Courtney Mostul '17 among crop of rising stars

Tennis battling for NWC crown

TURF’S UP
Maxwell Field carpet due for replacement

NEW LOOK
Athletics website gets facelift

WILDCAT OPEN
2014 fundraiser builds on success of new venue

Spring 2014
Gifts of cash (either by check or credit card) are the most common method to make a charitable gift. However, there are other ways to make a gift that may make sense for you, depending on your situation. The college is able to accept gifts of stock or mutual funds, as well as other marketable assets such as real estate. If you’d like more information about alternative giving options, contact Craig Haisch, Office of Institutional Advancement: 503-883-2675 or chaisch@linfield.edu.

In the year 2000, the Linfield football team finished the regular season with an unbeaten 9-0 record and was hopeful of advancing deep into the NCAA Division III playoffs. But in a cruel twist of fate that was later dubbed the “Miracle in the Mud,” Linfield lost a heart-breaking game in overtime to Central College of Iowa.

After all was said and done, then-head football coach Jay Locey told me that in order to compete successfully at the national level, it was important that Linfield have an artificial playing surface. Locey’s vision was to build his team with speed rather than size, the latter being the prototype of teams from the Midwest region the Wildcats would likely face in the playoffs. To make a long story short, our plan to upgrade the configuration of the running track from yards to meters and install a new artificial turf field took root.

Over the next three years, planning and fundraising made it possible to complete the $1.4 million turf and track project in 2004. Also added that year were stadium lighting, an electronic scoreboard and video screen, and a long overdue replacement of the press box.

Ten years have flown by and the turf is in need of replacement. It is worn to a point where it no longer properly cushions the impact of a student-athlete contacting the surface and thus has become a safety concern. Our warranty on the field is expired. Furthermore, what most people perhaps do not realize is the benefit the field provides to the entire campus for countless other activities. It has become invaluable for more than half of our student population, athletes and non-athletes alike.

Recently, many of you received a letter from us asking you to consider supporting this project right away so that the work may be completed this summer. Asking for contributions for a new surface is a bit of a double-edged sword because we also rely so heavily on your annual contributions to our TopCat Club. The TopCat Club is basically our lifeline for providing for vital needs that fall outside our operational budget, such as non-budgeted travel, meals and equipment for our teams. The TopCat fund, along with supplemental dollars raised by our individual teams and other donations, accounts for about $250,000 each year. Linfield could not begin to offer the level of quality programs to our student-athletes we do without your generous support of this fund.

Like me, I know you have many choices and causes you believe in and are asked to support. I encourage you to consider making a three-year commitment toward the funding of the replacement field while at the same time beginning or maintaining your annual pledge to benefit the TopCat Club. We rely so much on your support and interest in all of our programs.

Thank you for your consideration. The ‘Cats appreciate your support so very much.

Scott Carnahan
CARNEY’S CORNER

In the year 2000, the Linfield football team finished the regular season with an unbeaten 9-0 record and was hopeful of advancing deep into the NCAA Division III playoffs. But in a cruel twist of fate that was later dubbed the “Miracle in the Mud,” Linfield lost a heart-breaking game in overtime to Central College of Iowa.

After all was said and done, then-head football coach Jay Locey told me that in order to compete successfully at the national level, it was important that Linfield have an artificial playing surface. Locey’s vision was to build his team with speed rather than size, the latter being the prototype of teams from the Midwest region the Wildcats would likely face in the playoffs. To make a long story short, our plan to upgrade the configuration of the running track from yards to meters and install a new artificial turf field took root.

Over the next three years, planning and fundraising made it possible to complete the $1.4 million turf and track project in 2004. Also added that year were stadium lighting, an electronic scoreboard and video screen, and a long overdue replacement of the press box.

Ten years have flown by and the turf is in need of replacement.

Make your pledge by April 30
www.linfield.edu/gift

Be sure to designate your gift to the Maxwell Field Turf Fund

TURF’S UP!
LINFIELD STUDENT-ATHLETES NEED YOUR HELP

Turf replacement fund drive underway

www.linfield.edu/gift

Be sure to designate your gift to the Maxwell Field Turf Fund

Gifts of cash (either by check or credit card) are the most common method to make a charitable gift. However, there are other ways to make a gift that may make sense for you, depending on your situation. The college is able to accept gifts of stock or mutual funds, as well as other marketable assets such as real estate. If you’d like more information about alternative giving options, contact Craig Haisch, Office of Institutional Advancement: 503-883-2675 or chaisch@linfield.edu.
Time is of the essence to replace field by fall

Having a successful football program with 58 consecutive winning seasons takes a lot — talent, values, solid work ethic, fan support and much more. First-class facilities are also important. Linfield is fortunate to have some of the best sports venues of any small college in NCAA Division III.

In 1928, Maxwell Field became the home for Wildcat football. In 2004, a $1.4 million project, funded by private gifts, upgraded the facility to include lighting, an all-weather track, new scoreboard, color video display and press box. The new synthetic turf field was an important addition considering the amount of rain Oregon receives each fall, which can turn a grass field a muddy mess on game day.

Synthetic turf surfaces do have limited lifespans — 10 years — and Linfield’s turf must be replaced. Maxwell Field’s turf isn’t just used on game days — it’s used every day by a variety of groups and interests.

An all-weather turf field enhances the Linfield football team’s ability to throw the ball effectively and increases the team’s overall speed. “We don’t have the physical size that some of the other programs in the Midwest have, and a top-notch playing surface is important for our style of play,” said football coach Joseph Smith ’93.

There is time to replace the turf prior to the 2014 season, but we need your help! Gifts and commitments totaling $450,000 are needed by April 30 in order to move forward with this project. Please consider a gift to help provide the first-class field we need to keep the Wildcats at the top of the small-college football national scene.

Former Portland State football coach Mouse Davis looks on as Linfield’s Chris Haddeland ’15 accepts the Ad Rutschman Award, honoring the top small-college athlete in Oregon.

Wildcats again among big winners at annual Oregon Sports Awards

Confirming Linfield’s place as one of the leading athletic programs in the state, the Wildcats were again big winners at the 62nd Oregon Sports Awards. The event took place March 9 at Nike’s Tiger Woods Center in Beaverton.

All-America pitcher Chris Haddeland was the male recipient of the Ad Rutschman Small College Athlete of the Year Award while the Linfield baseball team was presented the George Pasero Award, saluting the state’s outstanding teams.

Baseball coach Scott Brosius was a finalist for the Slats Gill Sportsperson of the Year, given annually to Oregon’s top coach, administrator or organization.

With an audience full of sports stars from past and present, Haddeland’s name was called to receive the Rutschman Award.

All-America pitcher Chris Haddeland was the male recipient of the Ad Rutschman Small College Athlete of the Year Award while the Linfield baseball team was presented the George Pasero Award, saluting the state’s outstanding teams.

Baseball coach Scott Brosius was a finalist for the Slats Gill Sportsperson of the Year, given annually to Oregon’s top coach, administrator or organization.

With an audience full of sports stars from past and present, Haddeland’s name was called to receive the Rutschman Award. Named for the former Linfield football and baseball coach and athletic director, the Rutschman Award is presented annually to the top student-athletes who compete for the 14 Oregon-based NAIA, NCAA Division II and Division III institutions.

Haddeland, who earned Division III Pitcher of the Year acclaim while leading Linfield to the 2013 national title, edged Linfield football linebacker Dominique Forrest and last year’s Rutschman Award winner, wrestler Mitch Lofstedt of Southern Oregon, for the statewide honor.

“Winning the Rutschman Award was great,” said Haddeland. “It was neat to see our team win the Pasero Award as well. It was a fun experience seeing all the great athletes, coaches and other sports-related people from around Oregon and learning what they have accomplished. It was truly an honor to be an award winner.”

Counting two-time winners Staci Doucette (2010, ’12) and Brett Elliott (2004, ’05), six Linfield athletes have received Rutschman Awards a total of eight times since its inception in 2001. The list of previous Linfield honorees includes football All-Americans David Russell (’02), Tyler Matthews (’03) and Aaron Boehme (’09).

Haddeland pitched the Wildcats to 15 victories in 2013 en route to national, regional and conference pitcher of the year honors. In 126 innings, he posted a team-low 1.07 ERA with 96 strikeouts.

Forrest was a two-time West Region and Northwest Conference Defensive Player of the Year while garnering a first team All-America citation.

Under Brosius, Linfield’s baseball team rolled to a school-record 42 victories while capturing the school’s first national championship in the NCAA era and third overall. Jordan Harlow, one of four seniors representing the 2013 squad, accepted the Pasero Award on behalf of the team.
Being a naturally competitive person, I’ve always strived for the output of the Linfield sports information office to be a cut above the schools down the street, in neighboring states and across the country. Like Linfield’s teams and athletes, I’m not happy if Linfield is second fiddle to any other institution.

In the case of college athletics websites, Linfield has nearly always been a leader among small colleges in terms of creative designs, strong news and photographic content, and depth of historical information.

While Linfield was setting the pace, many schools nationally and in the Northwest Conference were languishing with unimaginative athletic web designs and lackluster content. But the landscape has changed over the last five years, enabling the have-not schools to close the gap considerably.

Several third-party companies have emerged in recent years offering college athletic departments fancy design services while also “hosting” a college’s site on their servers using their propriety content interfaces.

On the surface, these quick-and-easy solutions look pretty, but after a while they start to bear a resemblance to one another, with only the school colors and logos changing, and the design pieces shifting around to different positions on the page. I’ve always resisted Linfield taking that easy approach, fearing our athletics site would become just another cookie-cutter solution.

By building and maintaining the Linfield athletics website on campus, we are saving the college thousands of dollars in annual fees. And we are able to customize the site to our exact needs, both in terms of what you see when you view pages, as well as on the administrative side, where we do all the programming and content configuration.

Linfield’s newest athletics website continues our desire to remain on the leading edge of design and content. It’s another way Athletics can convey the underlying message that Linfield remains genuinely special and unique.
Three notable Wildcats pass away

A former coach, all-star athlete and longtime athletics supporter each passed away recently. Nils Lou, Bruce Assily and Bert Johnson all left lasting impressions on the respective programs they associated with.

Lou, a former men’s and women’s golf coach and longtime art professor at Linfield, died unexpectedly on Christmas Day at age 81. His ties to the college date back to 1987.

Lou coached the men’s golf team for seven seasons, from 1995 until 2001, during which time Linfield placed as high as second in the Northwest Conference (2000) and third five other times.

He was the founding coach of the women’s golf program, leading the first women’s team to a second-place conference finish during their maiden season of 1996.

Lou was internationally known for his art and his techniques, including the outdoor firings in wood-fired, earthen kiln he built at his home near Willamina.

Assily, Class of 2000, died accidentally Jan. 24 while underwater spearfishing near Waikiki, Hawaii.

Assily, 36, played defensive end for the Wildcats from 1996 until 1999, earning all-conference recognition in each of his four years. He is widely considered one of the most dominant players at his position in program history.

A four-year starter, Assily recorded 16 career sacks among his 40 total tackles for loss. Perhaps more significant than his football accomplishments, he is remembered for a larger-than-life personality.

“Few people can literally fill a room with energy and spirit by themselves. Bruce Assily could,” said football coach Joseph Smith, who was Linfield’s defensive line coach during Assily’s four seasons.

“When Bruce touched foot into a building, you knew he had arrived. You could hear him a mile away with that infectious laugh that he inflicted, and affected, everyone around him.”

Assily’s positive attitude rubbed off on his teammates, who voted him as the Wildcats’ Most Inspirational Player in 1999.

Johnson, a longtime Linfield athletics supporter and fan from the Class of 1952, passed away peacefully Jan. 23 at age 83.

A retired school teacher living in Portland, Johnson was an avid Linfield football fan.

In honor of Bert’s passion for Linfield athletics, the family requests that gifts in Bert’s memory be sent to Linfield College, c/o Institutional Advancement, 900 S.E. Baker St., McMinnville, OR 97128.
The Wildcat Open • Friday, July 18 • The Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club • Aloha, Oregon

Sponsorships available • linfield.edu/sports/wildcatopen • email wildcatopen@linfield.edu

LINFIELD COLLEGE
Wildcat Open

Sponsorships available • linfield.edu/sports/w
Why do I enjoy the Wildcat Open?

“The Reserve is a first-rate facility with an excellent, spacious practice area and great tee-to-green conditions...it’s so good, I may have to buy a few more mulligans this year to help our group.

I really enjoy the great new benefits, such as the opportunity to use the ‘Nike Bucks’ toward a purchase in the pro shop.

Where else but the Wildcat Open could three left-handed golfers play together in one group?”

– Buzz Stroud ‘71
Basketball senior Kaely Maltman recently completed an impressive four-year career that places her among the most productive and consistent players in program history. She appeared in the starting lineup in 96 straight games, achieved 15 career double-doubles, and scored 20 or more points in a game 11 times.
Youthful rosters gain experience for future

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
Playing with perhaps the youngest roster in one of the most competitive leagues in the nation, the Wildcats made significant strides, both in terms of tangible statistics and palpable competitiveness from night to night.

Vaulting from tied for last place to sixth in the NWC, Linfield tripled its overall win total from the previous season and claimed five league victories, including a signature, 11-point road victory over Lewis & Clark. Perhaps most encouraging is how strong the Wildcats finished the year, winning two of their last three games.

“I’m very excited about the foundation that we finally have for the program,” said head coach Robin Potera-Haskins. “It takes a while to get the type of student-athletes that are able to excel not just in the classroom but also on the court.”

Statistically, one of the Wildcats’ greatest improvements came in the form of 3-point shooting. In an about-face, Linfield went from being the second-worst performing NWC team beyond the arc in 2012-13 (25.6 percent) to the best in 2013-14 (35 percent). Much of the team’s success from long range can be attributed to freshman Quincey Gibson and sophomore Taylor Solomon. Both ranked among the top 3-point threats in the conference, Gibson second at 41 percent and Solomon sixth at 39.2.

Kaela Maltman, a four-year starter, graduates as one of just three players in program history to surpass 1,000 points and 500 rebounds, but Solomon, Katelyn Henson and Kaleigh Phillips constitute the veteran core, along with rising juniors Catie Mets and Jessica McMillan. Now with a full year of experience under their belts, players like Riley Graham and Annalise Beshears should assume greater roles in their sophomore seasons.

MEN’S BASKETBALL
Strictly from a numbers point of view, the improvement demonstrated by the Linfield men’s basketball program was not always obvious or apparent. Yet, a close examination between the lines reveals a young program very much on the rise under new coach Shanan Rosenberg.

The Wildcats completed the 2013-14 season with a record of 5-20 and 3-13 against Northwest Conference foes.

Rosenberg’s debut season concluded with a 20-point victory over Pacific Lutheran. The Wildcats moved up one spot in the NWC standings from the previous year, taking with them positive momentum into the offseason. Linfield also scored conference wins over George Fox and Willamette.

“Our freshmen really grew up, and in particular, their growth was evident during the last 2-3 weeks of the season,” said Rosenberg. “Our goal was to be playing our best basketball in February and by the end of the season, we were.”

The season was not without some tribulation. At various points, three starters – Kevin Hurley, Mason Rodby and Adam Myren – went down with season-ending injuries. Yet, the Wildcats refused to fold their tent.

Ryan Potter, a streak-shooting freshman guard, was the only Wildcat to average in double figures at 10.5 points per game. Chris Dirks was the team’s leading rebounder (4.6), while point guard Ryan Cali averaged 2.2 assists to go along with 6.8 points.

Freshman guard Tanner Brill was steady and consistent, averaging 7.6 points and 2.1 rebounds. Another freshman, Jackson Gion, played well down the stretch. Rodby, a developing freshman center, was just starting to feel comfortable with the college game before he was sidelined.

Individual accomplishments buoy swimmers

Saving her fastest swim for the final race of the season, sophomore Elizabeth Fry eclipsed the Linfield record in the most grueling of all events – the 1,650-yard freestyle – to highlight the final day of action at the eight-team NWC Championships at King County Aquatic Center.

Fry recorded an 18:08.91 clocking to slip past teammate Nikki Overton, who set the standing record of 18:11.26 at last season’s conference championship meet.

Maggie May (backstroke), Toni Nickerson (breaststroke) and Caitlin Duffner (butterfly) also accounted for team points at the NWC meet.

Linfield’s men cheered point-scoring races by Lee Rivers (backstroke), Ian White (freestyle) and Christopher Hu (butterfly).

Rivers raced to a 1:58.76 result in the men’s 200 backstroke, capping a successful meet for the Linfield senior. Rivers set lifetime bests in all four individual events he competed in, coming within .45 seconds of breaking the school record in the 200 individual medley.

In the team standings, the Linfield women maintained their position of seventh place while the men were eighth overall.

Katherine Brackmann

FAST BREAK

NCAA Championships have always held a special place in my heart, from my longtime affinity for collegiate athletics, to four years of loyally rooting on my Zags in the Big Dance, to the amazing playoff rides I’ve enjoyed in three-plus years at Linfield, including a national title in baseball. But this year, the postseason took on a more personal note when my younger sister and her teammates qualified for the NCAA Division III Basketball Championship.

The experience confirmed three things I already knew about the playoffs, but from a new perspective.

First, it confirmed the unpredictable nature of playoff assignments, particularly for teams out West, when the Claremont-Mudd-Scripps Athenas (of the SCIAC in California) were sent to Greencastle, Ind., to take on defending national champion DePauw. (That’s a 2,000-mile trek for those of you keeping track.)

Second, it confirmed the tremendous sacrifices parents and families make to support their student-athletes, particularly during the postseason. For though I was supremely disappointed my sister was shipped halfway across the country, even had C-M-S played just one state away in Walla Walla, Wash., as I had hoped, it still would have been difficult for me to make the trip.

But fortunately (and this is where the third lesson comes in) the host school offered live video coverage of the first-round game. As I sat in the press box covering Linfield’s home track meet, I was able to watch my sister, a freshman, score a career-high 19 points as the Athenas gave the mighty Tigers all they could handle in a 79-68 loss. (Why yes, I am a proud sister!)

As we at Linfield push forward with the financial and time investments necessary to expand our live statistical, audio and video coverage to include lacrosse, softball and baseball for the first time this spring, I can now personally speak to the value of this technology and service. I’m so glad to be part of the team that keeps our fans, both near and far, connected to Wildcat Athletics!
Courtney Alley
STUDENT VIEWPOINT

As Linfield’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee president and a member of the women’s track and field team, I had the privilege of attending the 2014 NCAA Convention in San Diego.

It was a great experience. I was able to meet people not only from within the Northwest Conference, but from all across the United States. I was exposed to a variety of topics that I had never given much thought to, mainly because the issues being discussed are not things we at Linfield typically face on our campus.

The most interesting seminar I attended was a discussion of how lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals fit within the sports community. During the talk, I was seated at a table with a fellow student representative from Lewis & Clark College, whereas everyone else at our table hailed from Division III schools in the South that had a very conservative view of the subject. It was very interesting to hear the others’ perspective, which led me to realize how diverse the spectrum of Division III institutions really is.

Along with general convention seminars, we were invited to attend a Special Olympics event where we were given the opportunity to play Bocce Ball with local athletes. It was a fun experience and I’m looking forward to bringing more events such as this one to Linfield.

Finally, watching the actual voting process for legislation was interesting. I learned that the student-athlete really does have a voice within the large institution of the NCAA. Whenever a student-athlete had the courage to stand up at the microphone and speak, everyone listened actively and took what he or she had to say into consideration.

Overall, I am grateful for the experience to represent Linfield at the national level. It was a great way to get out and meet new people and see how the NCAA works from an administrator’s point of view.

Track and field individuals vie for titles

Motivated by a “humbling experience” at last year’s NWC Championships, the Wildcats look to capitalize on their full potential, and stay healthy, to resume their upward progression in the conference team standings.

“The pieces are in place to improve, and that’s what we’re shooting for,” said fourth-year coach Travis Olson. “The attitude is there, that we’re all on the same page for that common goal (of ultimately winning a NWC title).”

Linfield’s best scoring opportunities for both squads reside in the throws and in the distance events.

On the men’s side, Mike Maierhofer (shot put), Nick Fairhart (discus) and Morgunn Ewing (javelin) are the veteran leaders in their respective events.

Over on the track, senior Joe Gladow and freshman Michael O’Neil provide a solid 1-2 punch in the 5,000 meters, with Gladow also ramping it up for the 10,000 and O’Neil testing his speed in the 1,500.

For Linfield’s women, it is again a trio of veteran throwers to watch out for. Anna LaBeaume is a four-time NWC champion and remains a triple contender in the hammer, shot put and discus. Courtney Alley, one of the Wildcats’ captains, sustained a bump in the road with an ankle injury, but once healthy, could similarly score points in all three events. Olson is hopeful of keeping javelin thrower Kate Shear healthy and remains optimistic about the senior’s chances of returning to national competition.

Hannah Greider and Siena Noe – two top-10 performers in the 10,000 meters – are poised for great final seasons. Sprinter Halsie Peek is juggling track with her first year of nursing school, but has balanced both responsibilities well so far. Ellie Schmidt is ready to make waves in the 400 and possibly the 200.

Linfield’s most promising newcomers include Haley Pattishal in the sprints and Dallas Edge, a great hurdler who can also contribute in the 100, 4x100 relay and heptathlon.

Golf seasons resume after winter hiatus

MEN

Finishing a disappointing fifth in their major fall NWC tournament, the Wildcats face the daunting task of needing to win the remaining two majors to clinch the conference title and secure the league’s automatic invitation to the NCAA tournament.

Junior Taylor Klopp, considered by coach Greg Copeland to be one of the NWC’s premier individual players, leads the charge. Veterans A.J. Taylor, Taylor Pirrke, Logan Munson and Kevin Kawasaki have ample experience and skill to make the goal a reality. Hitting fairways consistently is key for the ‘Cats.

“We have the talent to win the championship,” said Copeland. “We’ve got do what it takes to get job done.”

WOMEN

Playing without rookie Abigail Heringer, who turned heads with a third-place finish at the NWC Fall Classic but did not turn out for the spring season, Linfield faces an even tougher uphill battle in the Northwest Conference team standings.

The Wildcats took seventh at the first of three major tournaments this year, but hope to climb the ranks with steady play from veterans Alexandria Smith and Maggie Harlow, who are both averaging fewer than 90 strokes per round this season.

Newcomers Laura Waller and Erin Crofcheck made great strides during the first half of the season and look to carry momentum into the spring tournaments.
On the diamond, Linfield baseball and softball remain strong

Linfield’s Northwest Conference and NCAA Division III baseball title defense begins on the mound, where the Wildcats return all three starters, including National Pitcher of the Year Chris Haddeland, All-West Region performer Aaron Thomassen and three-year starter Zach Brandon. The talented trio combined for 35 of Linfield’s 42 victories and a 2.11 ERA in 2013, helping the ‘Cats win every weekend in NWC action and 10 of 12 playoff games en route to the national title.

Comprising the other half of the battery are catchers Jake Wylie and Chance Laboda. Wylie was expected to take the majority of the starts, but an early season injury has shifted the home plate defensive responsibilities to Laboda. Wylie is expected to return at midseason.

Linfield brings back Clayton Truex at first base and Corey VanDomelen at shortstop, and fills the other two holes with versatile defensive standouts Eric Lawson, Kenny Johnson and Kekoa Kaulukukui.

Linfield’s outfield is on lockdown with the return of seniors Nate McClellan, Kramer Lindell and Nick Fisher, and the emergence of junior Jo Carroll.

The Wildcat lineup features four players who hit .300 or better in 2013 (Wylie, Lindell, Fisher and Truex).

“With a lot of returners from last year, we feel offensively we should be pretty strong, and have that same balance of some power in the lineup as well as some speed to be able to scratch and claw for runs,” Wildcats coach Scott Brosius said.

Linfield hosts the regional tournament whether or not it claims a second consecutive league title, and the Wildcats certainly prefer playing to watching in late May. Earning a coveted playoff bid is as daunting a task as ever in the increasingly competitive NWC and West Region.

“When you’re in the West you understand what it is: it’s a difficult climb to get through,” Brosius said. “The real key is the teams that are able to play consistent baseball week in and week out.”

Zach Brandon ’14

Ball-and-net sports striving for increased success on court, field

WOMEN’S TENNIS
Relying on the experience of a solid veteran trio just two years removed from a league championship and the talent of a supporting cast of young players, Lisa Macy-Baker has set the bar high for the Wildcats in her first year as head coach.

Caroline Brigham, Kelly Watanabe and Kaila Nip set the tone for Linfield’s unproven youth. Brigham, a three-time all-NWC honoree, comes off a great fall season. Watanabe and Nip provide not only talent and leadership, but also stability in their second season as doubles partners.

The Wildcats’ freshman class includes Mackenzie Fraser, Marisa Kume, Courtney Mostul and Lauren Seki.

MEN’S TENNIS
A small, yet determined roster takes the court for the Wildcats this spring under the tutelage of longtime coach Carl Swanson.

Four players return from last season’s club that completed the 2013 season without the satisfaction of tasting victory.

Returning for the ‘Cats are Micah Roos, Lukas Kleinman, Tim Hawkins and Nick Konen. Newcomers Alec Wisthoff and Kelsey Rosborough will be tested early in their careers.

“The program is continuing to develop and train by our championship principles that have led to past success on the court,” said Swanson. “The goal is to go out every day and be the best player, person and teammate possible.”

Since his highly regarded softball program isn’t broken, Linfield coach Jackson Vaughan doesn’t feel the need to try and tinker with what has been working so well over the last decade, a period when the Wildcats won 10 consecutive Northwest Conference titles, four regional crowns and a pair of national titles in 2007 and 2011.

“Our goals are to try to continue to compete at the national level,” said Vaughan, now 450-101-1 in 12 seasons. “We want to win the conference and reach as high beyond that as we possibly can.”

The Wildcats appear to have all the talent and experience needed to form an outstanding staff. 2012 All-American Karina Paavola, a senior on pace to break the school’s all-time wins record, joins fellow senior Shelby Vanderberg to form the NWC’s top 1-2 tandem.

Left-handed junior Montana McNealy is expected to figure prominently in the Wildcats’ success. Junior McKenna Spieth will be behind the plate.

At first base, Haylie Watson and All-America slugger Lisa Yamamoto both return. Ashley Garcia, a two-time all-region second baseman, slides over to her more natural position at third base.

Three freshmen — Kenzie Schmoll, Alissa Buss and Kaela Ingram — are vying for the starting spot at second base. Two-year starter Katy Brosig returns at shortstop.

The outfield features two returning starters in All-American Erin Carson in right field and all-conference standout Grace Middelstadt in center.

Linfield hit .352 as a team last spring, and with eight starters returning to the lineup, there’s every reason to believe the Wildcats will again be an offensive juggernaut.

“If all the pieces fall in place – we stay healthy and the players come close to reaching their potential – then the sky’s the limit,” said Vaughan. “We have to continue to practice and prepare in order to compete with the best teams in the country.”

WOMEN’S LACROSSE
Restoring the Linfield lacrosse program back into a regional contender is a multi-step process, a goal that second-year coach Sammy Smith believes is attainable through focusing on the essential fundamentals of passing, shooting, stick-handling and defending.

The Wildcats are coming off a winless season in Smith’s maiden campaign in 2013, yet the mindset among players and coaches is upbeat and positive.

Among the key veterans are seniors Shelby Duarte, Sierra Edgerly, Hana Gould and Nichole Thoens, and juniors Halsey Helgerson, Rebecca Kropp and Chas Tittle. Erika Phillipo returns to guard the goal.

Left-handed junior Montana McNealy is expected to figure prominently in the Wildcats’ success. Junior McKenna Spieth will be behind the plate.

At first base, Haylie Watson and All-America slugger Lisa Yamamoto both return. Ashley Garcia, a two-time all-region second baseman, slides over to her more natural position at third base.

Three freshmen — Kenzie Schmoll, Alissa Buss and Kaela Ingram — are vying for the starting spot at second base. Two-year starter Katy Brosig returns at shortstop.

The outfield features two returning starters in All-American Erin Carson in right field and all-conference standout Grace Middelstadt in center.

Linfield hit .352 as a team last spring, and with eight starters returning to the lineup, there’s every reason to believe the Wildcats will again be an offensive juggernaut.

“If all the pieces fall in place – we stay healthy and the players come close to reaching their potential – then the sky’s the limit,” said Vaughan. “We have to continue to practice and prepare in order to compete with the best teams in the country.”

WOMEN’S LACROSSE
Restoring the Linfield lacrosse program back into a regional contender is a multi-step process, a goal that second-year coach Sammy Smith believes is attainable through focusing on the essential fundamentals of passing, shooting, stick-handling and defending.

The Wildcats are coming off a winless season in Smith’s maiden campaign in 2013, yet the mindset among players and coaches is upbeat and positive.

Among the key veterans are seniors Shelby Duarte, Sierra Edgerly, Hana Gould and Nichole Thoens, and juniors Halsey Helgerson, Rebecca Kropp and Chas Tittle. Erika Phillipo returns to guard the goal.
The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee at Linfield is busily making plans for the second annual Division III Week, April 7-13. In addition to raising more funds to build a track and soccer field in Kenya via a team-versus-team coin drive competition, the group will stage a team talent show, highlight student-athletes that best embody the Division III philosophy and host an all student-athlete barbeque.

Now in its second year, Division III Week provides an opportunity for all individuals associated with the NCAA’s largest division (comprising 40 percent of total membership) to celebrate the impact of athletics and student-athletes on the campus and surrounding community. During the week, institutions are encouraged to conduct at least one outreach activity that falls into one of three categories honoring the all-around experience of Division III student-athletes: academic accomplishment, athletic experience or leadership and community involvement.

At Linfield, more than 30 percent of students participate in athletics each year as members of 19 Wildcat varsity sport programs. Since joining NCAA Division III the late 1990s, Linfield has won four national team championships football, softball and baseball and four individual titles in track & field.

Coin drive helps fund sports field in Africa

Taking time out of one of the busiest weekends of competition yet this year, the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) raised approximately $855 as part of its annual 48-hour coin drive fundraiser at the end of February.

This year, the proceeds benefit a project, spearheaded by football assistant coach Gary Thorson, to build a track and soccer field for the Open Arms Village and surrounding community outside of Eldoret, Kenya.

The village is home to approximately 100 children, most of which have been orphaned, abandoned or removed from their homes due to neglect or abuse.

Linfield’s student-athletes plan to continue fundraising during Division III Week, April 7-13, in hopes of helping Open Arms International reach its goal of raising $10,000 to complete the project.