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'Cat Tracks

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Challenges don’t hinder Rodgers

When Megan Rodgers ’07 steps on the tennis court, her pre-game preparation is different from other members of the Linfield College team.

Rodgers is undaunted by the challenges presented in combining a demanding major with her love of tennis. On any given morning, she might be found administering injections, learning how to set up IV or helping dress a wound at a clinical or in the nursing lab. By that afternoon, she’s braving the traffic bottleneck at Dundee to make a team practice or a match.

“She is the core of the team, which is distinctive given her geographical challenges,” according to Amy Dames Smith, Linfield women’s tennis coach.

Focus and hard work are not new for Rodgers. A passionate tennis player since picking up her racquet at the age of 12, the Prineville native was a state qualifier on basic requirements and fundamental health care at the age of 12, the Prineville native was a state qualifier.

Although Rodgers is uncertain whether she will compete her senior year, she knows tennis will always fit somewhere in her lifestyle.

“My schedule is tough. But I know I am receiving a good education and doing what I love,” Rodgers said. “I can walk away saying I didn’t take the easiest route and I didn’t give up at the first obstacle that landed in front of me.”

— Laura Graham ’07

Baseball

Linfield logged in its 15th consecutive winning baseball season and finished second in the NWC with a 15-9 record. This is the 18th time in head coach Scott Carnahan’s 23 seasons they have placed first or second in the conference. Ten ‘Cats made the all-conference team.

Track and Field

Head Coach Garry Killpore was named the West Region Coach of the Year by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association, and the NCAA Division III West Region Indoor Coach of the Year. The ‘Cats were second in the NWC. Jess Claypool `06 placed third in the women’s shot at the NCAA III championships. Also advancing to the national meet were Danielle Bielenberg `06, women’s shot, discus; Riley Bernard `07, women’s 400 hurdles; and Gabe Habelry `09, men’s javelin.

Tennis

The women’s team finished 21-3 with an 18-0 mark against NWC competition, extending its unbeaten run of NWC victories to 63. The season included the most victories in program history and a fifth consecutive NWC title.

The men’s team finished third in the NWC, with a 15-8 overall record, including a 14-5 mark in the NWC.

Golf

Linfield enjoyed its best men’s golf season in six years, taking second place in the NWC and shooting three of its best team scores in years.

The consistent play of Laurie Wheeler ’07, who earned first-team all-conference distinction, highlighted the women’s season. The team placed third in final standings.

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Challenges don’t hinder Rodgers

When Megan Rodgers ’07 steps on the tennis court, her pre-game preparation is different from other members of the Linfield College team.

Instead of walking a few blocks to the tennis courts on the McMinnville Campus, she drives 42 miles from Portland, where she’s a nursing student at the Linfield-Good Samaritan School of Nursing.

Rodgers is undaunted by the challenging curriculum presented in combining a demanding major with her love of tennis. On any given morning, she might be found administering injections, learning how to set an IV or helping dress a wound at a clinical or in the nursing lab. By that afternoon, she’s braving the traffic bottleneck at Dundee to make a team practice or a match.

“She is the core of the team, which is distinctive given her geographical challenges,” according to Amy Dames Smith, Linfield women’s tennis coach.

Focus and hard work are not new for Rodgers. A passionate tennis player since picking up her racquet at the age of 12, the Prineville native was a state qualifier all four years at Crook County High School. After high school, she wanted to combine her love of tennis with her interest in health care. Linfield seemed the perfect fit with its small class sizes, strong tennis program and nursing school.

Rodgers spent her first year in McMinnville focusing on basic requirements and fundamental health care classes. She found she loved the team aspect of college tennis.

“The play of one person can determine the winning of the entire team’s match,” Rodgers said. “You realize it isn’t over when your match is done. Your teammates are still out there and they need your support.”

Her move to the Portland Campus as a sophomore presented new challenges. Each year of the nursing curriculum builds on the previous year, beginning with basic skills such as taking vital signs and moving into clinical settings such as foster homes or the Oregon State Hospital. The clinicals require students to spend a certain number of hours each semester working in a professional facility.

Even with a move to the Portland Campus and the challenging curriculum, Rodgers decided to remain part of the tennis team.

“I wasn’t ready to be finished competing,” she said. “In a lot of ways it is therapeutic for me to do something that I love.”

During the last two years, Rodgers has made the commute to tennis practice almost three times a week. She admits her schedule is hectic, but stays on track with her schooling by being organized and making the best use of her time.

And when it comes to tennis, she’s proven her talent. Rodgers has been named first team Northwest Conference and twice received second team NWC honors. What’s more, her teammates voted her Most Valuable Player this year.

“Megan is an outstanding person,” said Dames Smith. “She has a good sense of herself and has one of the greatest work ethics I have ever seen.”

Although Rodgers is uncertain whether she will compete her senior year, she knows tennis will always fit somewhere in her lifestyle.

“My schedule is tough. But I know I am receiving a good education and doing what I love,” Rodgers said. “I can walk away saying I didn’t take the easiest route and I didn’t give up at the first obstacle that landed in front of me.”

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