



LANCERS: Sam Lopez

MM Track

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Freshman Tess Byrd will look to build on her successful cross country season after sitting out indoor track to focus on basketball. Jordyn Hudelson (Fr.), Beth Finnegan (So.) and Brittney Mikkelsen (Sr.) will add depth to races from the 800 meter run all the way up to the 10,000 meter run.

On the men's side, junior Sam Lopez will try to make a return trip to outdoor nationals after qualifying in the 800 meter run a year ago. Josh Monson (So.), Gage Blaschke (Fr.), Ryan Oye (Fr.) and Mychal Bierwagen (Jr.) will compete with Lopez for spots in the 1600 and 3200 meter relays and also run the 800 and 1500 meter runs. Bierwagen could also continue to work on the 3000 meter steeplechase, an event that he found success in last year as a sophomore.

Yankton native Emily Anderson (high jump) will join basketball players April Winne (high jump) and Holly Hegge (triple jump, long jump, sprints) in the jumping events while freshman Sadie Fedor and sophomore Abbey VanDenBerg will specialize in the triple jump with some long jump action mixed in as well.

VanDenBerg earned All-American honors at the indoor championships in Ohio a month ago, and hopes to build on that national success.

"I really hope to qualify for nationals again," VanDenBerg, who qualified for outdoor nationals as a freshman, said. "Having an indoor and outdoor nationals under my belt, I feel like I can go to nationals and really have a breakout performance. Doing that well at indoor (nationals) has set myself up for a great outdoor season."

According to VanDenBerg, the fickle weather this spring has been a hindrance, but more of an annoyance than anything.

"Last year we were already outside (by this time)," VanDenBerg said. "It's making me antsy to get

outside but we can do what we need to do inside. But the minute it gets warm enough we will be outside in the pits."

In the men's jumps, it will be the pair of Trevor Lopour (high jump) and Tyler Payer (triple jump, long jump, sprints) leading the charge. Lopour has loads of national meet experience but an All-American honor has thus far eluded the senior.

Former Winner standout Kelli Norrid placed in the top six in both hurdle events last year at the GPAC outdoor meet, and Fischer expects the sophomore to back that up with another strong performance.

"It is tough not having Kelli in indoor (due to basketball), but she had a great season for us last spring as a freshman and we are hopeful that she can come through for us down the stretch once again," Fischer said.

Yankton native Logan Ulmer will be counted on to be the top Lancer men's hurdler.

Junior Samantha Rus (shot put), senior Sarah Cros Grove (javelin) and sophomore Anna Kolasch (javelin) are the top throwers for the Lady Lancers entering the 2013 outdoor campaign.

"Sam has made strong improvements all along through her college career so far and we are expecting big things out of Anna this year as well," Fischer added.

Junior Chris Hoffman (Yankton) and freshman Will Mart (Vermillion) will be the top throwers for the men, both specializing in the shot put.

A select few Mount Marty athletes will open their outdoor season on March 30 at the Wildcat Classic in Wayne, Neb. while the entire team will compete for the first time on April 6 at the Dordt Invitational in Sioux Center, Iowa.

The NAIA Outdoor Championships are scheduled to be held in Marion, Ind. at the end of May.

You can follow Chris Riley on Twitter at twitter.com/ChrisCRiley

Poor Conditions Slow MMC Softball Start

BY CHRIS RILEY
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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally appeared in the March 8 edition of the Press & Dakotan. It has been updated to reflect the ongoing season.

Good thing the Mount Marty College softball team made it to Tucson, Ariz. for its annual spring break trip to open their 2013 campaign, because cold and wet weather has hampered any plans the Lancers had of beginning their Midwest play as scheduled.

Coming off of a season where the Lancers struggled to win close games and finished 5-35 overall (3-17 GPAC), Mount Marty enters 2013 with a drastically different roster due to graduation and some turnover, along with a wealth of optimism.

"We have a lot of potential," the Lancers lone senior Gabi Cardenas said. "We have a young team but we have come out with big goals."

Last year, the Lancers showed promise on numerous occasions but just could not seal the deal on many would-be victories.

"We had a lot of close games," Mount Marty head coach Albert Fernandez said. "We were actually in games where we had leads — our offense was productive enough to win more games, unfortunately it was either a defensive issue or pitching."

Those close game losses have continued, as the Lancers currently sit 0-8 after playing eight games in five days in Arizona, losing four by four runs or less.

Joining Fernandez's coaching staff this season will be Amanda Volgarino — an offensive threat from the past two seasons who used all of her eligibility, and student assistant Kristin Strickland.

Cardenas, a catcher, will share the task of breaking in a completely new pitching staff this season which consists of four freshmen.

"All of our pitchers are freshman so they have to step it up," Cardenas added. "It's a challenge to a point but it's also an opportunity to see them grow."

The Lancers were scheduled to play their first conference game against Doane on March 23, but that has since been rescheduled to April 7 due to weather. Only the top eight teams in the conference qualify for the GPAC



LANCERS: Michaela Bunde (top photo, left); Mercedes Ricke (bottom photo)



tournament and that is certainly a goal for this year's squad.

"We are anxious for this year for a number of reasons," Fernandez said. "All of our pitchers will have quite a learning curve and we are pretty young as a whole with just one senior. But from the top to bottom we are pretty solid offensively with a combination of kids returning, junior college kids

and some freshman. This is probably one of the best teams we've had since I've been here."

Junior catcher Kristin Loutsch is the top returning offensive threat from a year ago, when she sported a .205 batting average, including six doubles in just 88 at bats. Fellow catcher Cardenas returns after striking out only nine times in 100 at bats to post a .226

MMC SOFTBALL (0-8)		
Date	Opponent	Time/Score
March 11	vs. Jamestown*	L 3-11
	vs. Judson*	L 1-9
March 12	vs. Park*	L 1-5
	vs. Lubbock Christian*	L 0-9
March 14	vs. Purdue North Central*	L 4-7
	vs. Avila*	L 8-9
March 15	vs. Baker*	L 1-5
	vs. Dickinson State*	L 0-10
March 20	vs. Mayville State	DH, ppd.
March 21	vs. College of St. Mary	DH, ppd.
March 30	vs. Dickinson State**	11 a.m.
	vs. Jamestown**	1 p.m.
April 1	vs. Dakota State	DH, 1 p.m.
April 3	vs. Dordt	DH, 4 p.m.
April 6	at Midland	DH, 1 p.m.
April 7	at Doane	DH, 2 p.m.
April 8	at Dakota Wesleyan	DH, 3 p.m.
April 10	at Presentation	DH, 3 p.m.
April 12	vs. Morningside	DH, 4 p.m.
April 13	vs. Nebraska Wesleyan	DH, 2 p.m.
April 15	at Dakota State	DH, 4 p.m.
April 17	vs. Northwestern	DH, 4 p.m.
April 19	at Concordia	DH, 5 p.m.
April 24	vs. Presentation	DH, 4 p.m.
April 25	vs. Briar Cliff	DH, 4 p.m.
April 27	at Hastings	DH, 1 p.m.
May 2-4	GPAC Tour. (Sioux City, Iowa)	
Home Games at Riverside Park		
* - in Tucson, Ariz.		
** - Morningside Tournament, Sioux City, Iowa		

on base percentage.

Sophomore Lauren Orwig, who joints Cardenas as a team captain, will play in the infield after starting 39 of the team's 40 games a year ago.

Other returners include infielders Michaela Bunde (junior) and Shaina Lonneman (sophomore).

Everyone agrees that the 2013 season will likely come down to how well the pitching staff can

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