

2004

'Cat Tracks

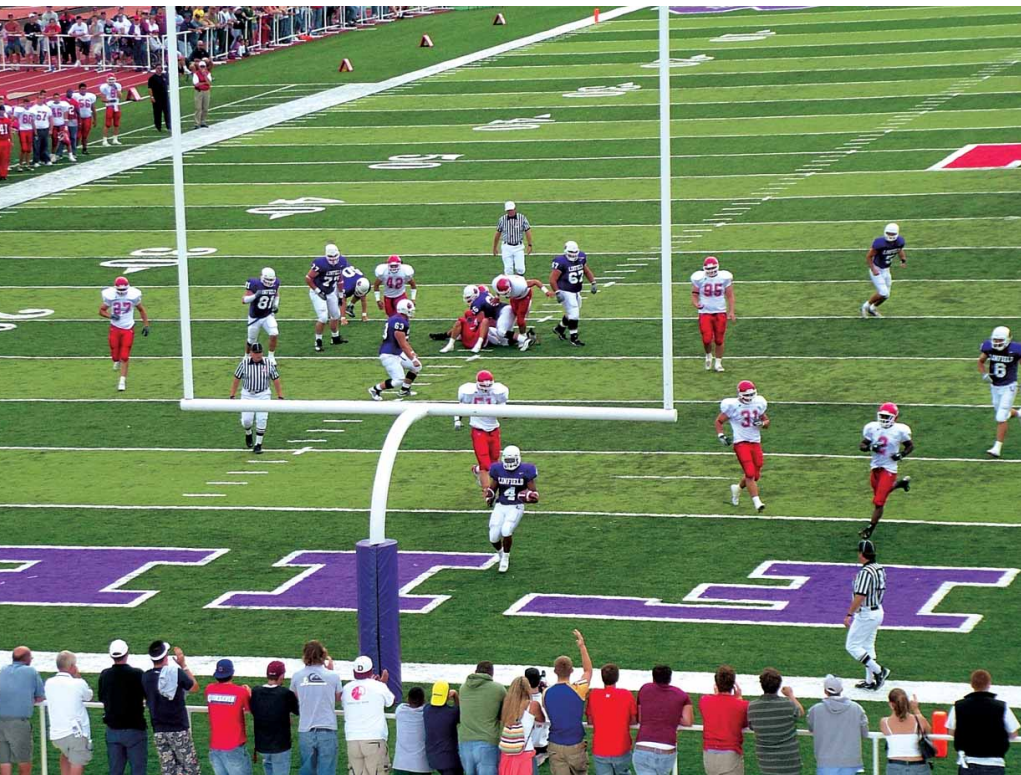
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Field improvements

Thomas Ford '05 scores the Wildcats' first touchdown on the newly renovated Maxwell Field during the 'Cats' defeat of Western Oregon University 58-17 on Sept. 11. Maxwell Field has undergone a \$1.44 million facelift including a new synthetic field, polyurethane track, stadium lights, scoreboard with color video display and press box. Over 60,000 square feet of FieldTurf, an artificial surface utilizing sand and rubber infill, replaced Maxwell Field's grass surface. The old latex-based track was upgraded to a longer-lasting polyurethane surface, increasing the lifespan from approximately six years to 10-12 years. A state-of-the-art Daktronics scoreboard and full-color video display replaced the 25-year-old scoreboard. The new facility was funded entirely by private donations and was rededicated Sept. 4 during a preseason football scrimmage.

Academic prowess off the track

For the first time in program history, both the Linfield men's and women's track and field teams were given Academic All-America standing by the U.S. Track Coaches Association.

The women combined for a 3.410 cumulative grade point average, while the men registered a 3.152 GPA. To qualify for the team award, a minimum of 14 athletes from each squad must be represented. Each athlete must have competed at least one season.

Five women and one man earned individual Academic All-America acclaim. They are: Meryl Witt '07, accounting major from Albany; Leah Moore '04, health and physical education major from Wendell, Idaho; Juli Huddleston '07, exercise science major from Stayton; Joni Claypool '06, sociology major from Stayton; Danielle Bielenberg '06, psychology major from Albany; and Mike Mills '06, computer science major from Sisters.

Wildcats help win Hood to Coast

Former Wildcat runners Greg Mitchell '95 of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Gabe Doebler '00 of Fairview competed on the winning Hood to Coast relay team in August.

Mitchell and Doebler, who both took part in cross country and track and field at Linfield, were members of the NCIC All-Stars, made up of runners from the Northwest Conference, formerly the NCIC. The team posted a 17:36:08 win and also placed first last year.

The Fred Meyer Hood to Coast Relay is the longest relay race in North America, covering 197 miles from the top of Oregon's Mt. Hood to the Pacific Ocean in Seaside. Over 12,000 runners compete in the annual event, now in its 23rd year.

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Kimura captures 500th volleyball victory



Wildcat volleyball head coach Shane Kimura '78, 2003 NWC Coach of the Year, discusses strategy during a practice with Lindsay Harksen '06, who earned second team all-American and first team all-league honors last year.

A recent win by the Linfield College volleyball team was sweeter than most for head coach Shane Kimura '78.

Kimura earned his 500th career coaching victory during a game against La Sierra in early September.

"It's a good milestone to reach," said Kimura, a third grade teacher at Wascher Elementary in Lafayette. "We've had great teams throughout the years at Linfield, and that makes me feel good."

Now in his 27th year as volleyball coach at Linfield, Kimura has won more games and coached in more matches than any active Northwest Conference coach. At press time his record stood at 504-364.

What's his secret?

"Recruiting good players who make you look good," he said with a laugh. He went on to stress the importance of communication, attracting and retaining solid students, being a positive role model and motivating athletes to play hard.

Kimura is relying on team leadership from Lindsay Harksen '06 of Sublimity, the only returning starter on the team.

"Lindsay leads by example," he said. "This year we're asking more of her, to set as well as hit, and she's going about it with a great attitude. She's a team player."

Harksen, who carries a 4.0 GPA with majors in finance and math, works hard to balance academics and athletics.

"I've always been devoted to academics," said Harksen. "It takes a lot of organization. I have very little free time so I know when I'm off, I have to do homework."

Kimura has earned the respect of his players on and off the court, according to Harksen, who praised more than just his coaching ability.

"Coach Kimura is a great communicator and knows what he's talking about," she said. "But more than that, he's a good person and role model outside of volleyball, too. He sets good examples and he's easy to talk with."

Seven athletes, one team to be inducted into Hall of Fame

Seven former athletes and one national championship team will be inducted into the Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame on Nov. 13.

Those to be honored at the seventh annual Hall of Fame banquet are:

The late Don Hansen '43, who once scored 44 points in a single basketball game, twice led the Northwest Conference in scoring and played on two championship teams;

Three-time national pole vault champion Curt Heywood '93, a six-time All-American and two-time Academic All-American;

Former All-America distance runner Melanie Leckenby '90, who competed in cross country, track and swimming, earned 12 varsity letters and was the 1987 NAIA District 2 cross country champion;

Kris Mueller '83, a conference 10,000-meter champion and district marathon champion who still holds conference records in the 5,000 and 10,000 events;

Two-time All-America football player Bernie Peterson '74, who starred at tight end for the Wildcats and was a member of two NWC

championship teams;

Football and baseball standout David Rohrer '64, who helped lead Linfield to the national playoffs in both sports;

Al Wills '52, a football tackle who blocked for All-America running back Ad Rutschman '54 in the early 1950s; and

Linfield's 1984 national championship football team, which came from 22 points down in the second half to beat Northwestern (Iowa), in the NAIA championship game.