she has definitely made improvements to the parts of her game that she struggled with early on in her career, which has allowed her to be the leading goal scorer. “She has just put in so much work, especially over the summer during the offseason and throughout the

fall leading up to this season,” said Fourman.

“I think she has just been so dedicated to AUWS (Ashland University Women’s Soccer) since freshman year but her commitment to do what it takes to get better and better has gone through the roof.”

Ashland University Women’s Soccer Head Coach Taylor Clarke also believes one of the biggest keys to her success has been the efforts she’s put into her fitness routine.

“One of the big things Makenzie did this off-season was make a commitment to fitness,” said Coach Clarke. “She really put emphasis on how it’s not about how long someone can run for but can you do the

real high intensity explosive movements.” Most would be very depleted after all that hard work right before an injury but Kelly is still just as motivated if not more than she already was.

The Eagles certainly hope to have their star player in Makenzie Kelly back on the field soon, but in the meantime she will continue to root for her team as they attempt to keep winning games and eventually make a deep playoff run this Spring.