

athletics

UPDATE ON YOUR YELLOW JACKETS

HCAC honors, fall season highlights, and more



The Defiance College volleyball team finished the 2011 season with a 14-16 record, including a 4-5 clip in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference. The Yellow Jackets returned to the HCAC Tournament for the third time in four years. The season was highlighted by a 4-0 mark at the Centre Tournament and a 3-0 start in league play.

Senior Marlea Rolander (*pictured*) and freshman Alicia Kalik (*pictured inset*) both collected postseason awards from the conference. Rolander, a senior middle blocker, was named All-HCAC for the second-straight season. The product of Napoleon High led the Yellow

Jackets with 219 kills and a .309 hitting percentage, which ranked second in the conference. Rolander also finished the year with 114 total blocks, which led Defiance and was second in the HCAC.

Kalik, a freshman setter from South Lyon (MI) High, became the third Yellow Jacket in four years to earn the title of HCAC Freshman of the Year. In her impressive debut season, Kalik paced the Yellow Jackets with 776 total assists, 141 digs, 30 service aces and 39 total blocks. She ranked third in the HCAC in assists. To go along with HCAC Freshman of the Year, Kalik was also named to the HCAC All-Freshman Team and All-HCAC Honorable Mention.

The Defiance College football season was an up-and-down campaign that saw the Jackets start the season on a four-game losing streak and end the year with back-to-back losses. The middle four contests went into the win column for DC however, as the Purple and Gold managed a 4-4 mark in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference with consecutive wins over Mount St. Joseph, Earlham, Anderson and Rose-Hulman.

For their efforts on the gridiron, Defiance saw nine student-athletes named to the All-HCAC squad at the end of the year. Senior tight end, Andy Cessna (*pictured*), joined junior nose tackle, Gregg Pickett, and junior safety and return specialist, Tony Sierra (*pictured inset*), as First-Team All-HCAC selections. The Jackets also placed three on the Second-Team All-HCAC list, with Ryan Black (Sr., OL), Hunter Robertson (Jr., LB) and Nick Wiedenhoft (Sr., WR) making the cut. Drew Kuesel (Sr., RB) and Rick Powell (Sr., QB) were voted as Honorable Mention All-HCAC standouts, along with Josh Slayton (Fr., DB).

Pickett, Sierra, Robertson, Slayton and HCAC All-Sportsmanship Team recipient, James Buari, are all set to return to Defiance for the 2012 campaign, as the group will anchor an experienced defensive unit with the hopes of leading a bounce back effort on the gridiron for the DC football program.



The Defiance College men's and women's cross country teams both enjoyed success on the course this fall that included wins at the DC Duals for both the men and the women.

The men's squad placed two runners, senior Justin Perkins and freshman Josh Hilton, on the All-Heartland College Athletic Conference Honorable Mention Team. Perkins was also named HCAC Runner of the Week on two occasions.

On the women's team, senior Ellen Stryffeler (*pictured*) earned All-HCAC accolades, after finishing in third place at the conference championships. The senior set a school record time of 23:32.02 at the NCAA Regional Championships, and was named HCAC Runner of the Week twice. Freshman Bri Rodriguez also has a solid season for the Jackets, and narrowly missed all-conference honors at the conference championships.



The DC women's tennis team finished eighth place in the final Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference standings for the 2011 season. The Jackets picked up two HCAC victories over Mount St. Joseph and Bluffton.

Number one singles player, sophomore Kirsten Wieland (*pictured*), led the Jackets in 2011. Wieland was named Honorable Mention All-HCAC for the second year in a row. Wieland played every match at the number one singles position and number one doubles position in the fall.

Another Jacket that was recognized by HCAC coaches was sophomore Danielle LaBarbera, who was placed on the HCAC All-Sportsmanship Team. This accolade is voted on by all the coaches in the HCAC and is awarded to the athletes who best exemplify the attitude an athlete should have on and off the court.

Continued improvement was evident for the Lady Jackets on the links this fall, as the team took another major step forward as a program. Defiance capped the 2011 season with its best showing at the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Championships since reinstating the program prior to 2006. The Jackets ended in sixth place at the HCAC Championships with a 783 for its best finish and lowest score in the past six seasons.

Other highlights included DC's showing at the season-opening Anderson Invitational, in which the Jackets fired their lowest two-round score since 2006 with a 735, breaking the previous best by 46 strokes. The strong performance was fueled by the play of junior Kelly Beard (*pictured*), as the junior carded an 81 over the final 18 holes for the best single-round score of any Defiance College women's golfer since 2006.

Even with the exciting 2011 campaign, the future is even brighter, with seven letterwinners expected to return for 2012.



The Defiance College men's soccer team battled to a 5-10-3 overall record and 3-4-2 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference record. The Yellow Jackets narrowly missed finishing in the top four of the HCAC which would have given the team a playoff berth. The Purple and Gold had a trio of standout performers that were recognized as all-conference selections.

Senior defender Kevin Elson was recognized as one of the top four defenders in the HCAC, as he was voted onto the first-team by the conference head coaches. Elson was one of DC's captains throughout the 2011 campaign and was the anchor in the middle of the Jackets' defense. Elson also added a goal and an assist totaling three points on the season.

This is the third consecutive year that senior midfielder Joseph Loftis (*pictured*) has been honored by the HCAC. Like Elson, the senior midfielder was also a captain for this season's team. Loftis ended the season as the leading goal scorer for DC and tied for most assists, totaling six goals and two assists.

Sophomore goalkeeper Sean Roberts was voted as one of the three best goalkeepers in the conference. Along with being honored for his play, Roberts was also recognized for his sportsmanship on the field. The conference coaches voted Roberts onto the HCAC All-Sportsmanship Team for the way he represented himself and Defiance on the pitch. Roberts recorded 101 saves and posted three shutouts.



The Lady Yellow Jackets' soccer team fought to an overall record of 5-14 and 3-6 in Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference play during the 2011 campaign. Leading the way for Defiance was senior defender Jordanne Buehrer (*pictured inset*) and junior forward Katie Heitkamp (*pictured*). Both received all-conference accolades from the HCAC head coaches.

Buehrer was named to the All-HCAC team for the first time in her career. Along with the All-HCAC accolade, Buehrer was also recognized for her sportsmanship by the conference coaches when she was placed on the HCAC All-Sportsmanship Team. The DC senior anchored the Yellow Jackets' backline all season and was a captain to this year's squad.

Heitkamp's selection marks the second time she has received All-HCAC honors in her three seasons at DC. The junior led the team in goals scored with four and tied for the lead in assists with one, giving her the highest point total on the team with nine. Of the four goals, one was the game-winning goal against Thiel.