

SPORTS

Drexler's Yellowjackets thrive on care and resilience

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For nearly a quarter century, Glen Drexler has been a fixture at the University of Wisconsin-Superior (UWS), leading both the men's and women's cross-country programs as well as track and field. Now in year 16 as head coach, he has built a reputation for success, with multiple Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) Coach of the Year titles, and with humility and care for his athletes.

This fall, Drexler was named UMAC Men's Cross-Country Coach of the Year once again. He quickly redirected the honor to his assistant coaches. "When you see these things of coach of the year, I consider it staff of the year," Drexler said. "They deserve more credit than I receive."

The recognition came during one of his toughest seasons. With only eight men and eight women competing, the Yellowjackets had little margin for error. "We were fragile to begin with...our recruiting just wasn't where we wanted it to be," he said. "We knew we'd have to be very careful that we don't push our limit too far past healthy."

Both teams entered the season as defending UMAC champions. Despite the thin lineup, the men

won the conference title and nearly achieved a perfect score, finishing only one point shy. The women battled through injuries and a stronger field, showing resilience even though they fell short of receiving the title.

Drexler's philosophy emphasizes treating each runner as an individual and supporting them athletically and personally. He encourages athletes to question him if they disagree, and he understands the pressures of college life, giving runners time off when needed to avoid burnout. Building a culture of care is central to the coaches' approach. "I will never say we're perfect, but I do know that it's a point of emphasis for us...we want to take care of that individual first, because that's most important to us," he said.

Junior runner Dylan Uitto was the 2025 UMAC Men's Individual Champion with a first-place finish at the conference meet. He echoed Drexler's philosophy. "Competing under Glen and the rest of the coaching staff has been a real pleasure," Uitto said. "They really show their support for each individual...giving our team a close-knit family feeling."

Uitto called the season "a huge success," noting that the smaller roster required smarter training and careful management of injuries.



Head coach Glen Drexler on Dec. 3

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean

His proudest moment was winning the individual title. "I set this goal after finishing in fourth last season," he said. He also pointed to the camaraderie on long bus rides. "My favorite memories...are definitely from the bus rides down to meets," he said. "Being stuck together for hours at a time gets our team pretty close and has led to some funny moments that I think I'll remember for the rest of my life."

Looking ahead, Drexler sees promise in the program with nearly both teams' rosters set to return, giving the incoming group strong leaders to follow. He called the newcomers a strong class, adding to that foundation. With that, the teams "are looking forward to next year and reasserting themselves among the top," he said.

2025 UMAC Honorees

Men's Cross Country:

Dylan Uitto - Individual Champion & First-Team All-Conference
Ben Placker - First-Team All-Conference
Maverick Hoogland - First-Team All-Conference
Tyler Smith - First-Team All-Conference
Jayde Canfield - Second-Team All-Conference
Deryck Parduhn - Second-Team All-Conference
Oleksander "Sasha" Danylov - All-Sportsmanship
Glen Drexler - Coach of the Year

Men's Soccer:

Jacob Wyles - Defensive Player of the Year and First-Team All-Conference
Seth Davidson - Rookie of the Year and Second-Team All-Conference
Jake Kidd - First-Team All-Conference
Harvey McLoughlin - First-Team All-Conference
Freddy Watson - First-Team All-Conference
Isaac Becket - Second-Team All-Conference
Joel Thomas - Honorable Mention All-Conference
Rowan Wagner - Honorable Mention All-Conference
Patrick Sessions - All-Sportsmanship
Joe Mooney - Coach of the Year

Women's Soccer:

Naimh Larson - First-Team All-Conference
Kamryn Hill - First-Team All-Conference
Meagan Bergerson - First-Team All-Conference
Quinn Clark - First-Team All-Conference
Emma Wright - Second-Team All-Conference
Brynne Crystal - Honorable Mention
Beth Schneider - Honorable Mention
Abby Randall - All-Sportsmanship

a stop along the way. On the topic of achieving a uscho.com national ranking, Kilgora said, "Don't count us out."

Kilgora said the end goal for this season is to, "Take over the WIAC." The team that wins the WIAC post-season tournament receives an automatic bid to the NCAA Division III tournament.

Women's hockey itching for upcoming season



Emma Kilgora faces-off against St. Scholastica on Nov. 25

Photo by Alicia Zoltowski | Promethean

can still go toe-to-toe with the other teams in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC). One of the team's goals is to improve their form. From start to finish, they want to enhance their performance now until the playoffs, aiming for consistent wins.

Simon said, "Getting 1% better every day. This is my rebuilding year, so we are just getting our feet wet and getting our freshmen adjusted to this level of the game."

When Kilgora was asked if Beloit's joining the WIAC conference would change anything, she responded, "No. I don't think that it changes anything...just another team we gotta beat."

Simons said that Beloit's joining

the WIAC doesn't change a thing. When Simons was asked about the team achieving a nationally ranking, she said, "Not this year, but hopefully in the next couple years."

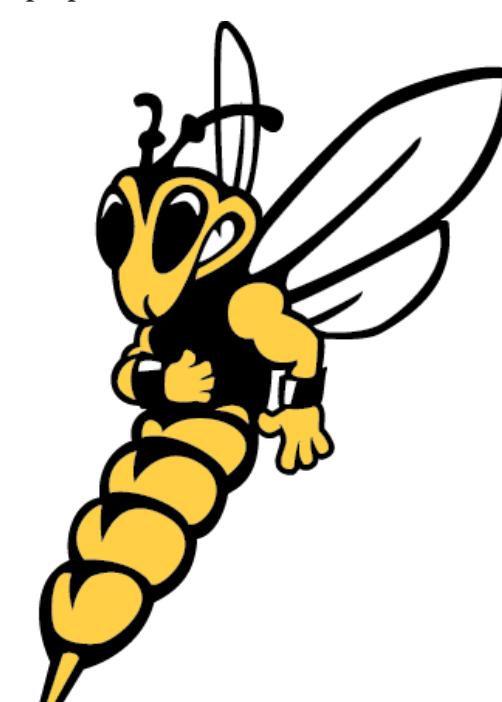
Kilgora also mentioned a few of the team's pregame rituals, "We play spikeball sometimes...we yell before the game. We do a little chant, a little cheer...so that the other team can hear us, hopefully."

Simons said, "Just getting an iced coffee before the games," when asked about the team's pregame rituals.

Simons said that travel days depend on where they're going. "If we are going further, we will leave a little earlier so we can stop halfway to let the girls get out and stretch/walk around, so we don't have bus legs when we show up to the rink. If we aren't going super far, then we just trek it all the way to the rink."

Depending on game time, they will either eat on the bus or make

that the time will help him define his leadership style and expectations for team leaders. He also plans to tighten pregame and postgame training routines and adjust the team's overall style of play as the Yellowjackets prepare for next fall.



Season of transition signals new era for UWS women's soccer

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For the University of Wisconsin-Superior women's soccer team, 2025 was a season of transition and discovery. With Nick Piazza in his first year at the helm and a roster of 12 newcomers and three returning starters, the Yellowjackets faced many challenges this season that tested both leadership and identity.

Piazza was grateful for the group he inherited, especially the seniors who helped stabilize the program during his debut season. "I asked a lot of them throughout the course of the year, just to help me out because I was trying to wrap my head around all the different things I have to do as head coach," Piazza said. "To have that senior group put as much as they did on their shoulders...I can't thank that class enough."

The Yellowjackets captured the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference championship and advanced to the

NCAA tournament. There, the team fell to the University of Chicago in the opening round. The eye-opening experience set a standard for the program moving forward. Piazza also reflected on lessons learned, including a midseason formation change that he later reversed. "It looked really good on paper, but I probably didn't clarify that to the team very well," he said. "In future years, we're really just trying to stick to what our identity is as a team, and pouring more into that," is what Piazza said would work better.

Senior captain, Kamryn Hill, described the season as a challenge from the start, with many new faces and adjustments to a new coach. "It almost felt like we were all in a hurry to become very put-together as fast as possible," Hill said. "It took us awhile to figure out that we are just here to play soccer, have fun, and play as many games as we can with this group. Once we did that, we began to play with so much joy...which

led to our successes," she added. Hill also pointed to Piazza's influence on the team's growth. "He had given us the tools to create a new legacy of our own, and that really pushed us to succeed," she said.

Her personal success was on full display in the conference tournament, when Hill scored the goal that sent the team to nationals. "It was like all the time, effort, and emotions I had put into all these girls behind a closed door is finally paying off," she said. "The overwhelming love and support they rushed me with, really told me that they see me, and they knew how much I cared about them."

Piazza sees this spring as an opportunity to establish details that were hard to build during the season. "I actually get a non-traditional season...to work with the team on what I want the culture to be about and what they want the culture to be about, and the standards that we want to set," Piazza said. He added