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Cat Tracks

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Athletics Hall of Fame to enshrine six greats

Six former athletes, each with impressive playing careers, have been selected for induction this fall into the Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame. The honorees will be enshrined Saturday, Nov. 5, in Ted Wilson Gymnasium following that afternoon's football game against Willamette. The 24th Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame class includes Matt Craven '97 (track and field, football), Staci Doucette '12 (softball), Drew Fisher '12 (football), Kasey (Kuenzli) Williams '08 (women's tennis), Amy Peterson '97 (volleyball) and Sonté Wong '01 (track and field, football). The induction banquet, presented by Pacific Office Automation, begins at 6 p.m. with a social hour starting at 5 p.m. Tickets go on sale in August.



Spring sports qualify for post-season play

The spring season ended on a high note, with multiple teams and student-athletes competing in the NCAA Division III Championships.

The softball team finished 38-9 overall and was 25-3 in Northwest Conference play. The 'Cats won their 15th NWC regular season title before claiming their eighth NWC Tournament championship in 11

seasons. The team advanced to the NCAA regionals in Marshall, Texas, where they ultimately lost the regional championship to top-seeded Belhaven.

The women's tennis team advanced to the first round of championship play, eventually ending their season against the University of Texas at Dallas. The No. 34 ranked Wildcats finished the year 14-3 overall (8-0 in conference play) and claimed their fifth straight NWC regular season title.

In addition, three track and field student-athletes left their mark at the outdoor championships. Keaton Wood '22 won two individual events on his way to claiming second place in the men's decathlon. Jerrica Pacht '24 placed 11th in the women's high jump in her first championship appearance, leaping 5 feet, 5¼ inches (1.66 meters). Matt Metcalf '22 finished 15th overall in the men's javelin.

Familiar faces start new roles in athletics

In June, two new administrators joined the athletic leadership team.

Keri Dixon '22 was named assistant director of athletics, senior woman administrator and NCAA compliance officer. Dixon has worked at the university since 2010. She previously served as a financial aid specialist, executive assistant and assistant director of housing operations.

In addition, Madeleine Romero will serve as the university's faculty athletics representative. In this role, Romero will promote academic integrity, monitor institutional control of the athletic program, facilitate the integration of the athletics and academic components of the university and enhance the student-athlete

experience. Romero has been at Linfield since 2010 and currently is an associate professor in the School of Business.

Pumping up the volume in Ted Wilson Gym

Spectators at events in Ted Wilson Gymnasium will hear a new tune this fall. With the help of a generous donor, a new sound system was installed in the gym this summer. The upgraded Sportsound® audio system is specially designed for indoor gymnasiums and provides high speech intelligibility and quality music reproduction with even coverage and levels capable of overcoming crowd noise. Wilson Gym is home to the Wildcat volleyball, men's and women's basketball and men's and women's wrestling teams. A variety of additional university events, including convocation, new student orientation and the luau, are held annually in the gym.



Student-athletes earn All-America status

Linfield's student-athletes garnered multiple academic and athletic accolades at the conclusion of the spring semester. This includes four Wildcats being recognized with All-America honors.

Softball players Katie Phillips '22 and Tayah Kelley '23 were voted to the 2022 National Fastpitch Coaches Association Division III All-America teams. Phillips led Division III softball with 70 hits and was named Northwest Conference Player of the Year. Kelley ended the season with 252 strikeouts, setting a new Linfield single-season record. She was named NWC Pitcher of the Year.

Baseball player Colton Meyer '22 was named a Fourth Team All-American by D3baseball.com. He was also honored by the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA)/Rawlings and was named NWC Pitcher of the Year.

Track and field athlete Keaton Wood '21, '22 earned All-America honors, as well as being named the West Region Men's Field Athlete of the Year from the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. Wood was the NWC Championships Men's Track Athlete of the Meet and set a new Linfield record in the decathlon.

Celebration to honor women's athletic history

Linfield Athletics will recognize its former and current women athletes on Saturday, Oct. 1. The event begins at 11 a.m. with an unveiling of a newly commissioned plaque of former coach and athletic director Jane McLlroy. The portrait will be added to the Paul Durham Foyer to honor McLlroy's lasting impact on women's sports at Linfield, the region and the nation. Alumni women athletes are invited to stay for a reception at 11:30 a.m. in the VIP area outside Memorial Stadium and a special on-field presentation during halftime of the football game.

Kickoff for the game versus the University of Puget Sound is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. RSVP at linfield.edu/alumni. alumni@linfield.edu.

Sport performance lab under construction

A new construction project is set to elevate graduate education and athletic spaces in the Rutschman Field House. Improvements include instruction space and a lab supporting the new Master of Science in sports science and analytics, as well as new tennis offices and storage space for the athletic department. The project will be completed in August.

Funding for this collaborative construction project is led by a generous gift from Jim and Sondra Wright and family, with contributions from Wildcat Athletics; the Department of Health, Human Performance and Athletics; the College of Arts and Sciences; and Facilities Services.

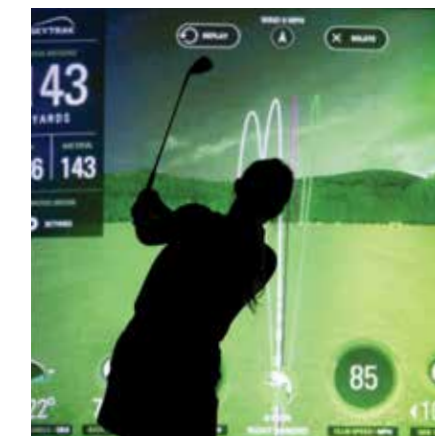
"We are thrilled to have a dedicated space that will both support students in the program and serve as a center for their research and learning," said Joe Wilferth, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "I appreciate the generous gift that made this lab space possible. It truly is transformative."

Riddle Maliska goes "ALL IN" on sport performance

After serving as the head women's tennis coach for three years, as well as a strength and conditioning and sport performance coach, Ella Riddle Maliska '18 started as director of sport performance in July. In this role, she collaborates with the strength and conditioning team to develop a comprehensive plan for athlete wellness.

After completing a bachelor's degree in exercise science at Linfield, Riddle Maliska worked as assistant strength and conditioning coach for the Leeds Rhinos Women's Professional Netball team and as head strength and conditioning coach

for the Leeds Beckett Women's Tennis team. She completed a master's degree in strength and conditioning in 2019. As head tennis coach, Riddle Maliska led the Wildcats to consecutive Northwest Conference team championships and was named NWC Coach of the Year in 2022.



Golf training facility opens in old racquetball court

An offsite competition course and cold weather are no longer challenges for the men's and women's golf teams. Over the winter, a racquetball court in the HHPA Complex was transformed into a new indoor practice area, complete with two simulators and an 11x20' putting green. The virtual environment allows golfers to track large amounts of data, including swing speed, club face angle, spin rates and more. Golfers are even able to play full rounds of golf from the comfort of the training room.

"This facility is a game changer for our golf programs," said Mitch Wilson, director of golf. "Since it opened in February, I don't think there has been a day during the school year where it wasn't used by one, if not two, athletes."