

SPORTS

Men's Basketball Plays in First UMAC Championship

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At the beginning of the season the Upper Midwest Athletics Conference Preseason Poll had the Yellowjackets men's team on the outside looking in.

Only four teams make the tournament at the end of the regular season and UW-Superior was ranked in fifth.

The team started off slow in the first nine games going 3-6 before winter break.

"I thought we really challenged ourselves in the non-conference schedule," said head coach Greg Polkowski and also mentioned a possible turning point in the Naples Shootout, down in Florida.

"When you look at the schedule, it looks like it started there, but I thought we were playing really well from the get-go, we had some losses but we were still playing tough."

The turning point was in the first game of the shootout where UWS was faced up against

eighth ranked John Carroll.

Led by junior J'vaun Walker's 23 points the team was able to squeeze out an 11 point win. They then defeated Clarkson and headed north for conference play.

To open post-break conference play they rattled off 5 straight victories, ending with an overtime win over last year's UMAC champs, Northwestern.

The rest of the season UWS would only lose to Bethany Lutheran and North Central in conference finishing 10-4.

This record not only got them in the playoffs but also the No. 2 overall seed which meant they were hosting Northwestern.

The game was postponed two days due to weather but it didn't stop the fans from showing out to the men's first home playoff game since entering the UMAC.

"That's something I haven't experienced in all four years, especially



Ty Melchert pumps up Farenholtz during home game.
Photo By Harrison Law

towards the end of the season with the type of fan base we had, it was awesome, just that feeling in the gym you get when your in big games, especially playing Northwestern at the end of the year," said Senior Josef Farenholtz

UWS went on to win the game by 11, outscoring Northwestern 24-14 in the final ten minutes.

Walker and Farenholtz led a team effort with four players in double-digit scoring.

The next was Bethany Lutheran and the two transfers from UWS, Mason Ackley and Xavier Patterson.

In Mankato, Minn., the team would suffer defeat in the championship 75-93.

The Yellowjackets have two players graduating in Levy Miguel and Carter Brown but will return everyone including Farenholtz, who is using his extra year of eligibility.

"The reasons I want to stay are to keep playing basketball, because I love it and I have the competitiveness to play collegiate basketball," said Farenholtz, who wants to see how far the team can go.

After doing things that have never been done for the jackets, the championship is the only one that eludes them, "Maybe there is some unfinished business left on the table, so I'm excited for him and the team to have the opportunity to pursue those goals together," Polkowski said about Farenholtz's choice to come back.

COLUMN | Opening Day

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Opening days for every sport are huge but none rival the impact Major League Baseball's Opening Day has on its fans.

Opening Day for baseball fans is pretty much a holiday rooted in tradition, and in a sport that holds such a rich history like America's Pastime, maintaining that tradition is seen as a necessity.

As the game of baseball changes and moves further and further away from tradition.

Another reason Opening Day is so highly celebrated is that baseball fans see it as the true start to spring.

MLB Hall of Famer Joe Dimaggio said it best. "You look forward to it like a birthday party when you're a kid."

It indicates that you can begin cheering on the home team through their grueling 162 game season are coming soon, and each fan is already hoping that they get to see their team hoist the Commissioner's Trophy in November.

From **PROFILE** on Page 2 Pryd played a wide array of sports while growing up, she always wanted to do something different, so she ended up partaking in everything she possibly could.

"Some sports followed me longer than others, as I was a competitive trampoline and tumbling



Alexie Pryd in front of Writing Center
Photo by Paul James

gymnast, and a softball player for at least seven years each," said Pryd.

She was aiming to obtain an athletic scholarship from a very young age, so she eventually decided to focus on only one sport.

"It was a really tough choice between gymnastics, softball, and volleyball, but ultimately volleyball won out, though I would argue I was better at the other two," Pryd added.

She also participated in track and field, to stay in shape during the off-season.

She was doing the high jump, long jump, and her

favorite, the triple jump.

Pryd verbally committed to Wingate University on a volleyball scholarship when she was a sophomore in high school, and she shaved off all the other activities she was doing.

This created more time to play volleyball, with her Junior Olympic team, and high school team until she graduated.

She transferred from Wingate University, in the spring semester of her sophomore year.

She transferred to UWS just in time to participate in the volleyball 2020 spring season, playing in

10 matches during the shortened season.

She already misses the ups and downs that a team faces during any season, and she will miss the comradery and family aspect of being on that team.

Her family aspect at home was full of an athletic background, her parents played a few sports, that in one way or another, inspired her to play.

Her dad was a big supporter and used to practice all the time on the fields, and they bonded over the sport when she was little.

"I am still trying to convince him to swing with me once in a while when I'm back home," said Pryd.

Her mom, on the other hand, won out when it ultimately came to volleyball.

She played college volleyball and set records at Southwest Minnesota State University, playing in the most career sets and all-time digs.

Pryd's volleyball career is done as she is graduating soon but if you want to see her try out some more of the sports she used to play you can watch her on uwsathletics Instagram's "I can do that" show.

Former Soccer Player Reflects on Time with Team

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Dan Cundy is an international student from Cambridge, England and is a junior this year. Ever since Cundy was three years old, he has been kicking a soccer ball and it is one of the reasons he came to UW-Superior. He was a defenseman for soccer team for two years before deciding to step away this past fall.

In 2020, in his first semester after transferring from Lake Superior

College, Cundy played in the shortened season. He appeared in 10 matches, started in one, and logged 103 total minutes that year.

COVID-19 struck that year, "It was really unprecedented, unusual, the season was condensed," said Cundy.

He was a freshman at the time, and didn't expect to play a whole lot, but felt he fit in quite nicely, getting a start and getting some playing time. "It

was more about adapting to the American game, it is so different here," said Cundy.

UWS finished number 3 in the nation for division III teams that year.

"It was nice to go back in the summer and brag about that to my friends in England," added Cundy. In 2021, Cundy started the first three matches of the season, logging a total of 160 minutes for the Yellowjackets.

He found out, to play sports at the college level, you must be all in.

"You must stay dedicated; it is a whole life commitment. You have to stay focused, and it takes quite a bit of practice and training," said Cundy.

He played three seasons at UWS and felt like it was time to move on to other things. Cundy has a goal to become a sports journalist someday. He will be graduating in May 2024 and is majoring in sports journalism.



Dan Cundy in Swenson
Photo by Paul James

His main focus for writing is soccer but would be happy to get into any sport.

Cundy is planning to join the Promethean next semester to further help pursue his goal of getting into sports journalism.