

SPORTS

Lacrosse team sets forth as trailblazers

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The University of Wisconsin-Superior women's lacrosse program made history on March 17, when players picked up sticks and goggles for their first official practice inside the racquetball courts at the Marcovich Wellness Center.

The early roster is small and largely new to the sport. Only about half of the players have prior lacrosse experience, and all but one are dual-sport



Lacrosse players hold their first ever practice inside the racquetball courts at the Marcovich Wellness Center on Mar. 17.

Photo by Abby Hoffman | Promethean

athletes already competing for other Yellow-jacket teams. Despite coming from different programs, head coach Hilda Nuutinen said the group has quickly come together.

"They're really supportive of each other because it is hard," Nuutinen said. "It's not easy to learn a new sport."

Practices are currently held twice a week indoors, with plans to move outside as weather improves. With limited space and numbers, practices have required creativity. Players spend time on individual skill work, including wall ball inside the racquetball courts. Nuutinen said the group is progressing quickly, with both new and experienced players showing steady growth.

For sophomore Niamh Larson, a member of the UWS women's soccer team who had never played lacrosse before, the challenge has been part of the appeal. After talking with teammates and meeting Nuutinen, she decided to join the program. "It's very exciting... Because it's the first ever women's lacrosse team here, I don't feel a lot of pressure. I do feel like relaxed about it and I can go have fun, but I'm also here to compete and play and learn something new," Larson said.

While the current emphasis is on development, attention is already turning toward the program's first competitive season in spring 2027. UWS is



Left to right: Veda Roeske, Niamh Larson and Brook Judnick practicing lacrosse fundamentals during the first ever practice in the Marcovich Wellness Center on Mar. 17.

Photo by Abby Hoffman | Promethean

set to compete in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, giving the team immediate credibility as it continues to expand its roster.

Nuutinen, who was hired in May 2025, said she has been actively contacting schools to assemble a schedule of approximately 15 to 17 games, including a spring break trip to Chicago. "I just literally cannot wait," Nuutinen said. "I message my recruits, probably on a weekly basis." That recruiting effort is already taking shape, with 12 incoming freshmen expected to join the lacrosse team in the fall.

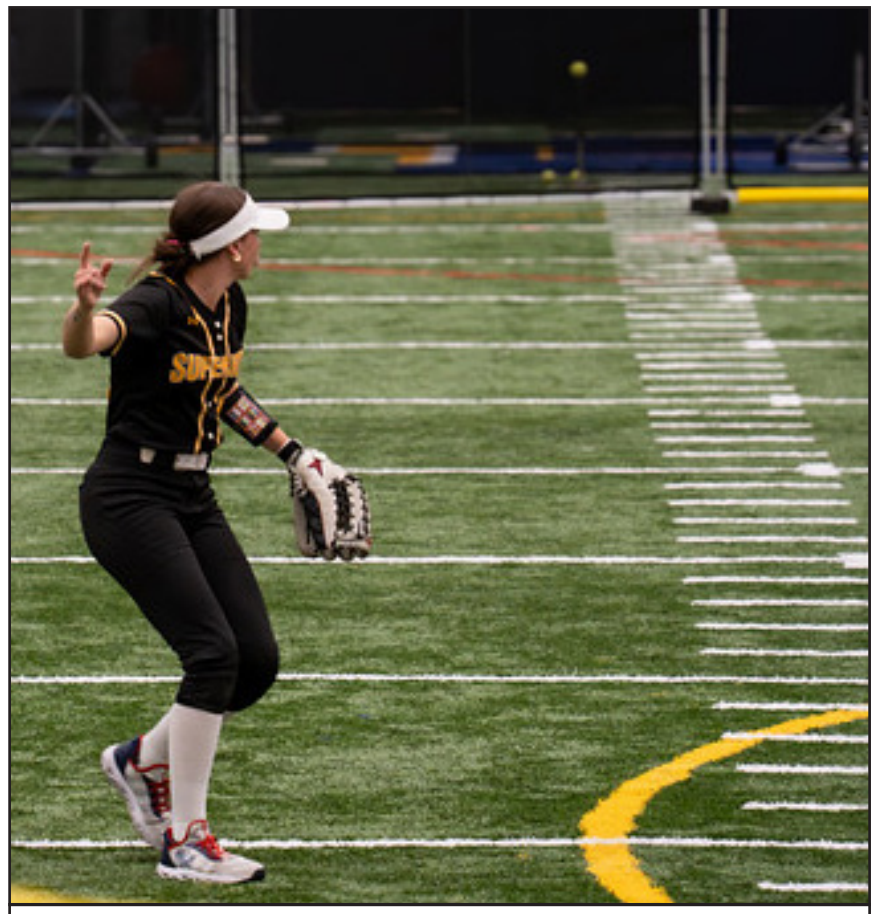
While Nuutinen is eager to build the program, her focus remains on the athletes leading it forward. "The reason why I'm doing this is not for my own enjoyment, it's for these kids to have the opportunity to be trailblazers," she said.

Yellowjacket softball vs. Blugolds



Left to right: Karen Balabon, Peyton Bennett and MyKenzie Leccia huddled up during game at UW-Eau Claire on Mar. 24.

Photo by Aidan Salama | Promethean



Senior MyKenzie Leccia preparing for a play in the outfield during game at UW-Eau Claire on Mar. 24.

Photo by Aidan Salama | Promethean



Freshman Kylie Zwak in action during game at UW-Eau Claire on Mar. 24.

Photo by Aidan Salama | Promethean



Sophomore Peyton Bennett playing in the outfield during game at UW-Eau Claire on Mar. 24.

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