

athletics

UPDATE FROM THE FIELD HOUSE

Records broken, tournament berths, awards, and more

by Seth Mikel, Sports Information Director
and John Sunde, Assistant Sports Information
Director

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL Most Success in Recent History

The Defiance College Lady Jackets had one of their most successful campaigns in recent history, going 17-10 on the season while advancing to the HCAC Semifinals for the first time since 2003-04.

The team was exceptional in front of their home crowd, going 12-2 at the Karl H. Weaner Center, including a 2-0 mark as they cruised to their third Hubbard Co. – Pro Rehab Tournament title in five attempts. Their 74.0 points per game ranked the Yellow Jackets atop the HCAC in scoring all season as they rode a high-octane offense that led the league in both three-point field goals and three-point field goal percentage.

Mandie White made the most out of her senior campaign, leading the team in points (14.3), rebounds (8.9) and field goal percentage (52.8). The Ottawa, Ohio, native received numerous accolades on the season including two all-tournament selections and two HCAC Player-of-the-Week awards. Despite fighting through injuries for the majority of her junior season, White became the 13th leading scorer in the history of the program, posting 1,127 to go along with 689 rebounds in her distinguished career.

Tasha Stucke ran the floor like a seasoned veteran in her third year as the starting point guard, leading the HCAC with 108 assists and ranking amongst the best in the nation in assist to turnover ratio. Stucke, who entered the



Tasha Stucke (13)

season as an HCAC Preseason Player-to-Watch, ended the season with career-highs in nearly every category including assists (108), three-pointers (38), free throws (51), steals



Shavonda Price (20)

(53) and points per game (9.3). Sophomore guard Shavonda Price proved that she can be one of the most versatile athletes in the HCAC, posting career-highs in points (12.4), rebounds (7.2), blocks (41) and a conference-best 66 steals. In addition to her signature drives to the hoop, Price expanded her game beyond the arc, hitting a career-high 16 three-pointers on the season at a 42.1 percent clip. The season came to a disappointing ending as the Yellow Jackets let a late lead slip away in the waning minutes of their HCAC Tournament Semifinals match against the top-seeded Franklin Grizzlies. Despite the loss, Shavonda Price was honored as an HCAC All-Tournament selection after averaging 12.5 points, nine rebounds and 1.5 blocks in two tournament competitions.

The program is headed in the right direction, and appears to be primed for an even bigger season next year, as the Yellow Jackets lose just one senior to graduation and return three of the best guards in the conference in Stucke, Price and the sharp-shooting Courtney Schmersal. ♦

MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD A Record-Breaking Season

The Defiance College men's indoor track and field team has gotten off to a stellar start this season, posting nine new school records and placing 37 athletes on DC's top-ten performances list through the first six meets.

Ryan Perry set the tone for the season with a blistering 6.99 second 60 meter dash in the season-opening Trine Meet to become the first athlete in school history to finish the race in less than seven seconds.

The Jackets' record-breaking season has in large part been thanks to an outstanding freshmen class which has had a hand in six of DC's nine school records this season. Aaron Demecs crushed the previous school record in the 400 meter dash by more than a second, crossing the line in 50.36 at the All-Ohio Championships, while Aaron Bronson posted a new school record time of 1:25.95 in the 600 meter dash.

Fres (9:06.31) in addition to his participation on some of DC's record-breaking relay teams.

Seth Bidlack has had an outstanding junior season highlighted by his school record-breaking 1,000 meter run at the Wesleyan Invitational Meet, in which he edged out Nic Alvarez to become the fastest DC runner ever to complete the race.

The relay (8:20.44). The distance medley relay team of Aaron Demecs, Seth Bidlack, Aaron Bronson and Hayden Krick broke the previous school record in the event by a staggering 26 seconds. ◆



Aaron Bronson (left) and Aaron Demecs



Ashlyn Howell

WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD - Rewriting the Records

The Defiance College women's indoor track and field team has re-written the record books in 2010, notching 26 DC top-ten performances and six school records through their first six meets. DC has consistently finished among the top teams at their meets this season, placing in the top-four in all but one of the meets that have recorded team results.

Defiance, Ohio native Kaitlin Switzer has been a huge part of the team's success, anchoring the team in the majority of the distance events. Switzer set new school records in the 1,000 meter run, one mile run and 3,000 meter run this season as well as participating on the Jackets' record-setting distance medley relay team.

The distance medley team of Switzer, Kelly Neff, Erika DeBos and Ellen Stryfeller crushed the previous school record in the relay by 44.6 seconds on their way to a second-place finish at the Fred Wilt Memorial Meet. Neff and DeBos also combined with Mindy DeLong and Chelsea Sites in the 4x800 meter relay to set another school record with a time of 11:35.14 in the event.

Pole vaulting has been a strong event for the Jackets all season as Kaitlyn Sandercock, Katie Heitkamp and Emily Cole have collectively been the best pole vaulting trio in the conference. Sandercock tied Cole's school record at the Anderson Meet, clearing 9-06.25 feet to take first place at the meet, while Heitkamp moved up to the third-place spot on DC's all-time performances list by clearing 9-00.25 at the Fred Wilt Memorial Meet.

Ashlyn Howell busted on to the scene in a big way in her freshman campaign, showing constant improvement as she has moved her way to the top of DC's all-time triple jump records with a 34-01.5 foot triple jump. Howell has also worked her way onto the top-ten performances list in the 55, 60, 200 and 400 meter dash events. ◆

MEN'S BASKETBALL Best Year Ever in Division III

The 2009-2010 season for the Defiance College men's basketball team will go down as one of the best years for the program since the institution made the decision to join the NCAA Division III ranks prior to the 1991-1992 campaign and will add another chapter to DC's illustrious tradition on the hardwood.

Second-year head coach Kyle Brumett and the Yellow Jackets posted a 23-6 overall mark to set the program record for wins during a single season in the D-III era and eventually claimed the 26th conference championship in the 105-year history of the men's basketball team at Defiance College by rallying past Franklin (92-78), Hanover (72-59) and Anderson (70-65) for the 2010 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Tournament Championship.

The Jackets claimed the HCAC's automatic bid into the NCAA Men's Basketball Division III National Tournament with their run to the league crown and set up the program's fourth NCAA Tournament appearance and first since the 2000-2001 season. DC was sent to The College of Wooster for its opening-round site and drew the No. 8 ranked Warhawks of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in the first game. Defiance gave UW-Whitewater all it could handle, until the Warhawks scored the final 10 points of the game to end DC's memorable season and 34th all-time postseason berth with a 75-71 defeat.

While most will remember the 2009-2010 season for Defiance's run to the NCAA Tournament, the highlights started back in November when the Yellow Jackets stormed out of the gates to secure wins over Kalamazoo, Mount Union, Adrian and Ohio Wesleyan for an impressive, 4-0, start. The fast start was DC's best since opening the 1973-1974 season with seven straight victories. The second and third wins in the 4-0 start claimed the Adrian Invitational Championship for the Yellow Jackets, as the first of four eventual tournament titles for the DC men.

Defiance would go on to claim the Purple



The 2009-2010 Men's Basketball team celebrates as HCAC Tournament champion

and Gold Financial Tournament, the Roanoke Invitational and the HCAC Tournament Championship on its way to the 15th 20-win season in program history. Along the way, the Jackets claimed the 1,300th all-time victory for the program with a 70-59 win over Manchester on February 3, 2010 and scored a pair of victories against a nationally ranked Anderson team. Other highlights for the squad included posting an unblemished, 9-0, non-conference record during the regular season and winning 12-of-13 games inside the Karl H. Weaner Community Center, while leading the HCAC in home attendance for the fourth-consecutive campaign.

Defiance garnered nine all-tournament nods, four tournament MVP awards, three HCAC Player-of-the-Week honors and saw Logan Wolfrum and Nick Sales named to the D3hoops.com National Team of the Week. While Sales, Wolfrum, Mike Floyd and Anthony Brown each were voted as All-HCAC performers for leading the Jackets throughout the season, perhaps no Jacket was more decorated during the 2009-2010 campaign than Sales.

The Barberton, Ohio, native and Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Player of the Year averaged 15.6 points, 8.2 rebounds, 2.7 assists and 2.3 steals per game for Defiance from his forward position. Sales used the stellar numbers to end his collegiate career with the Jackets ranking 16th in DC history with 1,383 points, fourth with 833 rebounds, second with 79 blocks and first

with a .605 career field goal percentage. Sales played in all 109 games during his time with Defiance, finishes as one of five players to ever record 1,300 points and 800 boards and the only player in program history to rank top 20 in scoring, while also ranking among DC's top five in rebounds, blocks and field goal percentage.

Sales not only leaves an individual fingerprint on the DC men's basketball program but teamed with Floyd, Heath Armstrong, Nate Conley, Eric Stolly and Josh Stuckey to form the squad's six-man senior group, which departs as the most successful class during the school's Division III tenure. The seniors boast a 77-32 record, four winning seasons, four trips to the HCAC Semifinals, three appearances in the HCAC Tournament Championship game, the 2008 regular season HCAC Championship, the 2010 HCAC Tournament Championship and one bid into the NCAA National Tournament.

While filling the collective shoes of the six-man class will not be easy, Brumett and the Jackets appear poised to carry on the winning tradition that has seen Defiance post the third-best winning percentage among Division III men's basketball programs in the state of Ohio during the past four years. DC looks to return 11 letterwinners from the 2009-2010 squad, with starters Anthony Brown and Brandon Campbell joining with key reserves Wolfrum, Kyle Tietje and Kevin Tietje to form the projected starting unit in 2010-2011. ♦