February 15 marked the preferred deadline for making application to Linfield for our 2008-09 recruiting class. Our coaches continue to work hard to attract student-athletes who will be a good fit academically and athletically. This process has not changed dramatically, but competition for these prospective student-athletes from our peer colleges and universities has gotten even greater.

Over the years, I have come to the conclusion there are basically four elements that play a major role in determining happiness for a student-athlete in their college experience.

The first factor potential students consider is the academic component. Many questions need to be answered for the student, relative to academic programs and majors. A great percentage of students who enter college as freshmen will change their minds about what field of study they want to major in, or they opt to remain somewhat undecided when they enroll. This is definitely one of the reasons our curriculum is attractive to many whom choose to enroll because students do not need to determine an academic major immediately. Small class size and an excellent learning support system coupled with a caring faculty and coaches are definitely impactful to the student-athlete’s academic experience.

The athlete’s experience in their respective sport or sports will also play a major role in their happiness at the institution. Most student-athletes come looking for an opportunity to participate, but also with visions of being a part of a championship team as well as excelling individually. Sometimes the choice is difficult because the prospect is torn between their own possibilities of immediate participation or turning out for a team whose program is successful and competition for positions is keen.

CONTINUED, PAGE 2
CAT PACK SHOWS GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW TO ROOT POSITIVELY FOR THE HOME TEAM

Were you at Ted Wilson Gym the night of Feb. 23? Were you one of the more than 1,000 fans who watched and cheered as the Linfield men’s and women’s basketball teams clobbered Lewis & Clark?

What a night of energy, excitement and drama it was!

Rewind to four weeks earlier, same gym. The Linfield men had just beaten Pacific Lutheran by 11 points. Fighting for a playoff berth, the ‘Cats fed off a fresh infusion of energy brought to the gym by the vocal crowd, many of them students clad in red.

That night after the game, that I told a colleague of mine from another Northwest Conference school that our Wildcats would not lose at home this season. I did so knowing the home schedule still included games against Lewis & Clark, the NWC preseason favorite; Pacific, which drubbed Linfield by 30 points earlier in Forest Grove; and Puget Sound, owners of seven straight wins over Linfield.

Well, the Wildcats (and those spirited fans) made me look like some sort of basketball savant, winning all their remaining home games, each one by 10 points or more. It capped the first unbeaten home record (11-0) since Mark Wickman and Larry Doty were wearing short shorts and capping the first unbeaten home record (11-0) since Mark Wickman and Larry Doty were wearing short shorts and tight-fitting tank tops as seniors for Coach Wilson in 1978.

Back-to-back ninth place conference finishes the last two seasons had taken the joy out of attending Linfield basketball games. Not surprisingly, the number of fans at games dwindled. The gym and the program seemed to have lost all momentum and karma needed to consistently win games in our league.

That changed this year. Credit football players Joe Seifert, Jaymin Jackson and Taylor Summers for leading a revival of the feared “Cat Pack,” a modern version of the old “South Forty” cheering section that thrived in the days of Riley Gym.

A full hour before the season finalé against Lewis & Clark began, the student cheering section was energized and organized. What was most impressive about this group was the positive manner in which they cheered.

Across the country, and even in our own state, we read and hear about abusive fan behavior at college basketball games. Reports of fans who shamelessly get in the face of opponents and game officials, often using vulgarity and classless taunts to insult, upset and incite.

To their full credit, the Cat Pack took the opposite approach, clapping, chanting and stomping in unison in order to inspire - even carry - their team to victory.

All night long, the Cat Pack was relentless in its support of the home team. Afterward, they slapped hands with every player on the team, then hoisted the seniors on their shoulders.

Final score: Linfield 90, Lewis & Clark 80. Pioneers knocked out of the playoffs.

Linfield basketball is fun again.

Kelly Bird is sports information director at Linfield.

Carney’s Corner, continued from Page 1

Frankly, some prospects want a guarantee that they will play immediately and in better programs no such guarantees can ever be made honestly. Quality coaching and continuity, opportunity, facilities, tradition of the program and institutional support are all factors that help determine commitment.

There is a social element that is inherent on any college campus. This certainly is the individual’s choice based on their investigation while on a visit or talking to others that have gone to the institution. Many things enter into the social climate of the college. The population of the school, area it is located, town or city that is its neighbor, climate, condition of the buildings and grounds, but most importantly the people. Even though over the past 10 years we have made significant positive changes to our physical environment at Linfield with upgrades to buildings and facilities, the caring atmosphere of the people that work here are the most important element socially. As I reflect on Linfield over the past 25 years, I think that people and programs sell Linfield more than anything else.

Lastly, when considering a private school education, there is definitely a financial consideration to be made by the prospect and his or her family. Because college is an expensive investment in their future, it is very important that we don’t try and sell them something they don’t want or can’t really afford. Financial aid packages are given to roughly 90 percent of admitted students at Linfield, which is higher than most all of our sister colleges in the Northwest Conference. Even though our financial aid packages are competitive, the prospective student-athlete and parents must determine whether or not it is an investment that they can, and are willing to, make.

If all four of the components discussed here look positive to the prospect, then Linfield has proven to be a very good fit. We have quality academic programs, have enjoyed success in all of our sports programs, and have a social environment that fits a fairly diverse student body. These factors, combined with a very competitive financial aid for students, have continued to make Linfield a desirable choice for our student-athletes. I believe this is backed up by the fact that Linfield has the highest retention rate as well as the highest graduation rate of any colleges listed in our classification in the West.

But, all that being said...Linfield is not necessarily the best place for everyone and it’s very important for prospective student-athletes to investigate the schools they are considering very carefully. We want them to choose us because they think they will receive a quality education while being involved in a highly competitive athletic program and becoming a part of a campus which makes them feel comfortable socially. We continue to call this the “Linfield Experience,” an experience that has always been difficult to describe. Yet, it remains a tradition that we ardently desire to continue.

Sincerely,
Scott Carnahan
Director of Athletics
HELSEY FIELD A BEEHIVE OF ACTIVITY AS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION

It’s taken more than six months, but the work is nearly done on an exciting improvement project at Roy Helser Field.

FieldTurf, a modern form of artificial turf, now covers the baseball infield. In addition to the infield, both bullpen areas now utilize an all-weather FieldTurf surface.

Nearby, a new structure approaches completion that will house the new covered batting cages. The partially enclosed building, which remains open on two sides with views toward the field, will be named after Scott Carnahan ’73, who spent 24 seasons as Wildcats coach, winning more than 560 games.

The building has been dubbed “Carney’s Cages,” in honor of Carnahan, who now serves as pitching coach for first-year manager Scott Brosius ’01.

With 12-foot high walls and 85 feet in length, the new batting cages can accommodate live pitching or automated ball machines.

Costing $300,000 to complete, the privately funded project also includes replacement of the backstop net and padding, repainting the interior of the pressbox, as well as a new coat of purple and red paint on all of the seatbacks.

Four-foot tall purple letters with white trim, spelling out the word “WILDCATS,” are embedded in the playing surface, just behind home plate. The pitching mound remains natural dirt and the outfield retains its natural grass surface.

The Linfield baseball program, with enough players to fully stock both varsity and junior varsity squads, benefits by being able to practice and play on Helser Field at any time.

Maintenance costs are expected to drop because of the new surface. The infield will no longer need to be mowed, watered, or fertilized.

2008 LINFIELD FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td>Hardin-Simmons</td>
<td>Abilene, Texas</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td>Idle</td>
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<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>Southern Oregon</td>
<td>McMinnville</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>•Menlo</td>
<td>McMinnville</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Family Weekend)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>•Whitworth</td>
<td>McMinnville</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>(Homecoming)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>•Lewis &amp; Clark</td>
<td>Portland, Ore.</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>•Willamette</td>
<td>McMinnville</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>•Puget Sound</td>
<td>Tacoma, Wash.</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>Western Oregon</td>
<td>McMinnville</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<td>(Hall of Fame Game)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td>•Pacific Lutheran</td>
<td>Puyallup, Wash.</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<td>• - Northwest Conference game</td>
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COMING SOON ON DVD:
LIFE LESSONS WITH RUTSCH

Just in time for summer, a video production featuring the teachings of Ad Rutschman will be available for sale through the Linfield Athletic Office.

Produced by the communications department, “Life Lessons with Linfield College’s Ad Rutschman,” features interviews with the Hall of Fame football and baseball coach and professor, plus many of his former students.

FMI: Doug Hire at 503-883-2419 or dhire@linfield.edu.
Spring Sports, continued from Page 1

**SOFTBALL**

With a heap of expectations fueled by the return of two All-Americans, numerous Northwest Conference selections, and three experienced pitchers, there was bound to be different feeling for Linfield as the Wildcats prepare to embark on the new season.

Though they face the daunting task of defending their conference, regional and national championships, Wildcats coach Jackson Vaughan said his team’s approach remains simple and unassuming.

“Even with all that happened last year we aren’t doing anything differently,” said Vaughan. “We just try to focus on how to be successful, which means being fundamentally sound and taking care of the little things.”

This year’s group is comprised of a core of talented and savvy veterans who proved resilient enough to win two elimination games in both the NCAA Regional and Finals in 2007 en route to the national title. The championship was the first for any women’s team in Linfield history.

With the exception of two graduated seniors, every key player returns from last season. As with all great championship teams, every key player returns from last season.

In the pitching circle, the Wildcats are expected to lean heavily on 2007 NWC Pitcher of the Year Brittany Miller, who set a school record with 24 victories last season.

But as Vaughan notes, his Wildcats have sufficient depth to run out a quality pitcher every time out. “This year, we are going to rely a great deal on Brittany Miller, but Kendra Strahm and Samantha Van Noy have pitched very well in the preseason, which gives us the depth we need.”

Strahm, a 15-game winner in 2006, looks to bounce back from a knee injury that caused her to miss the majority of last season.

Jumpstarting the offense again is leadoff hitter and third team All-American Stephanie Rice. With Rice in center field, Vaughan is looking at a number of players to contribute in left and right field.

CONTINUED, PAGE 5
MEN’S GOLF

Linfield’s quest for its first NWC championship since 1981 resumes. The Wildcats performed well during a successful fall portion of their schedule, winning all five NWC South Division competitions and prevailing in the Fall Classic.

Led by talented veterans Kyle Henderson, Andrew Fitch, Tyler Nelson and Jeff Nigro, the experienced Wildcats are aiming to knock off defending champion Whitworth, which edged Linfield for the conference title last spring.

WOMEN’S GOLF

With arguably the NWC’s finest player in freshman Bryn Hurdus, the Wildcats are capable of doing some damage at this spring’s NWC championships. Hurdus, the NWC’s Fall Classic champion, made a big splash in the fall, winning four of five fall tournaments she entered.

Lending scoring support are letterwinners Shawnie Dakan Brittany Johnston. Others who could contribute include newcomers Katie Kilborn, Alicia Zook and Bridget Butler.

WOMEN’S LACROSSE

Eleven letterwinners return from last season’s club that went 6-5 against NCAA Division III competition. Coach Bill Hander has lined up a daunting list of opponents that includes Kenyon (Ohio), Potsdam (N.Y.), Oberlin (Ohio) and Fontbonne (Mo.).

There’s no shortage of offense this spring, with the top two scorers from last season returning in the form of Jamie Mertz and Sammy Smith. Mertz, a scoring phenom, tallied 41 goals and assisted on 10 other scores as a freshman. Smith was a 30-goal, 10-assist scorer as a sophomore.

Veteran Michelle Dorris moves to the center position and is joined up front by letterwinners Ashley Johnson and Amber Brown.
In one of the more enjoyable seasons in recent years, the Linfield men’s basketball team came within an eyelash of claiming a berth in the Northwest Conference playoff tournament.

Logging a six-game improvement from last season, the 2007-08 Wildcats finished with a 14-11 overall record and ended in a four-way tie for third place in the final Northwest Conference standings. A complicated tiebreaking formula left Linfield on the outside looking in, but the Wildcats could take solace in significant progress made during the 2007-08.

So close were the Wildcats to sewing up third place for themselves, that it took a buzzer-beating shot at Willamette and an overtime defeat at Pacific Lutheran during the final two weeks to create the nearly unimaginable four-way tie for the last playoff spot.

“Tiebreaking formula left Linfield on the outside looking in, but the Wildcats could take solace in the significant progress made during the 2007-08,” said Wildcats coach Robyn Stewart. “That combination enabled us to be successful on the court.”

Linfield was unbeatable on its home court, rolling up an 11-0 record on the Ted Wilson Gymnasium hardwood. But to the Wildcats’ detriment, they struggled to win games on the road, winning just three of 11 contests away from home.

Perhaps the most satisfying wins of the season came against conference heavyweights Whitworth (77-70), Puget Sound (93-82), and Pacific (95-72), a team that embarrassed the Wildcats in a 30-point rout four weeks earlier.

“When you look at this year’s team and what they accomplished, what sticks out is that we were able to beat every team in the conference,” said Doty. “We must learn how to win on the road if we want to get to the upper echelon. I think we are right on the cusp of doing just that.”

Seniors Brian Murphy and Steve Taylor were steady influences in the team’s locker room, helping bring along a cadre of newcomers that included two transfers, two junior varsity holders and four freshmen.

Freshman K.C. Wiser made an immediate difference, averaging a team-high 14.7 points and 7.0 rebounds per game. Wiser earned second team all-Northwest Conference honors, and was joined by Taylor, who received honorable mention. Taylor averaged 13.6 points and 2.8 assists per game while equaling the Wildcats’ record for most 3-pointers in one season.

Other important contributions came from transfers Erik Olson (10.7 ppg) and Cody Tesoro (7.3). Drew Schroeder proved invaluable as a defensive spark plug and Ryan Chisolm carved a niche as a clutch rebounder.

“Every player had an important role to play,” said Doty.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

A fast start didn’t translate into a strong finish for the young Wildcats, who sputtered to a 5-11 record in Northwest Conference play and a 12-13 overall mark.

The results were disappointing to players and coaches alike. Linfield had set its sights on a top-three finish in the conference.

The Wildcats began the season by winning seven of nine out-of-conference games, including a one-point overtime thriller at Evergreen State and a 76-65 thumping of Maryville (Tenn.) in December.

Once Northwest Conference play began in January, things went south. The Wildcats dropped their first four conference games, all to championship-contending teams. Then, after posting consecutive wins over Willamette and Pacific, Linfield went on a debilitating six-game tailspin.

Saving their best for last, the Wildcats concluded on a happy note, beating Northwest Conference playoff qualifier Lewis & Clark 69-62 in the season’s final game.

“There were some things we did well in the conference games,” said Wildcats coach Robyn Stewart. “But our margin for error was much smaller than other years. Even our tried and true defense couldn’t always win games for us.”

Senior guards Casey Stepan and Brihtani Lassiter shouldered the scoring load and play-making responsibilities. Lassiter led the team at the offensive end, averaging 13.0 points per game. Stepan added 10.2 points and 1.5 assists per contest. The pair combined for 81 3-point baskets, helping the Wildcats set a team record for most threes in one season (137).

Also playing their final seasons were seniors Susan O’Meara and Monica Chock, two reserves whose inspirational leadership held the team together through tough times.

“Susan played basketball for all the right reasons,” said Stewart. “She showed the other players how to approach practices and games. Monica was a real positive person who always tried to get better and push her teammates.”

On the front line, juniors Kate Stadeli and Courtney McFadden combined to average 17 points and nine rebounds a game.

Stewart singled out four freshmen who played vital roles over the course of the season. Stephanie Fennimore started 11 games, Emily Shoemaker was a steady contributor off the bench, Brianna Reichelt developed into a dangerous outside shooter, and Sarah Amina came on strong at the end of the year.
Winter Sports, continued from Page 6

SWIMMING

It was a record-setting season for members of the Linfield swimming team. Led by five national-caliber athletes, the Linfield men finished third and the women seventh at the NWC Championships in late February.

Linfield’s Dominic Rieniets wrapped up the Outstanding Men’s Swimmer of the Meet award with a record-smashing victory in the 100-yard freestyle final.

Rieniets, who broke his own school record as well as the conference-meet record in 46.08 seconds, added to his victories in the 200 freestyle and the 100 butterfly. Rieniets was one of three swimmers to share Outstanding Swimmer recognition at the 2007 meet, but he takes that honor by himself this year.

The men’s 200 backstroke featured a battle between defending champion Kevin Caple from Linfield and Jackson Kowalski from Puget Sound. In the 100 backstroke final, Caple beat Kowalski, who had been the defending champion. Kowalski returned the favor, recording a 1:54.02 to beat Caple by 1.16 seconds.

Linfield’s Yusuke Kobayashi came into the men’s 200 butterfly as the defending champion, but it was Pacific Lutheran’s Jay Jones who raced to the victory in a time of 1:56.61, beating Kobayashi by 1.38 seconds. Linfield’s Josh Parfitt secured second place in the 1,650 freestyle with a finals time of 16:22.38, trailing only three-time winner David Dophay of Whitworth.

The meet’s final event, the men’s 400 freestyle relay, may have been the most exciting as Linfield anchor swimmer Caple overcame the Whitworth swimmer to lead the Wildcats to the victory in a time of 3:10.04.

In the NWC women’s team standings, the Wildcats placed seventh.

Rose Hollingsworth repeated as NWC champion in the 100 backstroke, breaking her own school record in that event. In the 200 backstroke, Hollingsworth was fourth (2:13.15) and freshman Lauren Anderson was fifth (2:14.04). The Linfield women’s 400 freestyle relay, featuring Anderson, Hollingsworth, Christine Nakamura and Felicia Weller, grabbed fifth place (3:47.94).

Hollingsworth qualified for the NCAA Division III championships in the 100 backstroke. Caple, Rieniets, Parfitt and Kobayashi will compete in the 800 freestyle relay as well as several other individual events.

Leading up to the NWC championships, the Linfield men compiled a 6-4 record in dual meets (6-1 versus NWC opponents), while the women were 1-8 in duals, 1-6 in the conference.

ARE MEN REALLY ALLOWED TO PRACTICE WITH WOMEN?

The NCAA holds its annual convention every January. Many things occur during the convention, but the most important function is voting on new rules, or bylaws.

This past January, one of the rules voted on and passed was the use of male practice players in women’s sports. It has been a hot topic at the Division III level for several reasons.

First, why would any coach have men practice with his or her women’s team? Reasons may vary from coach to coach. I can speak from personal experience as the Linfield women’s tennis coach. In the past, I have had members from our men’s team practice against some of my women to provide a different challenge (competing against teammates can get monotonous after a couple months) or to prepare our squad for more aggressive opponents than we have played.

The main controversy surrounding the use of male practice players is that incorporating men into a women’s practice may limit drill time and playing opportunities for some females on the team. The use of a male may relegate a female team member to the bench or not give her the practice time she deserves.

The new bylaw puts some limits into place to ensure fairness when using male practice players in female sports. The new rules become effective in August. The main stipulations all Division III schools (including Linfield) must soon follow are:

(a.) Male practice players shall only be permitted to practice in that sport’s traditional competition season;
(b.) The involvement of male practice players is limited to one practice per week;
(c.) The number of male practice players shall not exceed half the number of student-athletes of a typical starting unit in that sport.

So, if you happen by a Linfield women’s team practice and see men involved in the workout, you can be sure our teams are aware of the new rules and are staying in compliance!
ALUMNI NOTES AND TIDBITS

Marv Heater ’51 received the National Federation of State High School Associations’ citation award, the organization’s highest honor. Heater has served in athletics for more than 55 years (21 as a coach, four as an athletic director, eight as an administrator and 22 as executive director or co-director of the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association).

Former Linfield athletes Joe Wilkins ’93 and Ken Weinberg ’92 shared the Portland Interscholastic League’s Class 6A swimming coach of the year honors. Wilkins, head swimming coach at Lincoln, lettered four years in swimming at Linfield. Weinberg, head swimming coach at Benson, earned All-America honors in track and field, setting a school record in the javelin.

Linfield football letterman and assistant coach Craig Howard ’74 has switched head football coaching jobs, moving from Nease High School of Ponte Verde, Fla., to Columbia High School in Jacksonville. He was honored recently as the Jacksonville Quarterback Club’s “Coach of the Year.”

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Football letterman Rob Love ’76 of Carson City, Nev., is in his 30th year as athletic and recreational specialist for the Nevada State Prisons. He assists inmates with weight training, intramural programs and supervises various sports leagues.

Dave Orzel ’95 resigned as head baseball coach at Kalama High School, citing a desire to spend more time with his 3-year-old son, Tyler. Kalama went 81-33 during Orzel’s tenure, advancing to regional playoffs five straight seasons. Kalama finished third in the Washington state tournament in 2005 and lost in the championship game in ’06, going 20-4.

Bob Flood ’58 has retired from the Salem Officials Association after 49 years. He has refereed football and basketball in the Salem area. The football field at Judson Middle High School is named in his honor.

Football letterman Aleki Pascua ’99 is the new co-offensive line coach at Portland State under Jerry Glanville. He worked the past two seasons in a similar position at Western Oregon, and also assisted at Western Washington, as well as Willamette and Churchill high schools.

Former basketball and track letterwinner Lindsay Larson ’05 of Sandpoint, Idaho, is an intensive behavioral intervention therapist with children who have mental disabilities.

RUTSCHMAN REUNION PLANNED FOR JUNE 7

The annual Ad Rutschman football and baseball reunion luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, June 7, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the McMinnville Elks Lodge. All former players, coaches and friends of the Hall of Fame coach are invited and encouraged to attend.

The cost for lunch is $15, payable in advance or at the door. Those interested in attending should email football coach Joe Smith at joesmith@linfield.edu.