

BUZZ BEAT



The Official Newsletter of the
MSU-Billings Yellowjacket Soccer Teams



MSUB Joins Heartland Conference

Dr. Gary Gray, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics at Montana State University-Billings, announced that the school will join the Heartland Conference beginning with the 2005-2006 academic year. MSU-Billings, which currently competes in the Pacific West Conference, has been an NCAA Division II member for over 25 years.

The Heartland Conference is an NCAA Division II conference based in Texas and includes Dallas Baptist University, University of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio, TX), Lincoln University (Jefferson City, MO), Panhandle State University (Goodwell, OK), St. Edward's University (Austin, TX), and St. Mary's University (San Antonio, TX). Also joining the Heartland beginning next year will

be current PacWest member Western New Mexico University.

The move by MSU-Billings and Western New Mexico to the Heartland Conference comes after months of negotiations between various parties. The Heartland invited MSU-Billings and Western New Mexico to join in October. Since that time, numerous scenarios were explored, including an invitation from the Pacific West Confer-

ence to the four schools in Texas to join the PacWest. The PacWest includes BYU-Hawaii, Chaminade University, Hawaii Pacific University, and University of Hawaii-Hilo.

After the schools from Texas announced their decision to remain in the Heartland Conference and not join the PacWest, the opportunity reopened for MSU-Billings and Western New Mexico to move to the Heartland. MSU-Billings Chancellor Dr. Ronald Sexton announced the school's decision to join the Heartland, as did the President of Western New Mexico, Dr. John Counts.

"We are very excited about joining the Heartland Conference, and we look forward to the many new relationships that will be developed among our student-athletes and coaches, and those of the Heartland schools," said Sexton. "The Heartland Conference consists of many fine institutions and we are pleased to join them."

Joining the Heartland is seen as beneficial to the Yellowjacket Athletics Department for various reasons. The move is believed to assist in cost containment since Yellowjacket teams will no longer incur rising travel costs to Hawaii. In addition, women's basketball—one of the school's most successful programs—will have a conference affiliation and conference schedule for the first time since 2000-2001.

"This is the result of good faith efforts by many people," said Gray. "In meetings we held with the public last fall, we received very favorable responses to the potential move. I believe the Heartland is happy to have us because we are a long standing member of NCAA Division II, and we are glad to join the Heartland and its many outstanding programs."

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Yellowjacket Soccer News

Coach Seigle Resigns

Men's soccer head coach Doug Seigle submitted his letter of resignation on Thursday announced Dr. Gary Gray, Montana State University-Billings Athletic Director. The resignation becomes effective immediately. Gray said the school will immediately begin a search for a new head coach

"Coach Seigle has done a nice job with our men's soccer program," said Gray. "We wish him all the best."

Seigle was the Yellowjackets' head coach for three seasons beginning in 2002. He leaves with an 18-32-1 overall record, winning six games each season. In his first season he guided the Jackets to a 6-11-0 mark. He followed with a 6-9-1 record in 2003 and a 6-12-0 mark in 2004.

Yellowjacket Dinner Auction

This year's annual Dinner Auction was held on Halloween and was a huge success for the MSU-Billings Athletic Department. The entire athletic staff, all teams, and many generous donors helped to raise \$17,500 for the MSU-B Scholarship fund. A special thanks to all of the players and our boosters who played a part in the dinner auction.

Indoor Tournaments and Leagues

This winter we hosted three indoor tournaments - 3rd Annual Yellowjacket Women's Indoor Classic, 3rd Annual Yellowjacket Men's Indoor Classic, and the Yellowjacket Futsal Invitational Classic. The tournaments were a huge success with a total of 25 teams participating in the three tournaments. Teams came from all over Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota.

This winter we also hosted a men's and women's indoor league for players in the community. The league consisted of nine men's teams and eleven women's teams. The games were played Friday and Sunday nights.

The tournaments and leagues turned out to be an excellent fundraiser for the men's and women's soccer programs at MSU-Billings, raising close to \$4,500!

Quest for Excellence Soccer Academy

The Yellowjacket summer soccer camps have become very popular here in Billings over the past couple of years. Due to the success in the summer, we have created a year-round camp/clinic soccer experience for the local youth players - the *Quest for Excellence Soccer Academy*.

The mission of the *Quest for Excellence Soccer Academy* is to create an environment that enables teams and players in Billings an opportunity to achieve maximum technical, tactical, physical, and psychological soccer attributes that will help each team and player to grow and prosper to their utmost potential as soccer players and young adults. Furthermore, the Academy goal is to become the premier soccer training and mentoring program in Yellowstone County, whose teams and players have an opportunity to consistently develop and achieve success in club, high school, and the Olympic Development Program. Ultimately, we want our teams and players to receive soccer recognition at the state, regional, and national levels.

As with our summer soccer camps, our soccer Academy has become very popular. Since starting the Academy in April of 2004, we have conducted over 175 sessions for approximately 20 players, as well as five teams. If your son or daughter is interested in becoming part of the *Quest for Excellence Soccer Academy*, please call Don Trentham at 657-2373.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Goalkeeper Academy:
Thursdays, March 17 - May 26
- ◆ Student Athlete Awards Ceremony:
April 29 at 7 pm (Library Room 148)
- ◆ Run to Red Lodge with Eagle Mount
Friday, May 6
- ◆ 2005 Coca-Cola Yellowjacket Golf Classic:
June 2nd at Briarwood
- ◆ Quest for Excellence Soccer Academy:
Runs through the summer for all ages
- ◆ Youth Day Camp:
June 6 - 10 in Billings (grades 1 - 6)
- ◆ Green River, WY Satellite Camp:
June 12 - 17 in Green River, WY
- ◆ Overnight Camp:
June 26 - July 1 in Billings (grades 7 - 12)
- ◆ Whitefish Camp:
July 24 - 29 in Whitefish, MT

Record Setting Season for Lady Jackets

The 2004 season was a record breaking one for the MSU-Billings women's soccer team. The Yellowjackets finished with a 12-4-3 overall record and were ranked tenth in the Far West Region by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

Much of the women's soccer record book was rewritten in 2004. In all, the Yellowjackets set 14 new team school records, and players from the 2004 squad are listed in the individual record book a combined 32 times for game, season and career records.

Since the program started in 1996, the Yellowjackets have never had fewer than nine losses in a season. The 2004 Lady Jackets didn't suffer their first loss until September 22 when they fell at fourth-ranked Seattle Pacific. Leading up to the Seattle trip, the Yellowjackets posted a school-record seven game unbeaten streak. They started 6-0-1 and outscored their first seven opponents by a combined score of 24-7.

Following three losses in Washington to three regionally ranked opponents—Seattle Pacific, Seattle and Western Washington—the Yellowjackets rebounded with a four-game winning streak. MSUB rolled up wins against Minnesota-Crookston, Northern State, Jamestown and Grand Canyon, posting three shutouts in four games.

The Jackets' final loss of the season came at Division I Boise State, where they were shutout 2-0. They closed the season with a four-game unbeaten streak, with two wins and two ties. One of the ties came at Rocky Mountain College in the second game of the Third Annual Rimrock Cup. Combined with the Jackets' 7-2 route of the Bears earlier in the year, MSU-Billings brought home the Cup for the first time in three years.

MSU-Billings set new team records in 2004 for points, goals and assists. The Yellowjackets' 124 points broke the old school record by 20. They scored 45 goals (old record was 38) and had 34 assists (28). Thirteen different players accounted for those 45 goals, and ten different players had at least one assist.

Despite the fact that scoring came from so many different players, two Yellowjackets had remarkable seasons offensively. Margot Merrill-Johnson, a senior from Salt Lake City, capped an impressive career by setting new single-season school records with 28 points and 11 goals. She finished her career as the all-time career scoring leader with 71 points. For her

excellence on the field and in the classroom, Merrill-Johnson was named a first team ESPN Academic All-American. She became just the second Academic All-American in school history.

Ally Taylor, a sophomore from Ojai, CA, was close behind Merrill-Johnson for the team scoring lead. She netted eight goals with a team-leading eight assists for 24 points. She is currently third in the school record book for points in a season and third in school history for career points at 45.

While the offense was busy setting records, the Yellowjacket defense was making history of its own. In 19 games, MSU-Billings allowed only 22 goals, the fewest allowed in any season. The Jackets' team 1.08 goals against average also set a school record, breaking the old one by 0.37 goals per game.

Goalkeeper Megan Plank, a sophomore from Phoenix, AZ, was in goal for all 1836:51 of the 2004 season. Her 1.03 goals against average set a school record, breaking the record she set as a freshman. (Plank's GAA is lower than the team's because Alyssa Wolfer allowed one goal on a non-timed penalty kick).

The Yellowjackets' seniors had a great season to end their careers. Merrill-Johnson and team captain Candy Cherry of Missoula, MT sit tied atop the games played record list at 70 a piece. They each played in and started every game of their collegiate careers.

Megan Beckstead (Salt Lake City) and Laura Trinkle (Westminster, CO) also had great seasons. Beckstead, who transferred to MSUB as a junior, started every game in her two seasons at MSU-Billings.

One of the few disappointments for the Yellowjackets in 2004 was the season-ending injury to senior Stephanie Clark (Tualatin, OR). Clark, a staple of the MSUB midfield, started 56 games as a Yellowjacket and ranks seventh in school history for points scored with 16.

Including Taylor, the team will return seven players next season who scored at least one goal in 2004. Alyssa Wolfer (So., Longmont, CO) was third on the team with six goals and 15 points. Brittney Sandau (Fr., Billings, MT) and Abby Bennett (Fr., Livingston, MT) each scored three goals, and Sandau tallied six assists. Jenny Moellendorf (So., Green River, WY) and Kelsey Vinnedge (So., Great Falls, MT) scored two goals apiece. Freshmen Amy Stephens (Colorado Springs, CO) and Vanessa Edwards (Kent, WA) each scored a goal.

Lady Jackets Soccer Records

2004 Team Single Game Records

- 2 points vs. Rocky Mountain (4th)
- 7 goals vs. Rocky Mountain (3rd)
- 5 goals vs. Jamestown (tie - 5th)
- 5 goals vs. Central Washington (tie - 5th)
- 5 assists vs. Rocky Mountain (tie - 3rd)
- 5 assists vs. Central Washington (tie - 3rd)
- + 5 margin of victory vs. Rocky Mountain (tie - 4th)
- + 5 margin of victory vs. Jamestown (tie - 4th)
- :32 time elapsed between goals vs. Rocky Mountain (1st)

2004 Team Season Records

- 124 points (1st in school history)
- 45 goals (1st)
- 34 assists (1st)
- 22 goals allowed (1st)
- 12 wins (1st)
- 1.08 goals against average (1st)
- 7 game unbeaten streak (1st)
- 10 game home unbeaten streak (1st)
- 4 game road unbeaten streak (1st)
- 9 consecutive home wins (1st)
- 4 consecutive road wins (1st)
- .711 win/loss/tie percentage (1st)
- +6.0 improved win/loss/tie record (1st)
- 4 consecutive wins (2nd)
- 2.20 goals per game (2nd)
- 5 shutouts (2nd)
- 220:02 consecutive shutout minutes (3rd)
- Two 4 game unbeaten streaks (t-3rd)



2004 Individual Single Season Records

- 28 points - Margot Merrill-Johnson (1st)
- 11 goals - Margot Merrill-Johnson (1st)
- 8 assists - Ally Taylor (1st)
- 1.03 goals against average - Megan Plank (1st)
- 18:36:51 minutes in goal - Megan Plank (1st)
- 3 game winning goals - Margot Merrill-Johnson (t-2nd)
- 3 game winning goals - Alyssa Wolfer (t-2nd)
- 5 shutouts - Megan Plank (2nd)
- 24 points - Ally Taylor (3rd)
- 220:02 consecutive shutout minutes - Megan Plank (3rd)
- 6 assists - Margot Merrill-Johnson (t-4th)
- 6 assists - Brittney Sandau (t-4th)
- 204:06 consecutive shutout minutes - Megan Plank (5th)

2004 Individual Career Records

- 71 points - Margot Merrill-Johnson (1st)
- 70 games played - Candy Cherry (t-1st)
- 70 games played - Margot Merrill-Johnson (t-1st)
- 70 games started - Candy Cherry (t-1st)
- 1.07 goals against average - Megan Plank (1st)
- 70 games started - Margot Merrill-Johnson (t-1st)
- 15 assists - Ally Taylor (1st)
- 11 game winning goals - Margot Merrill-Johnson (1st)
- 191 saves - Megan Plank (2nd)
- 2932:55 minutes in goal - Megan Plank (2nd)
- 30 goals - Margot Merrill-Johnson (2nd)
- 45 points - Ally Taylor (3rd)
- 15 goals - Ally Taylor (3rd)
- 11 assists - Margot Merrill-Johnson (3rd)
- 6 assists - Brittney Sandau (t-6th)
- 16 points - Stephanie Clark (t-7th)
- 15 points - Alyssa Wolfer (9th)
- 13 points - Candy Cherry (10th)
- 12 points - Brittney Sandau (t-11th)

2004 Men's Soccer Season Review

The Montana State University-Billings men's soccer team posted six wins for the third-straight year in 2004, finishing 6-12-0. The Yellowjackets were unable to put together back-to-back wins at any point of the season.

MSU-Billings kicked off the season with a 1-0 win against Humboldt State at the Chico State tournament. Junior Jesse Spann (Rock Springs, WY) set a school record for the fastest goal ever scored when he found the net just 1:30 into the game. The Yellowjackets finished the tournament with a closely played 2-0 loss to second-ranked Chico State to finish the opening weekend 1-1.

The Yellowjackets opened their second tournament of the year with a win the following weekend. MSU-Billings held on to beat Vanguard, 4-3, in the first game of the Westminster College tournament. Senior Thomas Pertuit (Billings, MT) scored all four goals for the Yellowjackets to tie the school single game record. The Yellowjackets were unable to gain any momentum from the win, however, losing to host Westminster and Newman over the next two days to fall to 2-3.

MSU-Billings kicked off the start of classes with a September 6 home match against University of Colorado-Colorado Springs. The Yellowjackets took a 3-0 lead behind a pair of goals from senior Brian Palmer (Laramie, WY) and held on for a 3-2 win to even their record at 3-3.

Five straight road games made winning consecutive games a tall task. The Jackets started the three week road swing with a 5-1 loss at Division I Gonzaga. Following a 2-1 win at University of Mary that left them at the .500 mark again, MSU-Billings dropped three straight to Seattle University, Western Washington, and Seattle Pacific.

The promise of five straight home games to start October gave the 4-7 overall Yellowjackets confidence that they could get back to .500. They hit a bump in the road in the first game of the home stand, losing 3-1 to Colorado School of Mines. MSUB bounced back the following day with a 3-0 shutout of Westminster to end a four-game losing streak. Pertuit scored two of the three goals.

Looking for their first back-to-back wins of the season, the Yellowjackets hosted Si Tanka and Grand Canyon in a three team tournament the following weekend. A pair of narrow losses ended any hopes of a winning season, dropping MSU-Billings to 5-10.

The Yellowjackets wrapped up the home portion of their schedule on a high note, shutting out University of Mary 2-0 on October 14. Palmer scored both goals in the game, his fifth and sixth for the season. Palmer finished second on the team for goals and second for points with 14.

MSU-Billings concluded the season on the road in mid-October with losses at Colorado Springs and Metro State. The Yellowjackets managed just one goal in the two losses and finished the season by being outscored a combined 44-24 by their opponents.

Pertuit capped a solid career by scoring a team-best 11 goals with three assists for 25 points. He is second in the career school record book for goals and points and first for assists. He scored 59 points in four seasons on 23 goals and 13 assists.



Men's Soccer Records

2004 Team Single Game Records

- 13 saves vs. Grand Canyon (t-5th)
- 4 goals vs. Vanguard (t-6th)
- 9 points vs. Vanguard (7th)
- 3 goals vs. Colorado Springs (t-8th)
- 3 goals vs. Westminster (t-8th)
- 9 points vs. Vanguard (7th)

2004 Team Single Season Records

- 3 shutouts (1st)
- 6 wins (t-2nd)
- 2.44 goals against average (3rd)
- 108 saves (3rd)
- 1.33 goals per game (4th)
- 24 goals (4th)
- 6.00 saves per game (4th)

2004 Individual Single Game Records

- 8 points vs. Vanguard - Thomas Pertuit (t-1st)
- 4 goals vs. Vanguard - Thomas Pertuit (t-1st)
- Fastest goal at 1:30 vs. Humboldt State - Jesse Spann (1st)
- 13 saves vs. Grand Canyon - Kyle Bales (t-4th)
- Fastest goal at 6:24 vs. Mary - Brian Palmer (5th)
- Consecutive goals in 1:01 span - Brian Palmer (5th)
- 2 goals vs. Mary - Brian Palmer (t-7th)
- 2 goals vs. Westminster - Thomas Pertuit (t-7th)
- 2 goals vs. Colorado Springs - Brian Palmer (t-7th)
- 4 points vs. Mary - Brian Palmer (t-9th)
- 4 points vs. Westminster - Thomas Pertuit (t-9th)
- 4 points vs. Colorado Springs - Brian Palmer (t-9th)
- 9 saves vs. Colorado Springs - (t-14th)



2004 Individual Season Records

- 3 consecutive games with a goal - Thomas Pertuit (t-1st)
- 25 points - Thomas Pertuit (2nd)
- 2 solo shutouts - Kyle Bales (2nd)
- 11 goals - Thomas Pertuit (t-2nd)
- 2 consecutive games with a goal - Thomas Pertuit (t-3rd)
- 6.27 saves per game - Kyle Bales (3rd)
- 2.29 goals against average - Kyle Bales (3rd)
- 1.38 points per game - Thomas Pertuit (4th)
- 0.61 goals per game - Thomas Pertuit (4th)
- 69 saves - Kyle Bales (4th)
- 2.67 goals against average - Jess Feldtman (5th)
- 4.75 saves per game - Jess Feldtman (6th)
- 3 assists - Thomas Pertuit (t-6th)
- 6 goals - Brian Palmer (t-7th)
- 38 saves - Jess Feldtman (8th)
- 0.38 goals per game - Brian Palmer (t-8th)
- 14 points - Brian Palmer (9th)
- 0.87 points per game - Brian Palmer (9th)

2004 Individual Career Records

- 13 assists - Thomas Pertuit (1st)
- 0.28 assists per game - Robbie Thimm (1st)
- 1.79 goals against average - Jess Feldtman (2nd)
- 6.27 saves per game - Kyle Bales (2nd)
- 23 goals - Thomas Pertuit (2nd)
- 59 points - Thomas Pertuit (2nd)
- 0.35 goals per game - Thomas Pertuit (t-2nd)
- 5 assists - Robbie Thimm (t-3rd)
- 0.91 points per game - Thomas Pertuit (3rd)
- 0.20 assists per game - Thomas Pertuit (3rd)
- 0.19 assists per game - Dustin Kono (4th)
- 87 saves - Jess Feldtman (4th)
- 2.29 goals against average - Kyle Bales (4th)
- 4 assists - Dustin Kono (t-6th)
- 4 assists - Brian Palmer (t-6th)
- 4.57 saves per game - Jess Feldtman (6th)
- 69 saves - Kyle Bales (6th)
- 20 points - Brian Palmer (7th)
- 9 goals - Brian Palmer (7th)
- 0.44 points per game - Kyle Bales (8th)
- 0.41 points per game - Robbie Thimm (9th)
- 0.34 points per game - Brian Palmer (t-10th)

Yellowjacket Soccer Awards

Yellowjacket Women's Soccer



Newcomer of the Year
Lacey Albrent, *Junior*



Most Valuable Player
Megan Plank, *Sophomore*



Scholar-Athlete, Quest For Excellence
Margot Merrill-Johnson, *Senior*



Newcomer of the Year
Marcus Riley, *Junior*



Scholar Athlete
Victor Sargent, *Sophomore*



Most Valuable Player
Thomas Pertuit, *Senior*



Player's Player
Pat Boltz, *Junior*



2004-2005 Corporate Partners

