Featuring plot twists, high drama and a happy ending, the Linfield Wildcats’ 2007 season played out a good Hollywood script.

The stage was set for a run at the national championship, with eight prominent cast members returning from one of the most successful showings in history. But the story took a detour just eight games into the season when senior captain Lisa Smith suffered a broken arm that threatened to end her career prematurely. Losing Smith, who was hitting .529, was a big blow for Linfield, which relied heavily on her leadership and experience.

Still, the Wildcats kept winning, fashioning a school-record 18-game win streak. Putting pain aside, Smith miraculously returned to the lineup on the final weekend of the regular season, just in time to help Linfield overtake challenger Whitworth and win its fourth straight Northwest Conference championship.

On their way to a second straight West Region title, the Wildcats were forced to battle back from what could have been a season-ending 5-0 deficit against Louisiana College. The ‘Cats had to fend off elimination twice at the NCAA Finals in Salem, Va., in order to claim the Division III crown.

The Wildcats finished with a record of 45-7, becoming the first Linfield women’s team to earn a national title. Linfield had been knocking at the door of a national championship the last several seasons, but this year, the ‘Cats left little doubt at the end of which team was the best in the small-college ranks.

“Winning the national championship was very gratifying for the program as a whole. We tried to set a precedent by bringing in quality people,” said Wildcats coach Jackson Vaughan. “It really started with the 2004 group. To be able to go to regionals and win some games helped us to believe that something like the national championship was within our reach.”

Linfield finished fourth at the NCAA Finals in 2006, but graduated four seniors who were integral to the team’s rise to national prominence.

“Last year, when we made it to the World Series, we learned that we were truly capable of winning it all. We had to overcome the loss of some key seniors.”

The turning point of the 2007 season came at the regional tournament in Pineville, La., where Linfield trailed host Louisiana College by five runs.

“On the brink of elimination, the kids started to play for the pride of the program,” said Vaughan. “Beating a quality team in a hostile environment under adverse conditions was a huge step. After that, we started to figure out just how talented a team we were.”

To survive the regional, the Wildcats faced the daunting task of beating Redlands in back-to-back games. Redlands, which had already defeated the ‘Cats twice in 2007, looked to be in the driver’s seat, needing to defeat Linfield only once to advance to the national tournament. With both teams running out of pitching, Linfield carved out a 4-1 win over the Bulldogs, then came back to pound the SCIAC champions 17-1.

Linfield entered the NCAA Finals as the favorite, but had to dig deep on more than one occasion to fulfill the prophecy. The Wildcats began the tournament with rousing 11-0 and 9-0 wins over Emory (Ga.) and DePauw (Ind.).

From there, Linfield faced Washington-St. Louis and the nation’s best pitcher, falling 6-3 to drop into the losers’ bracket.

CONTINUED, PAGE 6

WOMEN’S TENNIS

Linfield reached new benchmarks this spring, taking the program to unprecedented heights in 2007:

• A sixth straight Northwest Conference championship;
• A conference winning streak that has reached 81 matches and counting;
• A team victory at the NCAA Division III West Regionals;
• A doubles team entered on the NCAA national championship bracket.

The result of it all is that Linfield is not longer merely a Northwest small-college power. The Wildcats are beginning to measure themselves against the top Division III programs in the nation.

Linfield posted a record of 19-6 and received an automatic berth to the West Regional, where the Wildcats beat Hardin-Simmons before falling to Pomona-Pitzer.

Seniors Becca Johnson and Megan Rodgers advanced as a doubles team to the NCAA championships in Fredricksburg, Va., where they lost in the first round to Lauren Hom and Sierra Kresbach from Gustavus Adolphus, 6-2, 7-5.

Johnson and Rodgers picked up a huge win earlier in the year when they beat Pomona-Pitzer’s No. 1 doubles team Siobhan Finicane and Jennifer Kaswick 8-5 on March 24. Finicane would go on to reach the NCAA semifinals in both singles and doubles, with a different partner.

Johnson was Linfield’s No. 1 singles player and moved through the NWC season undefeated. She was later named

CONTINUED, PAGE 4
BECCA JOHNSON, SCOTT VANASSCHE NAMED LINFIELD ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Tennis All-American Becca Johnson and track and field star Scott Vanassche have been named Linfield Athletes of the Year following a vote of athletic department coaches and staff.

Johnson led Linfield to its sixth consecutive Northwest Conference women’s tennis team championship. A four-year tennis letterwinner at Linfield, she was named NWC Player of the Year in 2005 and 2007.

Playing in the No. 1 position this spring, she went unbeaten in singles and doubles play against Northwest Conference opponents. She posted a 16-5 singles record in 2007 and a 17-3 mark in doubles.

In October, Johnson was one of a few select players to compete in the ITA Small College championship. She and doubles partner Megan Rodgers are competing in the NCAA Division III championships in May.

Johnson became the first player from Linfield to be named West Region Senior of the Year, one of four such regional honorees. For her career, Johnson compiled a 58-19 singles record and is 62-18 in doubles.

“Ever since Becca arrived at Linfield four years ago, I knew she was destined to do great things. She has gone above and beyond in tennis while still maintaining an enviable commitment to her academics,” said Wildcats coach Amy Dames Smith. “Anyone who knows Becca recognizes that it is her amazing work ethic, drive and dedication that allow her to accomplish all she has.”

A physics and mathematics major with a 3.74 grade point average, Johnson is under consideration for ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America consideration. Results will be announced by the end of the month.

Vanassche, a three-year letterwinner, was named most valuable male athlete at the Northwest Conference track and field championships in late April. He captured NWC individual titles in the 100 meters (10.72) and 200 meters (21.91). Vanassche also ran on the Wildcats’ championship-winning 4x100 relay squad.

“Scott has a very strong work ethic and has grown a tremendous amount since coming to Linfield,” said track coach Garry Killgore. “I give him a lot of credit for being able to take constructive criticism and grow from that.”

With Vanassche leading the way, Linfield captured its first NWC championship in men’s track and field since 1996. As a sophomore in 2006, he was second in the NWC in the 100 and fourth in the 200. This spring, Vanassche shaved time off both individual events, resulting in career-best finishes against conference competition.

“He came to Linfield as a pretty talented sprinter, but he has focused himself mentally and developed into a champion,” said Killgore. “In terms of commitment, he’s been a very good role model to his teammates. He’s always at practice, working hard, and that’s been an inspiration to others around him. I’m pretty proud of Scott.”

VERN MARSHALL AWARD GOES TO FOOTBALL’S MIKE KETLER AND SOFTBALL’S LISA SMITH

Lisa Smith, senior captain of the Linfield softball team, and hard-working football player Mike Ketler have been named recipients of the Vern Marshall Award, recognizing the Linfield athletes with the greatest tenacity and perseverance.

Smith, a four-year starter in the outfield for the Wildcats’ conference and regional championship team, thought her career was over just seven games into the 2007 season. She suffered two broken bones in her forearm after a violent collision at home plate against Puget Sound.

Doctors were skeptical that Smith could play again this season and she contemplated seeking a medical red-shirt that could possibly have granted her an extra year of eligibility. But with a week to go in the regular season, x-rays revealed that the bones were healing ahead of schedule and that Smith could return to the field with the arm properly braced.

In her second game after returning to the field, Smith hit four doubles.

Coach Jackson Vaughan admired how Smith remained connected and engaged in team activities, instead of drifting away as injured athletes often do. “Her willingness to stick around and help out the team in whatever way she could really sets her apart,” said Vaughan. “If she never played another game, Lisa was satisfied but not content with her playing career. But she was very excited to find out she was going to get a chance to play again.”

A career .330 hitter, Smith batted a career-best .422 this spring in 21 games. She totaled seven doubles and one home run. She earned first team all-Northwest Conference honors.

Ketler, a defensive tackle from Salem, Ore., developed himself into an all-conference player through sheer determination and hard work.

He was only lightly recruited to Linfield as a football player and arrived on campus as an undersized, 220-pound defensive end. Standing just 5-foot-11, Ketler was not tall enough to truly excel at the end position.

“Mike is one of the hardest working athletes I’ve ever coached,” said Vaughan, who doubles as the football team’s defensive coordinator. “He came in as a defensive end but his height really prevented him from becoming a great end. Mike was a hard worker and very competitive.”

After a redshirt year, Ketler moved to defensive tackle, spending countless hours lifting weights. He added muscle to his frame, increasing his weight to 270 pounds.

A four-year starter on the defensive line, he was a three-time first team NWC all-star. As a senior, Ketler recorded 21 tackles, including 10 for losses totaling 59 yards.
Paul Durham, one of the founders of the modern Linfield College athletic program, died June 22 at his home in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Coach Durham (friends and former players had addressed him as “Coach” for 60 years) would have turned 94 on October 18.

He coached, taught and built the athletics program at Linfield for 20 years. Nearly 40 years after he left Linfield to become athletic director at the University of Hawaii, Wildcat coaches continue to pass on to their athletes Durham’s positive values of dedication, sportsmanship and scholarship.

Durham was Linfield’s head football coach for 20 seasons, compiling a record of 122 victories, 51 defeats and 10 ties for a .694 winning percentage. In his final 12 years (“once I got the hang of it,” he said), the Wildcats went 90-16-6 (.830), won six Northwest Conference championships and reached the national championship game of the NAIA twice.

His 1956 team started the string of 51 consecutive winning seasons that continues to this day and is the national record at all levels of college football.

Durham was inducted into six athletics Halls of Fame, including the charter class of the Linfield Hall of Fame in 1998. He also was inducted into the Portland Interscholastic League Hall of Fame in 2001, Oregon Sports Hall of Fame in 1989, the NAIA Football Hall of Fame in 1969, the Helms League Hall of Fame in 2001, Oregon Sports Hall of Fame in 1998. He also was nominated for the national College Football Hall of Fame.

He was chosen NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) football Coach of the Year in 1962 and Oregon Man of the Year in 1961.

For three seasons (1949-1952), Durham and Oregon baseball Hall of Fame member Roy Helser were co-coaches of men’s basketball. One of those teams won the Northwest Conference championship.

In 1961, Durham’s football Wildcats capped the first unbeaten, untied regular season in school history with a trip to the “Camellia Bowl” in Sacramento, Calif. Linfield was the first college from the Northwest Conference to participate in the NAIA football playoffs. The Wildcats lost a hard-fought national championship game, 12-7 to rugged Pittsburg State of Kansas.

Linfield again finished unbeaten and untied in 1965 and defeated Sul Ross State of Texas 30-27 in the NAIA semifinals before losing to St. John’s of Minnesota 33-0 in the NAIA “Champion Bowl” in Augusta, Ga.

In the season-opening game of 1967, Durham took the Wildcats to Honolulu, where they upset the University of Hawaii, 15-13, at rainy Honolulu Stadium before a Honolulu Stadium crowd of about 20,000 - still the most ever to see a Linfield game.

Hawaii was so impressed with Durham and the Wildcats that it hired him away from Linfield in 1968 to direct its athletic program. He guided the ambitious Rainbows from lower-level competition into NCAA Division I.

Durham stepped down as athletic director in 1975 for health reasons but taught in the Hawaii College of Education until his retirement in 1981.

The foyers that serve as main entryways into the Linfield athletics complex, completed in 1989, is named in Durham’s honor.

He was a star athlete at Linfield in the 1930s, competing in football, basketball and track and field, and is one of the few Wildcats in history to earn 10 letters.

Durham graduated from Linfield in 1936 and he received his master’s degree from the University of Oregon in 1941. He then coached at high schools in Yamhill and Portland - Commerce (now called Cleveland and Franklin (his alma mater) - before returning to the college 12 years later to coach football. A year later, in 1949, he was appointed Linfield director of athletics.

Durham was a Renaissance man. Not only did he coach and teach (he taught health classes in addition to the life lessons he imparted on the football field), Durham read widely, sang in choirs and as a soloist, was an accomplished formal speaker, a wonderful story and joke teller (the Honolulu Quarterback Club’s weekly meetings were officially opened when he told a joke) with a deep, booming voice.

“He was an incredible person whose positive impact reached far beyond Maxwell Field and Manoa for more than 60 years,” said Chuck Charnquist, long-time Portland Trailblazers official and former Linfield sports information director.

Durham received a small scholarship to attend Linfield as the nation sank into the Great Depression. He earned a free room by working at the original Macy and Son Funeral Home in McMinnville. “I shared a bed with another football player,” Durham said. “In those days, two guys sleeping in the same bed did not raise any eyebrows.”

Raising a family (sons Jeff and Terry and daughter Cathy) on a small-college coach’s salary was a challenge, so Durham augmented his income in many other ways.

During summers -- in addition to teaching classes at Linfield -- he ran the McMinnville city recreation program overseeing activities in the city park during the day and softball games at night. And, he was sports editor of the then-daily local newspaper, the McMinnville News-Register. He wrote a popular sports column, “Dodging with Durham.”

One observer opined that Durham might have been the only college football coach in America who was never criticized in print by the local sports editor.

He was chosen First Citizen of McMinnville by the Chamber of Commerce and was elected president of the Linfield Alumni Association and honored as Alumnus of the Year.

Durham’s deep baritone singing voice was in great demand. He sang in the choir at the First Baptist Church on Sunday mornings and picked up a little extra cash singing popular hymns like “How Great Thou Art” at funerals at Macy and Son Funeral Home.
**Spring Sports, continued from Page 1**

**NCAA West Region Senior of the Year**

NCAA West Region Senior of the Year, a first for a Linfield player. “It was amazing,” coach Amy Dames Smith said of the award. “That’s a first for us. I’m very proud of her for that.”

Linfield entered the season feeling the pain of two players lost for the season to injuries. Kasey Kuenzli, the 2006 NWC Player of the Year, tore an anterior cruciate ligament last fall. And injuries also forced Hollin Buck to leave the team.

But Linfield pressed on and maintained its dominance of the NWC. Kelli Sides stepped up to the No. 3 singles spot and Sallie Katter held the No. 4 spot.

Johnson and Rodgers forged new territory for Linfield tennis when they represented the school at the NCAA championship tournament. They endured a long, arduous trip to get to Virginia before preparing for their match.

**MEN’S GOLF**

For the second straight year, the Linfield men’s golf team had to settle for second place.

The Wildcats’ last conference championship came in 1981 but Linfield continued to apply consistent pressure on Whitworth, which won its third straight Northwest Conference title this year.

Linfield won the Fall Classic in October, the highlight of a stretch where the Wildcats won six tournaments in a row. The ‘Cats also tied Whitworth for the Spring Classic title, and entered the NCAA championship tournament leading by one point.

Coach Greg Copeland’s Wildcats went on to finish third at the conference championship tournament, but dropped to second in the overall team standings.

Freshmen Tyler Nelson, the Fall Classic medalist, and Joel Rychard gave the team an instant boost beginning last fall and should be cornerstones for the next few years. Andrew Fitch was the lone player on the team that had a lower scoring average in the spring than in the fall and was the Spring Classic medalist by three strokes. Veterans Jeff Nigro and Kyle Henderson are also key players with sub-80 scoring averages who will return to compete in the fall.

**WOMEN’S GOLF**

Karly Cramer had every reason to be pleased with the accomplishments of the Linfield women’s golf team in her first season as coach.

The Wildcats finished eight shots out of first place at the Northwest Conference championship tournament. Senior leader Leslie Wheeler was the conference medalist and was invited to play at the NCAA Division III national championship tournament at Howey-in-the-Hills, Fla. — the first representative from Linfield to make it there since 2000.

Competitively, it was a big year for Wheeler. Cramer helped the senior with her course management and her mental focus. Wheeler became better at concentrating on the shot at hand rather than getting down on herself if she had a bad hole, or bad shot.

Wheeler won the conference tournament by seven strokes, and led the charging Wildcats to within eight shots of champion Puget Sound on the second day after a 14-shot deficit on the first day. Wheeler went on to tie for 23rd individually at the NCAA tournament.

Newcomer Brittany Johnston was another bright spot, placing 13th at the conference tournament. Johnston and Shawnie Dakan, another strong player, will be back next fall. The rest of the players will be new to the program. Rachel Warwick, a junior, plans leave the team to become a student-teacher in the fall.

**TRACK AND FIELD**

2007 was a big year for Linfield as the men’s team won its first NCAA championship in 10 years, the program welcomed a talented set of twins that could be central building blocks for continued success, and senior Joanna Murphy established herself as one of the best distance runners in school history.

Wildcats coach Garry Killgore was voted Northwest Conference Coach of the Year, then was singled out as the West Region Men’s Coach of the Year by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association.

One of the most gratifying moments of the season for Killgore came during the women’s 3,000-meter steeplechase final at the Division III national championships in Oshkosh, Wis. Murphy began conservatively and moved up as the race wore on, picking off runners one by one.

Murphy concluded her career second all-time in the 1,500 meters with a time of 4:37.35. She is No. 2 at 5,000 meters (17:23.52) and No. 4 all-time at 10,000 meters (38:05.2). In the 3,000 steeplechase, Murphy clocked 10:35.00 to lower her own school record by almost 44 seconds while breaking the NWC record in the process.

The women’s team also saw two young distance runners come onto the scene with promising first collegiate seasons. Marci Klimek moved to No. 5 in the steeplechase and No. 5 in the 5,000. And Frances Corcoran entered the lists at No. 6 in the 5,000.

Basketball team standout Casey Stepan ran the 1,500 in 4:46.10 to move to No. 4 on the school’s top-10 list.

The most talented group of sprinters the school has seen in about 15 years fueled the men’s team championship.

Scott Vanassche, John Torsey, Kreig Holland and Bubba Lemon broke the Northwest Conference record in the 4x100 relay with a time of 41.69. It was the third-best time in school history, though it may not have been the team’s best lineup.

Jeremy Lovell and Josh Lovell posted the second- and third-fastest times on the team in the 100 meters. But the brothers were more valuable elsewhere and their versatility gave the Wildcats scoring threats in the long jump, javelin and high jump. Both of

CONTINUED, PAGE 5
Spring Sports, continued from Page 4

them competed in the Division III championships in the decathlon.

Ryan Bronson, Linfield’s other NCAA participant, placed fifth and gained All-America honors in the javelin. His best throw of the season, 194 feet, 11 inches, is sixth all-time at Linfield.

Vanassche, who swept NWC titles in the 100 and 200, posted season-best marks of 10.72 seconds and 21.91 seconds, respectively, and was named men’s NWC Athlete of the Year. He rose to No. 5 in the 100 and into a tie for seventh in the 200.

BASEBALL

The 2007 season had some challenges, especially as the season began. Shoulder injuries to Tyler Stanley and Jordan Boustead gave the Wildcats an obstacle from the start. The two players were the leading candidates to start at shortstop. Stanley remained sidelined for the whole season and Boustead was less than 100 percent and relegated to duty in the outfield.

Transfer Cory Ellis stepped in from the start, but while he had effective range getting to balls coming his way, his arm strength wasn’t ideally suited for the position.

Linfield’s defense, usually a cornerstone, suffered for a stretch. There were games early in the season, where the offense left too many runners on base in close, one-run losses.

David Bachofner moved over from third base to shortstop, opening up a position on the field for Rhett Fenton. The moves added punch to the offensive lineup and improved the Wildcats’ defense.

Fenton, who moved up from the junior varsity, gave the team an instant offensive boost, hitting a team-best .375 in 22 games. He contributed eight doubles and two home runs.

Bachofner rebounded from a slump after the switch to shortstop and finished with a .328 batting average with eight doubles and one triple.

Throughout the order, Linfield had a capable bat. Mills started every game in center field, posting a .359 batting average. He scored 32 runs while adding six doubles, two triples and two home runs. He also drove in 36 runs and stole 16 bases.

Davis, who hit .358 while starting all 38 games, was a repeat first team selection. He hit a team-best 13 doubles to go with one triple and two home runs. Davis also led the ‘Cats with 38 RBIs.

And catcher Drew Van Cleave had another strong year defensively in addition to hitting .333 with 11 doubles, two home runs and 20 RBIs.

Ellis, one of the best lead-off hitters in the conference, was an offensive catalyst. He started all 38 games in the infield, hitting .351 with six doubles, two triples and two home runs.

Returning starter Brian Clark filled the role of pitching ace while Cameron Larson stepped up from a reliever slot and became a steady second starter.

Clark, a second team NWC all-star as a sophomore in 2006, made 14 pitching appearances and compiled a 7-3 record with a 2.99 earned run average and a team-high 83 strikeouts. Larson finished the season with an 8-3 record on the mound in 15 appearances. He posted a 3.42 ERA with 46 strikeouts.

The April 29 home game, a 7-1 victory over Whitworth, was retiring coach Scott Carnahan’s final home game and the event drew dozens of former players who wanted to pay their respects.

“It was emotional,” Carnahan said. “It turned out to be a very special weekend for me and my family.”

Carnahan finished with a record of 562-377-2 at Linfield and 727-447-2 overall.

WOMEN’S LACROSSE

The 2007 season may one day be looked upon as one of the turning points in the development of the lacrosse program at Linfield.

Not only did it mark the first time that the Wildcats played an NCAA-only schedule, but it marked the first year of one of its best players.

Jamie Mertz came to Linfield with valuable high school experience and she quickly became a focal point of the Wildcats’ offense with her superior speed and agility. She also wasted little time re-writing the school record book. Mertz set single-season records for goals per game (3.72) and points per game (4.64) during the 11-game season.

With 41 goals and 10 assists, Mertz was one of the driving forces behind a 6-5 season.

Defensively, Claire Carter, Callie Martin, Michelle Dorris, Martha Inouye and Meghan Sherman were key members of a unit that Coach Bill Hander called “rock solid.”

Freshman Ashley Johnson stepped in as goalkeeper and “did fine her first year in goal but with another year of experience her numbers will get even better,” Hander said.

MEN’S TENNIS

Among all of the competitive highlights of the 2007 season, Linfield coach Carl Swanson was most impressed by the contributions made by the team’s seniors.

There were four of them and all played key roles in the Wildcats’ 15-12 season. The team was 14-5 in Northwest Conference play and finished third in the conference tournament.

Leading the way was Ian McGrath, who was elected as the NWC’s Sportsman of the Year Award by the conference’s tennis coaches. The award was a reflection of McGrath’s sportsmanship and attitude on the court as well as his leading role as the No. 1 singles player in the Wildcats’ lineup.

McGrath was the team’s No. 5 player two years ago but steadily moved up and became the team’s top player.

Linfield’s lineup fluctuated frequently because many of the team’s players were so even. From first through sixth, Swanson used different combinations for different matchups and venues.

Wesley Gabrielson finished the season as the No. 2 singles player and teamed with Kyle Anderson to form the team’s No. 1 doubles pair. Cole Shelton played in a variety of singles positions and teamed with Nick Ruess to form a very solid No. 3 doubles tandem. Against PLU, which went on to win the NWC title, Linfield played nearly even, losing 5-4 in an early season matchup.

And in his final match, Jed Rembold won the deciding match in a 5-4 victory over Willamette to lock up third place in the NWC tournament.
We lost a beloved former coach and athletic director, Paul Durham, who died recently in Hawaii. A touching 2 1/2-hour memorial was held inside Ted Wilson Gymnasium on July 2, to celebrate the life of a great man and a great coach.

I didn’t play for Coach Durham, but I have talked to many, many, former Linfield athletes who did and understand the profound impact he had on so many lives. Coach Durham could be called one of the founders of the Linfield athletic tradition. Even today, his guiding principles as a coach and administrator continue to impact Linfield Athletics. Paul, along with Henry Lever, Roy Helser, Ted Wilson, Hal Smith and Ad Rutschman, are the coaches and administrators that molded the people who have followed them.

Over the 24 years I have been a teacher, coach, and administrator at Linfield, I received cards and notes from Paul on a regular basis. In almost all of them, he would send some note of praise about some achievement that had been accomplished by a Linfield team or individual. Almost always, he would also send copies of funny paper scripts that he found humorous as well. He had a great sense of humor and could come up with many anecdotes for almost any topic of conversation relative to sport and Linfield. In talking with him on occasion, I found he had a great appreciation and understanding of the challenges that every coach faces when trying to develop a team.

I don’t know of many individuals who loved Linfield College as much as Coach Durham. He was a true “Wildcat” and was so very proud of the athletic department he was instrumental in developing. Very soon after several of his former players set up an endowed fund to support Linfield Athletics, he sent me a note telling me about it. He was so appreciative of all of those people who had donated and said in his note to me that “he loved them all” and then signed his thank you note “Aloha and Love Linfield.”

Linfield has had so many great contributors over the years. They have donated their talents, time, and resources to keep the traditions strong and alive. Coach Durham has passed away, but he has left Linfield College and all the people he touched, richer because of their relationship with him.

Sincerely,

Scott Carnahan ‘73
Director of Athletics

**ANNUAL WILDCAT OPEN IS AUGUST 3**

Friday, Aug. 3, is the date of the annual Linfield Wildcat Open golf tournament at Michelbook Country Club in McMinnville.

The event includes an 18-hole tournament, sack lunch, barbeque dinner and beverages. Space is limited to the first 180 golfers so it is wise to get your entry in early. The cost is $125.

The format is a five-person scramble. Registration starts at 11 a.m. Team entries are encouraged, or we will be happy to place you with a team.

Prizes will be awarded for low scores, both net and gross. Closest-to-the-pin and long-drive prizes will also be given.

**IAN LEFEBVRE TO LEAD MEN’S SOCCER TEAM**

Ian Lefebvre has been hired to replace Eric Watson as men’s soccer coach, athletic director Scott Carnahan announced in early April. Lefebvre, 30, becomes the 16th coach in program history. He replaces Watson, who resigned in December to take a coaching position on the East Coast. He compiled a 62-24-10 record in five seasons as Wildcats coach.

Lefebvre (pronounced La-FAY-vor) brings nine years of college coaching experience to Linfield, most of it spent at Clark College in Vancouver, Wash.

He coached the Clark men’s soccer team for seven years, compiling an 84-27-3 overall record. He guided the Penguins to seven NWAACC playoff appearances and three NWAACC Southern Division championships. Since 2005, Lefebvre has coached boys soccer at Vancouver’s Skyview High School, twice reaching the district playoffs. He earned a bachelor’s degree in communications in 1999 from William Woods University in Fulton, Mo.

A midfielder and forward, Lefebvre spent one season as a member of the Yakima Reds, a semi-professional team in Yakima, Wash.

He earned his Class C coaching license from the United States Soccer Federation in 2003 and went on to complete a master’s degree in teaching at Concordia University in Portland in 2004.

**Softball Champions, continued from Page 1**

That didn’t bother the Wildcats, who outscored their opponents 66-23 in elimination games and 99-23 in the postseason. Linfield eventually beat Washington-St. Louis twice to seal the championship.

Seven Wildcats batted over .400 and collectively, the ‘Cats hit at a .388 clip. Eighteen new team records were established, including home runs (50), stolen bases (133) and winning percentage (.865).

Jenny Marshall, who earned first team All-America honors, set a new single-season mark with a .442 batting average. Third-team All-American Stephanie Rice set new season standards for hits (86) and runs (65). Jena Loop, named the team’s most valuable player, enjoyed a banner season in which she hit .441 with 12 home runs.

Linfield’s pitching staff posted a stellar 2.35 earned run average. Brittany Miller led the way, compiling a school-record 24 wins. Erica Hancock (7-0), Samantha Van Noy (11-2) and Kendra Strahm (3-0) also made contributions in the pitching circle.

Upon their return home, the Wildcats were honored in a ceremony by fans and supporters, including McMinnville Mayor Ed Gormely, who proclaimed May 24 as “Linfield Wildcats National Championship Day.”
LINFIELD FOOTBALL PUBLICATION EARN TWO AWARDS

The Linfield College football publication was honored with two national awards in a recently completed judging contest conducted by the College Sports Information Directors of America. The awards were presented July 3 at the annual CoSIDA Workshop in San Diego, Calif.

Linfield's football brochure placed second nationally and received the "Best Cover" award in the annual CoSIDA contest coordinated by Derek Smolik, sports information director at St. Mary's University in San Antonio.

Kenyon College (Ohio) took top honors for the "Division C" category, which encompasses member institutions from NCAA Division III, NAIA, and NCCAA. The Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (Terre Haute, Ind.) was third, followed by Hobart College (Geneva, N.Y.) and Wabash College (Crawfordsville, Ind.). There were 41 entries.

Linfield sports information director Kelly Bird designed, edited and provided much of the photography for the award-winning brochure.

Linfield alumnus Ryan Gardner '97, co-owner of Visual People, photographed the cover images and collaborated with Bird on the "Blueprint for Success" themed cover. Irwin-Hodson of Portland, under the direction of former general manager Matt Fishback '83, printed the full-color cover. Print Northwest of McMinnville, owned an operated by Eric Fricke '80, reproduced the brochures.

HALL OF FAME TO WELCOME 10 NEW INDUCTEES

The Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame will enshrine 10 new individuals at induction ceremonies Nov. 10 inside Ted Wilson Gymnasium. The list includes:

- Bret Bailey '82, who competed in both football and baseball, was a three-time all-league selection and two-time most valuable baseball player;
- Jay Buse '75, a second team NAIA All-American in 1974 and considered one of the most dominating defensive linemen in program history;
- Basketball all-star Dave Craven '88, the fourth-leading scorer in program history;
- Track and field sprinter Dave Freundschuh '82, who continues to hold the school record in the 100-meter dash;
- Doug Hire '87, a member of two national championship football teams where he was an All-American on the offensive line;
- Volleyball All-American Susan Holm '84, who helped lead the Wildcats to a national runner-up finish in the AIWA in 1981;
- Jim Massey '72, holder of four top-10 rushing records, went on to play professional football;
- Steve Reimann '88 was a three-time all-conference defensive end and two-time NAIA All-American;
- Jack Ostlund '69, a four-year starter on the defensive line who was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in 1967; and,
- Don Rutschan '76, who excelled in baseball as a pitcher and football as a receiver.

The Linfield Athletics Hall of Fame was established in 1998 as a means to honor outstanding former athletes, coaches, staff and contributors, and to preserve the memory of their past achievements.

LINFIELD PLACES SECOND IN ALL-SPORTS RACE

Despite a late surge by Linfield, defending Northwest all-sports champion Puget Sound scored enough points to take its second consecutive McIlroy-Lewis Trophy.

Trailing UPS by 44 points after the winter sports seasons, Linfield made a tremendous charge in the spring, finishing no lower than third in any of the eight sports and winning NWC titles in softball, women's tennis and men's track & field. The Wildcats scored 128 points in the spring for a total of 241 to overtake Whitworth and move into second place in the final standings. UPS won a conference title in women's golf and finished second in women's tennis to score 96 points this spring for a year-long total of 253 points.

Whitworth won the men's golf title and finished third with 238 points. Pacific Lutheran and Willamette tied for fourth, both with 187 points.

The NWC All-Sports Trophy recognizes athletic excellence among conference institutions across all fields of competition. It is named in honor of Jane McIlroy, Linfield women's athletics director and physical education professor from 1950-82 who also coached field hockey (1952-81), basketball, volleyball, softball and tennis; and John Lewis, baseball and basketball coach and athletics director (1952-72) at Willamette.

Linfield last won the McIlroy-Lewis Trophy in 2004, and also received the prestigious honor in 2003 and 2001.
BIRD’S EYE VIEW
Kelly Bird, Sports Information Director

My perspective has been widened, my horizons are broadened. Fifteen days on the road with the Linfield softball team is the reason why.

Traveling 5,428 miles, our group of 25 crossed the Mississippi River and parts of the Louisiana Bayou, skirted Virginia’s famous Blue Ridge Mountains and passed briefly through the capital cities of Baton Rouge, La., Atlanta, Ga., Springfield, Ill., Cheyenne, Wyo., and Salt Lake City, Utah.

When the NCAA announced its “West Region” playoff tournament would be held in Pineville, Louisiana, only 90 miles west of the Mississippi, we all scratched our heads and asked “Where’s that?”

Flying to Baton Rouge in two separate groups, the team crammed all its luggage and gear into two 12-passenger vans and a mini-van. We drove across 90 miles of swamp-land to Pineville, where a woman working at a gas station there shook her head and informed us “Y’all gonna lose.”

Did I mention the driving route to Louisiana College’s softball field led through the grounds of the State Mental Institution? No kidding.

Not only were the Wildcats slotted in the nation’s most daunting regional tournament, they had to overcome the extreme heat, humidity and bugs of Louisiana. Twice, Linfield’s games were delayed by lightning and once by a civic fireworks celebration in nearby Alexandria, La.

Little did I know I would be called upon to voice the play-by-play at regionals after our original plan for internet broadcasts went awry. My announcing skills were put to the test, particularly when Linfield overcame a 5-0 deficit to beat the host school, Louisiana College, 8-6. Linfield faced long odds the next day, needing to beat Redlands twice. But the Wildcats did it, the last time by a 17-1 score.

Once in Virginia for the NCAA Finals, things turned more serious. A self-guided tour of Virginia Tech’s campus in Blacksburg offered a time for somber reflection in the wake of the recent shooting rampage. The Wildcats later paid a visit to the Veterans Administration Hospital in Salem, bringing joy to the faces of residents there.

Hearing the players and coaches talk of their determination to succeed, I sensed that great things were in store. Facing elimination again after a 6-3 loss to Washington-St. Louis, I knew Linfield would battle to the very end. And battle they did, beating Wisconsin-Eau Claire, then Washington-St. Louis and the nation’s best pitcher in back-to-back games to clinch the title. Simply awesome!

No Linfield women’s team in my recollection has overcome more obstacles to achieve its ultimate goal. This was a special group of young women who worked extremely hard, survived difficult circumstances and behaved and performed with the grace and class that symbolizes Linfield athletic teams. Truly, this was a team, and an experience, I will long remember.