

From Tutors to Panthers: *A Brief History of Athletics at the University of Northern Iowa*

University of Northern Iowa Foundation Development & Alumni Relations
Panther Scholarship Club
Cedar Falls, Iowa

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This book literally took a "village to raise the child." It could not have happened without the work of those who freely gave of their time so that the final product will assist future student-athletes at the University of Northern Iowa through scholarships. All work, from the authoring of chapters, to the layout, to the cover, was done gratis. The printing was underwritten by Woolverton Printing and those mentioned below, and in so doing, 100 percent of sales will be given to the UNI Panther Scholarship Club to be used to support student-athlete scholarships.

There are many to acknowledge and to offer thanks for a job well done. **Authors:** First and foremost are the authors whose names are associated with their respective chapters in the table of contents and within respective chapters. They had to research, interview and dig for the information from many sources in order to put it into a storyline that would enable them to capture the history of the sport they were writing about. To add to their burden, they had to abbreviate it all into the limited pages allowed. Any one of these chapters has the propensity to be a book unto its own, which would allow for a greater story to be told.

Layout: Layout was accomplished by the Graphic Technologies Program within UNI's Department of Technology. Many hours were spent establishing the format, photograph tables and product parameters, specifically by: **Sara Smith**, Faculty Instructor of Graphic Technologies; **Lee Giesinger**, Faculty Instructor of Graphic Technologies; and **Dr. Antonio Scontrino**, Assistant Professor of Graphic Technologies. They are to be recognized for putting their talents to work in order to give this book its professional look. A "job well done" can be bestowed upon **Joshua Teiken**, a graduated student that did all of the final layout work. If a comma or spelling or phrase had to be adjusted; if a photograph had to be set differently; it was Josh that took care of this part of production. He will use this book as a part of his portfolio as he searches for his first professional career position in the Twin Cities region. Smith, Giesinger and Scontrino were able to involve their respective students in this project enabling them to have a real work-place opportunity. As for Mr. Giesinger's class in Digital Prepress, his students were assigned to create an "e-book" of this manuscript, which may someday become available for purchase for those who prefer this reading mode.

Photographs: The photographs that were used in this book came from various sources throughout the University. Specific photos that had to be acquired with a fee are identified as such, but the majority of photos came from university files tied to the Old Gold, the Northern Iowan, files within the University Archives or files and media guides within the Athletic Media Relations office. There were some personal photos allowed by respective authors. **Dr. Sharon Huddleston**, **Dr. Jane Mertesdorf** and **Dr. Wanda Green** offered photographs from their personal files. It has never been our intent to omit photograph recognition, but sources were often not available. What we knew was the photographs used were a part of the University. We offer this paragraph to serve as our address for photographs used. We are of the opinion a photograph was better used here, than resting in the bottom of a box somewhere. Many of the photos required work to scan or shoot, capturing them into a digital format that was appropriate for the layout process. In addition, retouching and clean-up was needed for enhancement of the images. This work was performed by Graphic Technologies students, Scontrino, Smith, and **John Smith**.

Specific acknowledgement needs to be given to **Gerald Peterson**, Special Collections Librarian & University Archivist, **David Glime**, Library Assistant, and library student assistant **Kim Nurre** for their unending support as we all scoured the archives for printed material and photographs. **Sam Castro** was a great help providing specific photographs from UNI's Public Information registry. **Bronson Dullin** was of great assistance to Jeff Kurtz selecting photographs for the football chapter. The **Kansas Historical Society** provided permission to use the photograph of James Naismith in the men's basketball chapter. **Colin McDonough**, Assistant Athletic Director for Athletic Communication made the files in Athletic Media Relations available and often asked **Wes Offerman**, one of his

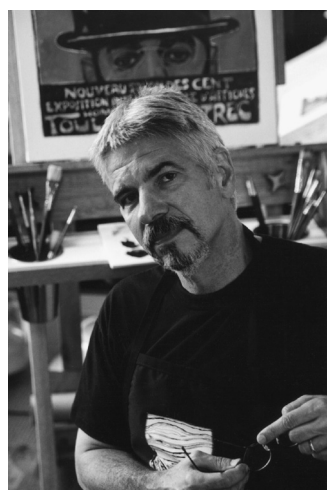
graduate assistants to burn a CD of photographs for us to use. There were many more photographs available for us to choose from, but so many of them were not identified nor had respective dates so they could not be used.

Underwriting printing: Underwriting the cost of printing allowed for us to put 100 percent of sales towards scholarship funds for UNI's student-athletes. We are indebted to **Mike Hurley** who led this part of the project and to the following for their financial contribution: **Brent Dahlstrom, John Adams, Jean Kelly, Simpson Furniture** and several contributors that preferred to remain anonymous.

Printing: John Lynch, a strong Panther supporter, and the Woolverton Printing Company granted a major portion of the printing cost, thus enabling the remaining printing cost to be underwritten so the proceeds could be used for Panther scholarships. The quality of the printed book is evidence unto its own.

Editing: One of the tough jobs in the industry is editing. While this book was designed to allow the authors the freedom to tell their respective stories utilizing a personal writing style, the chapter, none the less, had to be edited and in some cases reduced in size. Special recognition is extended to **Nancy Justis** for her assistance with this critical part of the final process.

Cover: The cover art work is from renowned illustrator **Gary Kelley** who donated this piece, not only for the cover of this book, but he is also donating the original art work to the 2013 Rally in the Valley, another venue to raise funds for Panther scholarships. The cover graphics was done by **Sara Smith**, Instructor of Industrial Technology and Chair of the Graphic Arts Division.



Kelley came to UNI on a football scholarship, but soon realized his future was in the art building, not at O.R. Latham Stadium. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in art with emphases in drawing, painting and design. He worked as a graphic designer before turning to illustration in the late 1970's. As an illustrator, he worked for clients such as Rolling Stone, Playboy, The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly and numerous advertising groups. He was commissioned by the NFL to create theme art for two Super Bowls. He also created theme art for the NBA All-Star game and was chosen to be the official artist for the 2002 Kentucky Derby. In 2007, Kelley completed the 80-foot mural that hangs in the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame concourse on campus. In 2009, he created the stage backdrop for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame anniversary concert at Madison Square Garden. Kelley received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the University of Northern Iowa in 1992 and was elected to the Society of Illustrators (New York) Hall of Fame in 2007.

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“You don’t know where you are going unless you know where you have been.”

I’m sure this quote should be attributed to someone, but it was engrained in my head so many years ago, the source has been forgotten. The message, however, must never be forgotten.

The evolutionary path of the University of Northern Iowa has allowed for the development of an intercollegiate athletics program which has, as its guiding principle, helped prepare students, through athletics competition, for personal and professional successes throughout their lives. Starting with one program, and today touting 17 programs, intercollegiate athletics has since charted its own evolutionary path for over a century.

From Tutors to Panthers: A Brief History of Athletics at the University of Northern Iowa chronicles that path. It follows our University’s path through peaks and valleys, through expansion and contraction and toward great unknowns. It defines the path that Panther students, alums and fans have joined at various points to now walk forward in unison. Thanks to the vision of Jim Kelly and the hard work of his authoring and resource team, this manuscript memorializes where we have been, and as a result, ensures we will never forget where we must go.



Every student-athlete, every coach, every university administrator and frankly every Panther fan has built this path we follow today. There are many great athletes in our past. There are many legendary coaches in our past. There are many stories heretofore untold which, while some are uncovered by the authors of this book, have guided us to this place in history. A great foundation was laid, allowing today’s 397 student-athletes an unprecedented opportunity for personal growth and development. And, today’s 397 student-athletes continue to add to that foundation, setting the stage for even greater opportunities in the future.

As you read this book, tie the stories and the names and the sweat and tears to what we enjoy today. Tie these things to what we anticipate tomorrow. Tie a piece of our history to everything you see now, and decipher what in today’s world of Panther athletics will be most impactful to the outcomes we seek in sport and personal development.

Without question, our institution, my alma mater, has been changed for the better through the impact of intercollegiate athletics. As a result, the path we all walk today is smoother, wider, and pointed toward a great future.

As athletic director, I cannot begin to express my personal, our department’s appreciation for the work spent to produce this book of history. Over the course of two years, so many individuals have worked tirelessly to help everyone understand where we have been. The end result will define where we go as more history is written.

Introduction

Most schools of higher education have gone through an evolutionary naming process from their respective beginnings to present day status. Such has been the case with the school we all know as the University of Northern Iowa. Originally known as the Iowa State Normal School (ISNS) when it opened its doors in 1876, it eventually became the Iowa State Teachers College (ISTC) in 1909, a name which enhanced the major dimension for its existence as one of the Iowa Board of Regent’s schools of higher education. The decade of the ‘60s saw two name changes. The first came in 1961 when the Iowa State Teachers College became the State College of Iowa (SCI) representing the verity that liberal arts degrees were also awarded in addition to teacher education degrees. And then in 1967, the most recent name change became official when SCI was renamed the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), representing the fact that graduate education was now a key part of the academic life of this institution.

With each name change the central mission of UNI remained the same, but additions to the ever expanding curriculum put in motion the development of new departments and the ultimate academic arrangement of the five original colleges and the division of continuing education. As the academic landscape changed along with respective name changes, the student population also changed growing from an original 400 students to well over 13,000 today. And with population growth came more demands for extra-curricular activities; athletics would host one of the options to be offered. To be sure, athletic growth was paralleled with respective governance at the local, conference and national levels, which would ultimately influence how our athletic options would come into existence and also how they would be managed.

The introduction of athletics at ISNS can be traced back to its inaugural years in the late 1800s. The purpose for having competitive sports in those novice years was not entirely defined, but athletics developed none the less and it has been from those early beginnings to today that we offer this abbreviated storyline of the history of intercollegiate athletics at the University of Northern Iowa. The story being told has been abbreviated because the time that has passed is well over a century and as you might imagine, a lot has happened during that amount of time. It has been abbreviated because the sheer volumes of raw data by itself could literally occupy a thousand pages alone and not many will ever have a desire to sort through raw data. This storyline has been abbreviated knowing that only a few of the many athletes could be mentioned; there simply was no way all the countless numbers of athletes could have a part in this book even though all played their role in their respective sport and played it with distinction and honor. It has been abbreviated because this book is not and was never considered to be a compendium of UNI’s athletic programs, past or present. The authors have struggled to keep their chapters within reason because so much information could be included. It has never been our intent to purposely leave out anyone or any event, but there had to be decisions as to what to write and how much to write. As a result, we have taken personal license to address specific highlights and individuals in order for UNI’s historical flavor to emerge.

Over the past 112 years, the University of Northern Iowa has been able to offer 19 intercollegiate, competitive athletic options to its men and women student-athletes. Some competitive options no longer exist and others are relatively recent additions. With Title IX, the women’s athletic options blossomed. An important part of today’s sports programming; women’s intercollegiate, competitive sporting events have only been available to its athletes the past 40 years, which is a relatively short time when compared to the men’s athletic history.

You need to be aware that for this chronological rendering, we are submitting one storyline for each athletic discipline to traverse our intercollegiate sports history. If when reading this book a specific sport or event, coach or athlete interests you and you wish to pursue it or them in greater depth, you can do this by accessing the archives at the UNI library or attain components of the countless data compilations that reside within the Athletics Commu-

nications Office. The initial URLs that will assist you with your search are: www.library.uni.edu/collections/special-collections and <http://www.unipanthers.com>.

Because there are many authors, there will be differences in writing style. That is as it should be. Each is submitting their concept of storyline for their respective sport. Each author believes that you will find their respective version most satisfying, leaving you with many spirit filled memories. Keep in mind that this is a condensed version of Panther athletic history. One delimitation that we must make, as we researched the content of the text, we found some differences in dates, and there may be a piece of data that we weren't able to decide which was the fact and which remained without corroboration, but know that we strove always to provide the most accurate account possible.

One of the difficulties that we encountered as we developed our respective chapters was retrieval of photographs. While photographs exist in one form or another, many of the older photographs are without dates or names and so we had to leave them alone for fear we would give a wrong name or a wrong date. It is possible that could happen anyway, but we hope not. Many photographs were obtained through the Old Gold yearbooks or within the boxes of photographs found in the library archives. Some photographs had to be taken from the old pages of the Northern Iowan as they were all that we had to draw from. Still others were available from the Athletic Communications files, as vintage photographs, from media guides, or in some cases, as digitally reproduced CDs. And then let's not forget those photographs gotten from Public Information at UNI. Wherever the photograph was gotten, it was a valuable source for the author to use as it clearly enhanced each storyline and rendered a pictorial moment in time.

So as you read through the printed pages of this book and view the accompanying photographs, data and personal stories, we hope that you will mentally hear the chant we have tried to project and the one heard so often on campus today – **GO PANTHERS!**

Enjoy the book.

Dr. Jim Kelly, Project Director

History of Athletic Administration and Facilities

Gerald Peterson, Christopher R. Edginton, William R. Thrall, Steve Schofield

The support of the administration of the University of Northern Iowa, in particular its presidents, has been instrumental in advancing the intercollegiate athletic program. All presidents from Homer Seerley to Benjamin Allen have shown a strong interest in the intercollegiate athletic program. It is often noted that the Panther sport and athletic program is the “front porch” of the university; one of its most visible and important activities which extends into the community.

Founded as Iowa State Normal School in 1876, the institution was known by that name until 1909. From 1909 through 1961, it was known as Iowa State Teachers College. In 1961, the name of the institution was changed to the State College of Iowa and then in 1967 to the University of Northern Iowa, its current name.

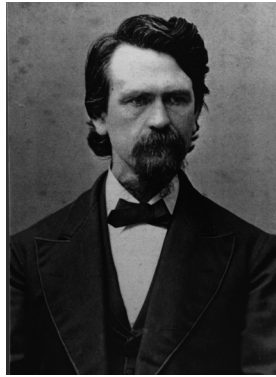
Initially, the institution’s athletic teams were known as the “Tutors”. Undoubtedly, this name was adopted to reflect the mission of the institution in preparing teachers. In 1931, the student newspaper established a contest calling for a new school nickname.

Who wants to be called Tutors, Pedagogues, and Teachers all the time. Every leading school in the country has some name by which they are known in the realm of sport. Iowa is known as the Hawkeyes, Minnesota as Gophers, Chicago as Maroons and so forth. Why not give Iowa State Teachers College a name which signifies something characteristic about the school besides the fact that it is a teachers college?

The question was asked:

Subsequently, a new name was chosen and the athletic teams in the first year of competition on the North Central Athletic Association were named the “Purple Panthers.” Obviously, this nickname was later shortened to the Panthers; a nickname that is fitting to describe the energy, competitiveness and maybe even the unyielding nature of UNI’s athletic teams.

During the history of the university, there have been nine presidents including James C. Gilchrist (1876-1886); Homer H. Seerley (1897-1927); Orval R. Latham



James C. Gilchrist

(1828-1940); Malcolm P. Price (1940-1950); James W. Maucker, (1950-1970); John J. Kamerick (1970-1983); Constantine W. Curris (1983-1995); Robert D. Koob (1995-2006); and Benjamin J. Allen (2006-present). Each president has contributed to the development of the athletic program in terms of governance strategies, infrastructure including facility planning and development and securing outstanding administrators.

Likewise, the athletic program has been blessed with many administrators who advanced the program in a significant fashion. In the early years, G. B. Affleck (1902-1905), Roy F. Seymour (1906-1916), and Frank Mead (1920-1927) all provided guidance in their role in directing both the academic programs in physical education and the athletic program. L. L. Mendenhall (1928-1959) was the longest serving administrator with responsibilities for athletics. Jim Witham (1960-1969) and William (Bill) Thrall (1970-1978) worked to advance the program especially as it transitioned from a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II program to Division I. This required a restructuring of academic programs as well as the creation of a new department of intercollegiate athletics. In recent times, there have been several individuals who provided leadership as the program’s athletic director including Stan Sheriff (1970-1983), Robert Bowlsby (1984-1990), Christopher Ritrievi (1991-1999), Rick Hartzell (1999-2008) and Troy Dannen (2008-present). Coach Eldon Miller served an interim one year term after the resignation of Bowlsby.

The women’s intercollegiate program organized as a part of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAIW) which was founded in 1971 and later transitioned to operate under the umbrella of the NCAA. Leadership provided by individuals such as Elinor Crawford who served as women’s intercollegiate athletics coordinator (1968-1978) and in

the modern era, Senior Associate Athletics Directors Sandra Williamson (1978-2004), Julie Bright (2004-2007) Bobbi Petersen (2007-2008) and, more recently, Jean Berger (2008-present) have all served the program well. Highlighted in this chapter will be some of the more noteworthy events and persons that impacted the athletic program in a significant fashion.

The Early Years:

The Contributions of Presidents Homer H. Seerley (1897-1927) and O. R. Latham (1928-1940)

In the latter half of the nineteenth century athletics was becoming a part of the campus scene across the country and it planted its roots at the Iowa State Normal School in the early 1890s. Those early students practiced their sports on informal campus playing fields that students laid out when and where they needed them.

In those early days, student athletes most often played and practiced in the area west of the academic and service buildings, roughly in the area where Rod Library now stands. Students and school officials chose that area for several reasons. First, the decorum of that day held that informal activities, such as sports, should not take place on the well-landscaped lawn and carriage drives east of the academic buildings. And second, there was simply more open land belonging to the Normal School on the west side of campus.

In those days, Normal School property extended about as far west as the area where the Campanile now stands. On a parallel path, the student military training corps, the Student Battalion, needed a large drill ground at about the same time that Normal School athletics began to formally organize themselves. So, in 1892, following the formation of the Athletic Association, the school made clear that the area west of the academic buildings would be reserved both for athletics and for field activities, such as military drill. Today, after well over one hundred years of institutional growth and development, the athletics facilities of the University of Northern Iowa are still on the western edge of campus.

The Normal School initially made portions of the basements of Central Hall and, after 1901, the Auditorium Building (now known as Lang Hall) available for physical education classes, indoor athletics activities, and equipment storage. The first purposely built athletics facility, the Gymnasium, was constructed after

President Homer H. Seerley returned from a study tour of physical training facilities in the eastern United States. At that time, physical education as a curriculum was developing across the country. The Normal School faculty hoped that a new building would meet those growing needs. As an institution whose sole purpose was the training of teachers, the Normal School needed a facility in which to prepare its students to teach physical education in Iowa Schools.

Early leadership to the development of programs and facilities was led by G. B. Affleck who served as the head of what would become known as the Department of Physical Education from 1902-1905. Affleck joined the faculty as a full time physical director and was in charge of athletics. He was drawn to the institution with the prospects of building a new gymnasium. A graduate of the YMCA Center at Springfield, Massachusetts, "Affleck was responsible for the "general control of athletics of all kinds ...and [the supervision] of contest teams." In 1903, Seerley hired C. A. Pell, a graduate of Drake University and outstanding athlete. He joined the faculty full time as Assistant Director. In the previous year, he had served as a football and track coach. In the summer of 1906, both Affleck and Pell resigned.

Affleck was replaced by Roy F. Seymour who oversaw the programs of physical education, physical training and athletics from 1906-1916. A graduate of the YMCA Training Center with a degree in directing physical training, he succeeded Affleck as Physical Director. Like Affleck, he was director of the Physical Training Department and responsible for the general control of athletics. Clayton B. Simmons, graduate of Colgate University, joined the faculty to replace Pell. Seymour would focus the attention of the program to insure that individuals were physically fit and prepared for service in World War I. He served as both a professor of physical education and had the broad responsibility as serving as the department head which included directing the athletic program.

Construction on the Gymnasium (now known as the Innovative Teaching and Technology Center) began in 1903 and was completed in 1905. The Gymnasium was a model facility in many respects. It included a small swimming pool; shower baths; dressing rooms; offices; classrooms and a large, open floor for games, gymnastics and basketball. Women's facilities were on the south end of the building and men's facilities were

on the north end. The building was enhanced by the addition of a large swimming pool on its west side in 1938.



The first gymnasium was known as the "Gymnasium". Later, it became the Women's Gym and then the East Gym and is now the Innovative Teaching and Technology Center. The Gymnasium offered physical education classes and athletics a state-of-the-art facility when it was constructed. It later included the first indoor collegiate swimming pool west of the Mississippi River. In 1938, with funding from the Works Progress Administration, a swimming pool complex was completed on the west side of the building. Prior to its construction in 1905, the basketball team always felt it was at a disadvantage because it did not have a good practice facility. Having to practice outdoors or in rooms that were not designed for such play, the team was often quoted as saying that they lost because of poor facilities.

The East Gym today has been altered to serve the technology needs of the University. The 30 yard pool, which was five yards too long to host swimming events, has been filled in and a student gathering area exists in its place. The concrete bleachers still exist in the room as a reminder of days gone by.

While the governance was loose in the beginning years, the college knew it had to have some form of oversight. Typically, it was a group of professors who oversaw governance of athletic teams based on the rules that were in place at the time, and the rules changed often as the various sporting activities evolved. Seerley provided oversight to the Athletic Association (the institution's governing body for athletics) and advanced the idea of a physical director who would be responsible

for the general control of athletics of all kinds. Seerley felt very strongly that the institution should prepare both teachers and coaches of physical education and athletics. Later, this governing board was organized to concentrate more control under the faculty's direction. In addition, as conferences for athletic competition formed and changed on a regular basis, so did the rules that governed the various sporting venues. And to compound the governance issue, the established boards would change as the professors who made up those boards came and left.

In order to get the athletic programs in order at ISTC, the upper administration brought in Ivan Doseff to put its athletic house in order. Doseff taught classes and coached basketball during his brief stay, but was successful in advancing the athletic program. The next hire (1921) was L.L. Mendenhall, who was hired away from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Like Doseff, Mendenhall assigned himself to coach basketball, but his leadership skills became very evident and after a three year stint as a teacher/coach, Mendenhall was appointed as the director of all athletic programs, a position that he would hold for the next 30 years. He would be, in essence, the first athletic director although that title was not given until later in his career.

Homer H. Seerley was the second president of the college through World War I. The Gymnasium, which was completed in 1905, served as the school's primary athletics facility through World War I. But following World War I, school officials began to think seriously about attracting more men to enroll at the college, where they would



Homer H. Seerley

train to become teachers. Seerley was strongly behind this action. It was believed that more men would enroll at ISTC if the school enhanced its athletics facilities and also developed a curriculum that would lead to careers in athletics coaching. The Men's Gymnasium was a result of this recruitment effort. Construction of this new building was completed in late 1925. After men's activities became concentrated in the new Men's Gymnasium, the older Gymnasium made a transition becoming the Women's Gymnasium.

The Men's Gymnasium housed physical education classes, intramurals, and athletics activities for more than half a century. The building accommodated basketball, wrestling, volleyball, gymnastics and other sports. Eventually, gymnastics would become housed solely in the Women's Gym. The large gymnasium floor of the Men's Gym was also the scene of special college events such as Commencements, conferences, assemblies and presentations by well-known speakers. When the strict segregation of men's activities from women's activities began to disappear, the Men's Gymnasium became known as the West Gym and the Women's Gym became the East Gym.



A 1930 view of the West Gym, which was then known as the Men's Gym. Visiting teams found the gym to be a horrible place to play by competing teams, the local basketball, wrestling and volleyball teams loved the spicy atmosphere of the West Gym; the crowd was essentially on top of the action.

Basketball players found the floor was springy and that the gym was a great facility to shoot in. Volleyball players felt the West Gym had a sort of mystical quality about it as the ball was live when it bounced off the ceiling. The West Gym was home to one of volleyball's longest winning streaks. This player's haven would eventually give way to a newer facility. The West Gym is still the home for Panther Wrestling.

In this photo, the new football field, track and tennis courts and baseball diamond can be seen in this very rural campus scene.

Following the construction of the Men's Gymnasium, the football field was relocated farther west. For about 30 years, football had been played on

a field located where the Rod Library now stands. But, over those years, academic and service building development had moved toward the field and had begun to crowd the athletics facilities. So following the acquisition of the land needed to build the Men's Gym, it also became possible to develop a new football field farther west. Officials selected a site between the Men's Gym and Hudson Road. Grading the area and developing the turf took several years before the new football stadium could be dedicated on October 6, 1928. A quarter mile track encircled the new field. Football fans could enjoy the games from new wooden grandstands.

The college gradually improved the new football stadium during the early 1930s. However, on July 22, 1936, a storm tore through campus destroying the wooden grandstand and damaging other facilities. College officials and the State Board of Education responded with incredible speed and determination. They arranged for debris to be removed quickly. Then they worked creatively to secure financing to rebuild the stadium on the same site. The rebuilt stadium would include concrete grandstands, a press box, restrooms, and other associated stadium facilities. When the 1936 football season began, the work was certainly still a long way from completion. However, construction had progressed sufficiently for the Panthers to play a football game in the new stadium against Coe College on October 17, 1936, less than three months after the storm had hit campus. Work continued over the next three years to make the stadium an attractive and useful facility that included seating for eight thousand and an indoor running track under the west grandstand. Before his death on July 9, 1940, President O.R. Latham had worked tirelessly to restore and enhance the new stadium. In recognition of his work, the stadium was dedicated and named in his honor on October 26, 1940.

O.R. Latham was the third president of the college. He had a stronger interest in athletics than his predecessor, but like Seerley, Latham believed he could avoid the abuses so commonly found in athletics if he and the faculty took the responsibility to prevent them. During his presidency, Latham's athletic boards may have varied



O.R. Latham



This photo shows a great outdoor field that was the site of plenty of football and track and field competition hosting many teams from the '30s until 1975. The last football game to be played at O.R. Latham Field (named after the third president of the University) was the venerable "Mud Bowl". The crowd was slim on that cold, wet and miserable day. The Panthers were in postseason play hosting Western Kentucky. The wet and muddy field had been treated with sand and straw to improve conditions. (It didn't help). The UNI-Dome was up, but it wasn't ready to host games until the following season. The Panthers lost by two points, but the memories have not gone away. Just ask those team members, who played the game that day, or the coaches who fought to find a winning edge, or one of the 100 fans who stuck it out.

Stadium Hall was the bleacher complex shown that was also used as a dormitory for approximately 200 young men, many of whom were athletes. The crowded conditions didn't seem to affect them too much as they often times relive those moments when living there.

An indoor track was below the complex. Art Dickinson trained his teams there during the early part of the track and field season. And like the infamous Mud Bowl, the water fight that occurred one night in Stadium Hall found its way onto that oil-packed dirt track. The apparent mixture of dirt, even oiled dirt, and water created a situation that caused Coach Dickinson to display a side of him that suggested he was not the happiest camper on campus that day.

in size and personnel. But President Latham appointed them and he was in charge.

The ISTC Athletic Board was designed to advise the President and the Athletic Director regarding issues that would confront athletics. They were also responsible for determining the eligibility of all student-athletes. During much of Latham's presidency, science professor H. Earl Rath served as chair of this Board. Latham found Rath to be a valuable source for advice and help in evaluating the athletics programs and personnel. Head of the Department of Physical Education for Men (a.k.a. Athletic Director at that time), L.L. Mendenhall served as an ex-officio member and secretary of the Athletic Board.

ISTC was a member of the early Hawkeye Conference and later the Iowa Conference before joining the North Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (NCIAC) in 1935, where it remained for the next 45 years. The Iowa Conference limited freshmen competition to three football games, six basketball games and similar limits in other sports. The NCIAC barred freshmen from varsity competition. No scholarships, loans or remissions of tuition were awarded on the basis of athletic skill, and no financial aid to student athletes by individuals, organizations, or alumni was permitted for the purpose of subsidizing them as athletes or for promoting athletic success at a particular college or university. Athletic Directors and coaches were not permitted to distribute literature or conduct personal interviews of their own doing, endeavoring to recruit student athletes. In fact, they needed to actively discourage recruiting by students and alumni.

In 1928, college officials began to review the three teacher education degrees that were offered at ISTC and by 1933 only one degree was offered, the Bachelor of Arts in Education. Within a few years, the "in Education" was dropped and ISTC offered only the Bachelor of Arts degree. In harmony with the consolidations suggested by the North Central Association, an academic accrediting organization, athletics and coaching became part of the major in physical education. In fact, many men who completed a degree in teaching at ISTC were successful teacher/coaches, but did not letter in the sport(s) they coached. There was a great need for teachers and coaches as the schools of Iowa grew and the ISTC physical education program was helping to fulfill those needs.

The teaching approach used was "explanation, demonstration and application". Two to three class

periods in the week were devoted to the theory of the game taught by the faculty. The remaining time was devoted to the application of the theory. If one examined the process in football theory, for example, you might find 175 young men in class, all fully equipped from shoes to sheepskins and allocated by skill and experience. The classes were divided into teams and they practiced and played a schedule throughout the term. The students were the players and seniors trained and coached the teams. Students received two years of theory experience. Upon graduation, they were ready to meet the requirements of their new teaching and coaching jobs within Iowa schools.

The War Years:

President Malcolm Price (1940-1950),

James W. Maucker (1951-1969)



President Malcolm P. Price

When President Price arrived at ISTC, the College had around 1,800 students. The professional preparation and athletic programs in the Department of Physical Education for Men were at an all-time high. But during World War II, the number of male students declined to 62. Many of the faculty also left to serve in the armed forces. As a result, the athletic scene was put on hold for several years until the war was over and the young men and women returned to campus once again.

It was during this time that ISTC had an opportunity to establish a training center for 3,000 Navy pilots, but it would require shutting down the College. This was not acceptable because ISTC was the teacher training institution in Iowa and Iowa was in great need of teachers because of the war. The State University of Iowa accepted the Naval Pre-Flight training program and ISTC accepted a training program for 1,000 Navy WAVES. ISTC also had military training programs for the Army Air Force Cadets and Army Air Force glider pilots; the latter program was housed in the Men's Gym (I Club and wrestling rooms) and Latham Stadium (mezzanine area). These programs kept the men's

physical education and coaching faculty busy with physical training and military drill programs.

O.R. Latham Stadium had served as the school's football stadium and indoor and outdoor track facility for 35 years. It also served other purposes. For example, the field was occasionally used for special events, such as a Navy Bond show on July 4, 1944. In addition, the west grandstand mezzanine level served as a men's dormitory from 1947 through 1961. The Board of Regents approved making the mezzanine area in Latham Stadium a dorm area for 200 students. The Board stipulated, however, that the College needed to vacate that dormitory space in ten years or less as the oil permeated track below left the dorm area an undesirable living environment to say the least.



L.L. Mendenhall

Leadership had been relatively stable through the '30s, '40s, and '50s because of Mendenhall's tenure. He had been on staff for 39 years, Head of the Department for Men for 35 years and Athletic Director for 38 years before retiring in 1960. Dr. Paul Bender filled in for one year while a search for the next athletic director could be completed. The selection committee selected men's basketball coach Dr. James Witham to replace Mendenhall as head of the Department of Physical Education for Men and Director of Athletics, but the joint responsibilities were soon to be separated. In the early 1960s, Drs. Bill Thrall and Elinor Crawford were assigned to head up their respective Physical Education Departments and they were given the responsibility to develop plans for new physical education and indoor and outdoor athletic facilities west of Hudson Road.

There had been a flurry of construction in the 1920s and '30's, but the school had to then be content with the facilities it had. Repair and retain were the themes of the day. With the war effort, a lot of repair and retain became the *modus operandi*. But after the war and by the mid-1960s, college officials believed that the school needed some significant new development in many areas, including its athletics facilities. The officials cited large increases in the school's enrollment. They also noted that academic, dormitory and service buildings had encroached on the space needed for athletics

and physical education. Consequently, the major development of university facilities west of Hudson Road began.

The first major building for athletics and physical education to be built was the Physical Education Center (PEC). In 1968, the Board of Regents approved plans to build the PEC to provide space for men and women's locker rooms, offices, equipment storage and laundry for both departments.

The second floor consisted of two large gymnasias offering eight basketball/volleyball/tennis court areas with divider doors that could reduce the large room into four separate gymnasias. Additional funds led to multiple-use activity and athletic fields west of the PEC including a baseball field, a softball field, twenty tennis courts and handball courts. The work to build this complex began March 1969. The building was ready for use the fall semester of 1971. As the name implies, the Physical Education Center was intended primarily for classes and recreation, such as intramurals, but athletics teams also practiced and trained in that building, up to a point.



The Physical Education Center (PEC) was a much needed building that provided additional classroom space, as well as, recreation space for the growing student population. Despite initial challenges to use the PEC for athletic practice, the primary function of the building was upheld and today, with the expansion to the new Wellness/Recreation Center, the PEC has been a place where students can go to stay current with wellness. The new pool does serve the intercollegiate swimming program and offers a place to host home meets. Dr. Bill Thrall was instrumental in getting the PEC built.

It was during this time that auditoria needs were also being recognized and discussed. As head of what was then the State College of Iowa (SCI), Presi-

dent Maucker discussed the needs with the Cedar Falls Chamber of Commerce regarding "What was needed for SCI and the Cedar Falls region?" The President appointed an ad hoc Committee on Auditoria Needs on which Drs. Witham and Thrall and football coach Stan Sheriff were to research a multi-purpose coliseum. The structure that caught most everyone's attention was the arena concept with an air-supported roof.

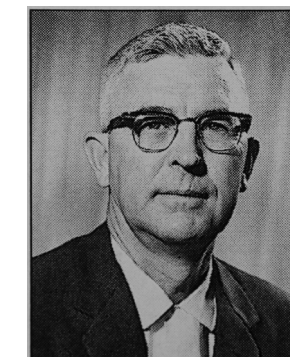


James W. Maucker

The Committee on Auditoria submitted its report identifying three auditoria: a 12,000 seat coliseum or arena; a 2,000 seat auditorium and a little theater. Which should come first. By 1969, President Maucker realized that any Foundation fund drive would need strong support from the metropolitan community and therefore made the decision that the University should build an arena-type structure first. He conveyed his vision of the facility to Dr. Marshall Beard, Director of Planning. He described the arena as "a large attractive structure, providing a covered area of major size, which could accommodate special events, track meets, basketball and football games." Such a structure "would be new, startling, bold, enthralling and provocative." SCI was now UNI, the University of Northern Iowa with its last name change.

Years of Reorganization and Expansion:

President John J. Kamerick (1970-1983)

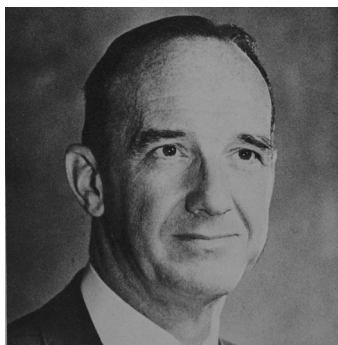


James Witham

Dr. James Witham retired as the Athletic Director in 1970 and President Maucker stepped aside at the same time. Dr. John J. Kamerick became the sixth President of the institution. Dr. William Thrall replaced Witham as Head of the Department of Physical Education for Men and Men's Athletics. Dr. Elton Green would coordinate Professional Programs, Dr. Lyle Schwarzenbach would coordinate Service Programs, and Stan Sheriff

would coordinate the specific athletic programs under Dr. Thrall's design. Thrall hired and evaluated all of the coaching staff except for the head basketball coach. Essentially, he was responsible for providing oversight to the athletic program and provided great leadership in the transition of the program as it moved from Division II to Division I.

President Kamerick recognized early in his administration that UNI needed something to draw attention to its campus. After reviewing the Campus Planning Committee and Committee on Auditoria Needs' reports, Kamerick reacted very favorably to



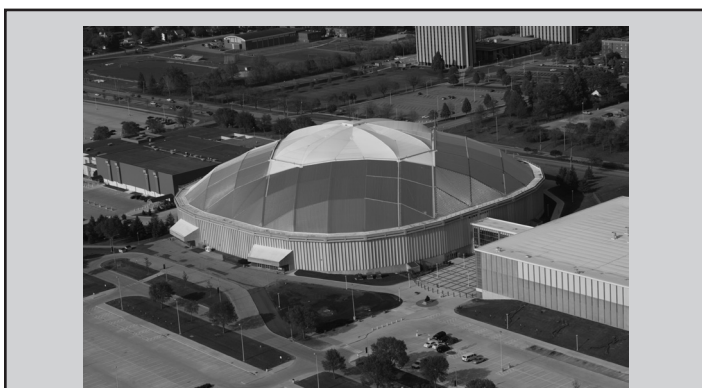
John J. Kamerick

a possible multi-purpose covered coliseum in which one could even play football. He was also aware that the Iowa State High School Athletic Association had reacted favorably to the possible use of the facility for their State Championship games. He believed a covered mini-dome to be that bold and spectacular project that would bring Iowans to think of UNI. He clarified that UNI would not become a "big time" football power because the 15,000 seat facility would prohibit it, but this type of facility would allow UNI to look for a "slightly bigger time" and more "prestigious" conference. He immediately named a Need and Scope Committee of ten to examine the feasibility of building a multi-purpose coliseum. The coliseum would replace O.R. Latham Stadium and adjacent activity fields and thereby free up choice land for central campus expansion.

The next development in the complex west of Hudson Road was the long undertaking that resulted in the construction of the air-supported roof coliseum, the UNI-Dome. Those who were committed to the Dome's construction faced significant obstacles including a difficult financial situation and vocal opposition from some members of the campus community. In addition, the inflatable roof was a relatively new concept. While the novelty of the roof had a certain appeal, it also aroused many questions about stability and durability. In spite of these and other obstacles, Dome backers persisted in their efforts.

With accolades for the development of the domed facility from Governor Robert Ray, NCIAC

Commissioner Keppenhaven, ISHSAA Director Bernie Sagau, the sales pitch for funding the Dome was strengthened and construction began the summer of 1974. Despite escalating costs and damage caused by storms, the Dome hosted its first event on February 7, 1976; a wrestling match against the University of Iowa. The Dome became a widely-recognized icon of the University of Northern Iowa. Over the next twenty years the UNI-Dome was the scene of thousands of events. The field hockey, football, basketball, track and field, and softball teams practiced and competed there. In addition, Commencements, trade shows, concerts, speeches, and large meetings also took place there.



The UNI-Dome was the brain child of Stan Sheriff, who was the football coach and later the athletic director. The Dome was strongly supported by President John Kamerick. Convincing people to invest in its construction was a never ending task. A little over \$3.4 million was raised with the remainder coming from student fees. While there were problems when the roof collapsed several times and new roof construction became necessary, the UNI-Dome is as symbolic to the University of Northern Iowa as any other building on campus. The playing field carries Stan Sheriff's name in his honor.

The Dome underwent a number of major repair and improvement projects over the years aimed at correcting old problems and enhancing the strength and durability of the structure. Consequently, the UNI-Dome should continue to serve as the home for both UNI athletics events and for a wide variety of other campus and community events well into the future.

During President Kamerick's tenure, Title IX legislation placed a greater emphasis on women's athletics at UNI. Field Hockey, Softball, Women's Basketball, and Women's Track and Field were added to the athletic

venues. Budgets were extremely limited and coaches had to be hired to fit the roles of teaching and coaching as well as organizing related intramural programs. Prior to Title IX legislation, the women's sports program did not include scholarships and competition between institutions was organized by the Women's Physical Education program in a series of play days that eventually led to direct competition between institutions in a variety of sports. For example, women's softball emerged as a result of the high skill level of students participating in UNI's intermural program wishing to seek greater competition.

Perhaps the most significant development during this era was the transition of the program from an NCAA Division II status to that of Division I. This required a restructuring of the academic programs in physical education, recreation and health reflected in the merging of the Men's and Women's Physical Education Departments into a School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Later, this school was renamed the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services (HPELS). A Department of Intercollegiate Athletics was then established and moved from the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs office to the Vice President of Administration and Finance. Stan Sheriff, who had served as the coordinator of athletics in the Men's Physical Education department was named Athletic Director and operated in the new reporting structure as both AD and head football coach. In addition, men's basketball coach Jim Berry and his staff were also realigned in the new organizational scheme.

In the Division II model, individuals were hired in the teaching/coaching model and were, in effect, recruited, hired and evaluated by the head of Men's and/or Women's Physical Education. As the transition from Division II to Division I progressed, a number of coaches retained their faculty appointments as well as their coaching responsibilities. This created a dynamic where individuals were stretched to meet their responsibilities and it wasn't until 1999 when an agreement was struck between Athletic Director Christopher Ritrievi and Director of the School of HPELS Christopher Edginton to reengineer the relationship. The transition for the academic programs to a teacher/scholar model challenged coaches who were hired in the previous model. However, several individuals were able to raise their profile of scholarship including Sharon

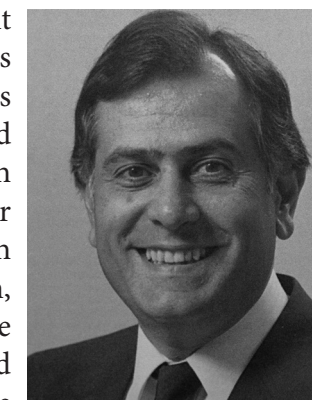
Huddleston and Iradge Ahrabi-Fard. In the early years of the transition, Thrall continued to evaluate faculty members who served as coaches and salaries for these individuals were depressed in favor of those who had stronger academic profiles.

The Modern Era ~ A Program of National Prominence:

Constantine W. Curris (1983-1995), Robert D. Koob (1995-2006) and Benjamin J. Allen (2006-present)

As UNI's enrollment grew in the 1980s, and as interest in fitness and wellness also grew, the University faced a shortage of space in which students could work out or exercise individually. With the East Gym, West Gym, PEC and the Dome available for organized intramural and intercollegiate sports, space for individual, recreational activities was limited. It was during President Curris' tenure that the Wellness/Recreation Center was built to meet the new demands to provide facilities for fitness and wellness. The pool that was included with the Center was designed to be a state-of-the-art pool and a great venue to host swimming competition.

In 1983, President Curris appointed Bob Bowsby as Athletic Director. A native of Waterloo, Iowa, Bowsby served until 1991 when he became the Director of Athletics at The University of Iowa. During Bowsby's tenure, the Panther Athletic program prospered in terms of national prominence, exposure and attention. Of particular importance was the naming of Eldon Miller as the head men's basketball coach in 1987. Miller had previously served as the head coach at The Ohio State University and was hired at UNI after winning the National Invitation Tournament at New York City. During his tenure, the Panthers scored a 77-74 victory over the Iowa Hawkeyes in front of 22,797 fans in the UNI-Dome. This still remains the largest crowd to attend a home Panther athletic event. Miller called the victory over The University of Iowa,



Constantine W. Curris

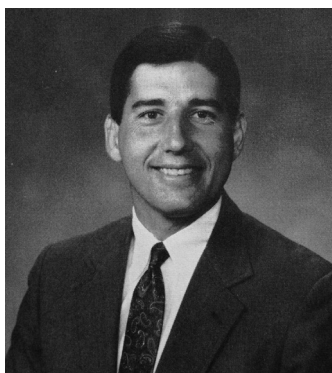


Wellness and the complete concept behind recreation was becoming central to students' lives. The PEC had served UNI well, but it was now time to expand its horizon. With that came construction to create a larger multi-function facility. The PEC was encompassed within the new Wellness/Recreation Center, which boasted a climbing wall, locker rooms, a walking track and a new Olympic-level swimming pool. Dr. Christopher Edginton was the push to incorporate the PEC into the Wellness/Recreation Center.

"... the most meaningful game our fans have ever experienced." In 1990, the men's basketball team advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament, again drawing national attention to the athletic program.

Miller's hiring was followed by the hiring of Earl Bruce as the head football coach. Bruce had served as the head coach at Iowa State University and at The Ohio State University. Although Bruce was with the Panthers for only one year, these two hires brought national attention to the UNI athletic program. In 1989, Terry Allen was hired as the men's head football coach and led the Panthers to seven consecutive Gateway championships and playoff berths.

One of the most significant developments in Panther athletics that was advanced during Bowsby's tenure was membership in the Missouri Valley Conference. By joining the historic MVC, Panther athletics were elevated significantly in terms of their competitive expectations. This was particularly the case in the sport of basketball where the



Robert Bowsby

MVC is viewed as one of the nation's premier athletic conferences. Bowsby was instrumental in raising the external funding profile of the athletic program. In particular, the Panther Scholarship Club was able to significantly enhance the intercollegiate program by raising over one million dollars annually. This represented a 400 percent growth in fundraising. Bowsby also established the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame program. The first class was inducted in 1985.

During Bowsby's tenure, the women's intercollegiate athletic program gained greater support as well as success. Under the wise stewardship of Associate Athletic Director, Sandra Williamson, the women's intercollegiate athletic program was elevated to a level comparable with the men's intercollegiate program.

President Robert Koob became the first UNI graduate to serve as president of the university. During his tenure, significant developments were initiated including the completion of the Wellness/Recreation Center and planning and fundraising activities directed toward the McLeod Arena and the Human Performance Center. The Dome, with its seating capacity of about



Robert D. Koob

17,000, works well for large events and large crowds. However, even early on, spectators found the building's cavernous expanse and distant seating to be less than satisfactory for sports such as volleyball, wrestling and basketball. People believed that a smaller arena, with seating closer to the action, would be better for both participants and spectators. Ultimately, that belief grew into a campaign that resulted in the McLeod Center, located south of the Dome. The building was named in honor of Clark and Mary McLeod, lead donors to the project. The McLeod Center project faced serious financial hurdles, but private donors responded generously to the University's fundraising campaign and the University was able to break ground in October 2004. On November 8, 2006, the McLeod Center opened for its first event; Coach Bobbi Petersen brought her volleyball squad to the Center to face Bradley University. It was the first win for a Panther team in the new facility.

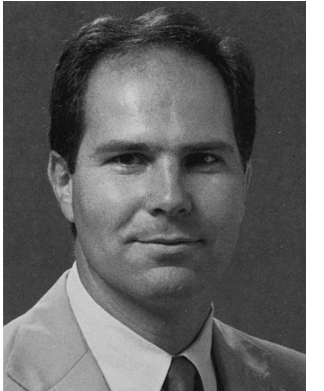


The McLeod Center was needed in order to have the kind of facility that would meet the needs of today's basketball and volleyball teams. The Dome was not a desirable place to play basketball. It was a football, and track and field facility, even though it was also used in the '70s through today as a place to play field hockey and softball when inclement weather kept these teams from playing outdoors.

Coach Eldon Miller was the inspiration for the McLeod Center and like Stan Sheriff before him while building the UNI-Dome; Coach Miller persevered to get the McLeod Center built. The basketball teams were reaching a new level of play. The volleyball team was already at a new level, but both needed to have a facility that allowed the athletics growth to happen. The upgrade for both teams can be witnessed by the 2009 men's basketball team reaching the Sweet Sixteen and beating the no. 1 ranked Kansas Jayhawks in the NCAA Tournament. The volleyball team offers further evidence having had three past years of 30+ win seasons. This facility has played an important part in helping the coaches and players to perform at a high level.

President Robert Koob and athletic director Rick Hartzell provided leadership for the development of the design of the McLeod Center. In addition to serving as athletic director, Hartzell was a basketball official and had visited many venues. He was able to take the best ideas from around the nation and incorporate them into the McLeod Center. Clark and Mary McLeod were the major benefactors for its development and the building carries their name as a result. The court is respectful of the contributions of R.J. and Elizabeth McCoy.

Christopher Ritrievi was named Athletic Director in 1992. Eldon Miller had served as interim Athletic Director during the 1991-1992 academic year. Ritrievi worked furiously to improve the competitive nature of UNI as a Division I athletic program. He worked to realign the management of the department and increased

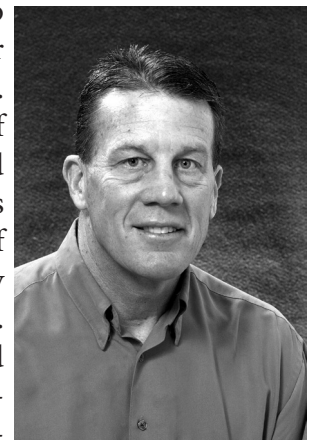


Christopher Ritrievi

operating budgets for all sports and scholarships for women's athletic teams. The NCAA Division I National Wrestling Championships were held in the UNI-Dome in 1997. During Ritrievi's time as Athletic Director, the Panthers experienced great success. It was during his tenure that athletics had a balanced budget and student athlete graduation rates were equal to or better than rates for the student body as a whole. The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, during Ritrievi's tenure, was granted NCAA Certification without conditions.

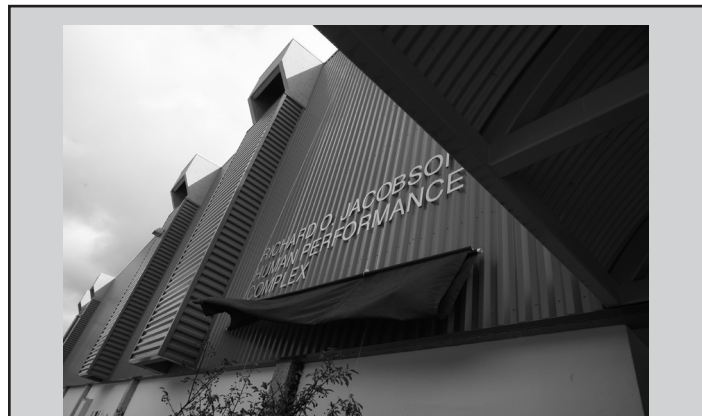
The UNI-Dome roof collapsed again in 1994. The roof was temporarily repaired, but some Panther basketball games, previously scheduled for the Dome were played in Young Arena in Waterloo and the Four Seasons Center in Cedar Rapids. Some football games were relocated to Memorial Stadium in Waterloo. The air-supported roof structure was replaced with a new steel roof and reopened in fall 1998. Ritrievi provided counsel for the repairs that changed the character and esthetics of the UNI-Dome both inside and out.

In 1999, President Koob named Rick Hartzell as Director of the Panther Athletic program. A graduate of UNI's School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Hartzell was the fourth full time director of athletics since the university competed at the Division I level. Hartzell's passion for sport and his support for student athletics were evident in his administration. He worked to advance the development of the McLeod Arena and the Human Performance Center.



Rick Hartzell

The Human Performance Complex advanced along a track parallel with the McLeod Center. The University considered them as two aspects of the same fundraising and architectural design project. However, the two projects were divided due to financial considerations requiring modifications of early plans. Nonetheless, the University was able to break ground for the building on July 21, 2006, in a location between the Wellness/Recreation Center and the UNI-Dome. In September 2007, the building was named the Jacobson Human Performance Complex in honor of Richard O. Jacobson, who made a substantial donation to the project. The building, which opened in late January 2008, houses curricular facilities and professional



Alongside the McLeod Center, the Human Performance Center was also built to bring an entirely new dimension to the UNI campus. The visionary brain child of Dr. Christopher Edginton and Dr. Richard "Biff" Williams, the Human Performance Center was designed to bring a medical entity to the curriculum, a place to offer one of the best athletic training curriculums in the country. The building was supported financially by Richard O. Jacobson and the entire complex, including upgrades to the Strength and Conditioning Center, locker rooms and administrative offices for athletics carry his name.

services relating to athletic training, sports medicine, and leisure, youth and human services.

During the Koob and Hartzell administrative years, the football team won multiple conference titles and advanced to the NCAA FCS championship game in 2005. The basketball team won its first MVC championship and made three straight NCAA tournament appearances. The track and field program gained national prominence with a top ten finish at the NCAA Division I indoor championships. The Panther volley-

ball team made multiple appearances in the NCAA tournament including advancing to the Sweet 16. The wrestling program crowned its first Division I individual national champion. During Hartzell's reign, the Panthers ranked in the top 100 of the US Sports Academy Director's Cup. Hartzell established women's soccer as a new varsity sport and was instrumental in a cooperative merger with the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, bringing UNI's athletic training and strength and conditioning programs under one umbrella. He received the All-American Football Foundation's General Robert Neyland Outstanding Athletic Director Award in 2007.

In 2006, Benjamin J. Allen was named the ninth president of the University of Northern Iowa. The McLeod Center, the Human Performance Center and the Jacobson Human Performance Complex including a new strength and conditioning center, locker rooms (football, track and field, basketball, volleyball and soccer) and administrative offices for intercollegiate athletics were all dedicated during Allen's presidency. These improvements have provided UNI with some of the best athletic facilities among peer institutions in the nation. On many occasions, individuals have commented on the quality of UNI athletic facilities, especially the fact that they have been knitted together in one contiguously linked facility, possibly unlike any other in the country. Hartzell departed as Athletic Director in 2008 and was replaced on an interim basis by head football coach Mark Farley.

In July 2008, Troy Dannen, a graduate of UNI, was named UNI's fifth Athletic Director. His tenure as Athletic Director has been marked by competitive and academic excellence. In addition, he has excelled in the area of fundraising, bringing significant new resources to the Department of Intercollegiate Athlet-



Benjamin J. Allen



Troy Dannen



The combination of the PEC/Wellness/Recreation Center, Human Performance Center, UNI-Dome, and McLeod Center provide Panther athletics with one of the most stunning array of resources to be found anywhere in the United States for intercollegiate athletics.

ics. Dannen brought the largest single unrestricted cash gift of \$2 million for intercollegiate athletics to the university. Of the department's \$11.6 million budget, the department generated over 50 percent of this annual amount. With the signing of an agreement with Learfield Sports, the Panthers media exposure has improved and expanded with multiple athletic events televised not only on a regional basis but throughout the United States. However, adjustments to the budget required the downsizing of the athletic program forcing the discontinuation of the baseball program.

The football program has continued its competitive ways, winning conference championships in the newly formed Missouri Valley Football Conference. The women's volleyball team has achieved a record of unparalleled success with consecutive undefeated MVC conference and tournament championships. The women's basketball team made back-to-back appearances in the NCAA Tournament and, for the first time, was crowned champions of the MVC league and tournament in 2010-2011. A crowning achievement for Panther athletics was the men's basketball team progression in the NCAA Tournament in 2010. After winning the MVC league and tournament championship, the men's basketball team stormed into the Sweet 16 by defeating the highly-ranked University of Nevada-Las Vegas and then the number one seed in the tournament, the University of Kansas. Dannen also continued the quest to upgrade Panther areas and facilities

by directing the \$1 million replacement of the turf in the UNI-Dome. In addition, he has worked to renovate and upgrade the West Gymnasium enhancing facilities for the wrestling program and has contributed to the updating of the West Campus Plan including provisions for a lighted artificial turf which will provide an on campus home for the women's soccer team.

Conclusion

In its first 30 years of the University of Northern Iowa's history, intercollegiate athletics had their humble beginnings on the open fields and in the basements of classroom buildings on a small teachers college campus. As the college developed, and interest in athletics grew, the college responded with purposely built, solid, traditional gymnasiums and playing fields that served both athletes and spectators for many decades. These facilities were nearly always strongly tied to the physical education curriculum. As the college approached university status and as the old facilities aged beyond reasonable expectations for enhancement, the school began the development of an extraordinary complex of facilities west of Hudson Road. Several of these new facilities retained a strong link to the school's curriculum. But others, such as the UNI-Dome and the McLeod Center, were more clearly and specifically aimed at athletics and entertainment.

Over the years, the program has been blessed with support from each of the university's presidents. Further, leadership provided by individuals serving in administrative roles within both the men's and women's physical education program and the School of HPELS as well as those individuals identified as Athletic Directors in the modern era, have contributed in a significant fashion to the development and success of the program. One of the challenges over the years has been the movement of the program from its NCAA Division II status to Division I. The resources to run a program at this level were most likely underestimated at the time of the transition. The cost of many of the programs coaches over the years was buried in the School of HPELS. However, in recent years, that relationship was reengineered and, as a result, the programs true cost have been realized. Today, UNI runs a very competitive NCAA Division I program, yet one that is challenged to reach its financial benchmarks year in and year out.

Clearly, the Panther athletics program was elevated in 1950 when the wrestling program was crowned national champions. During that time, there were no divisions so essentially the team competed against all institutions. Several other landmark championships were earned that brought great credit to UNI including winning the women's softball championship in 1977 and 1982. Other successful sporting events such as the 1991 men's basketball team advancement in the men's NCAA basketball tournament and the 2009 victory of number one seeded University of Kansas, drew great attention to the Panther athletic program. These significant achievements had a great impact on enhancing the stature of Panther athletics assisting in greater recruiting of athletes and fan support.

It is difficult to predict what the next significant step will be in the development of athletics facilities at UNI. The number of inter-collegiate sports has declined. University enrollment is stable at best. Both private and public finances are limited. The University of Northern Iowa may well be moving into a period similar to the 1940s, '50s and '60s, when the school simply maintained and slightly enhanced its athletic facilities. If that is the case, the University may take comfort from the fact that it is going into that kind of period with a good stock of athletics, recreation and physical education facilities on hand.



The UNI track and field program, like the other sports venues, was growing to be a serious Division I contender. UNI simply did not have a 400 meter track and specifically not one that was an all-weather surface. The program needed an upgrade, and so the cinder track at Malcolm Price Laboratory School was selected as the site for the Mark Messersmith Track Complex. It boasts a state-of-the-art all-weather surface that is found on those tracks that serve Olympic-level running.

Baseball at UNI

Steve Taft

In the world of the ideal and perhaps in the far corners of our memories, it's not unusual to think of baseball in terms of sand lots and little league games, playing catch with dad or attending a professional game with a glove in one hand and a hot dog in another hoping to catch that ever evasive foul ball. Iowa is, of course, the home of Hollywood's Field of Dreams and it is also home to the original field of dreams in Van Meter, Iowa where a father cleared a farm field and built a "ballpark, complete with bleachers, scoreboard and refreshments, right there on our farm," so his future Hall of Fame son, Bob Feller, could play the game of baseball.

Today, this sport known as baseball, traditionally referred to as the National Past Time and America's Game is slowly being overshadowed by more popular sports and perhaps more so to video games and youthful technology. For 103 years, the game of Ruth, DiMaggio, Robinson, Mantle, Mays, Aaron, Jeter and more was played by students enrolled in our university. In 2009, UNI Panther baseball faded into history with economics, weather, and politics ultimately swinging the bat of reality.

An appropriate title for this chapter may be "Against All Odds" because throughout its existence, UNI baseball coaches and players fought the good fight often accomplishing more with less. Given the unexpected timing of the notification in the spring of 2009 that UNI baseball was ending forever, emotions may cloud the fact that the existence of UNI baseball was an uphill battle for years, if not throughout much of the program's existence. This chapter will highlight some of the many accomplishments of baseball at the University of Northern Iowa and perhaps a disappointment or two. Every effort has been made to accurately portray the history of baseball at UNI. Specific reference resources include student newspapers such as *The Students Offering*, *The Normal Eyte*, *The College Eye*, *The Northern Iowan*, and the university *Old Gold Yearbook*, the *Waterloo Courier*, UNI Hall of Fame biographies, UNI Baseball Media Guides and *The Associated Press*.

Space is of course limited and apologies to all of the outstanding players, coaches, assistant coach-

es, academic advisers and supporters that may not be mentioned in this chapter.

The Beginning

Although university baseball media guides list baseball beginning officially in 1893 at the Iowa State Teacher's College (I.S.T.C.), it should be noted that records show the sport first appeared on campus at the then known Iowa State Normal School as far back as 1878. As *The Students' Offering*, the first student newspaper notes, "Base Ball in the pasture is the favorite amusement." (Note the original spelling of the sport.) Although not an official sanctioned sport, the crack of a bat on campus continued to be heard throughout these early years. In 1891, *The Normal Eyte*, the new school newspaper reported competition was alive and well on campus as the "young men of the Fourth Year class invite the gentlemen of the Third Year class and H.S. classes to cross bats with them upon the diamond". The diamond was perhaps more of the sand lot type as "The boys have put up good back-stop on the ball grounds. Now if the grounds could be leveled-off a little some and some of the post holes filled up it would be a pretty respectable looking place to play ball."

On June 17, 1893, during the first "official" season of baseball at Iowa State Teachers College, the Normal Nine as they were known, bounced back from a June 3rd 27-4 pounding by Waverly to defeat them on the road 18-9. The 1893 team did not have an official "coach", but was instead led by Captain Avery and the first year of baseball as an official sport on campus ended with a record of one win and one loss. Avery continued to guide the team in 1894 with the team sporting one win and two losses.

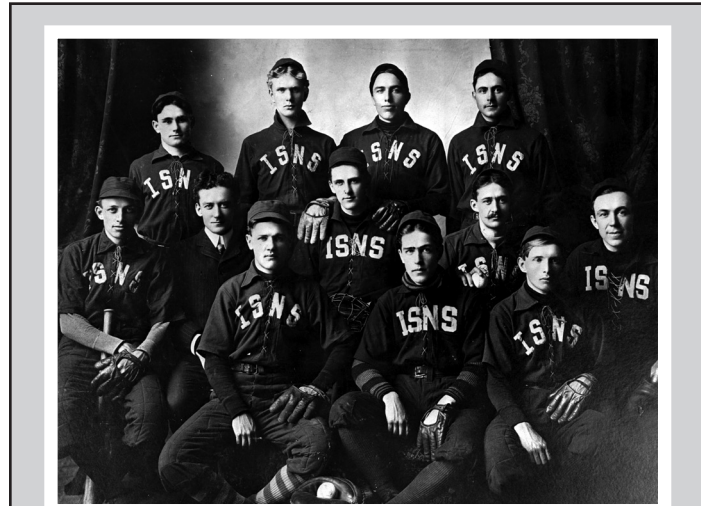
In 1895, *The Normal Eyte* reports baseball was not simply reserved for the males at the college to enjoy: "Boys are not the only one who can play base ball; if you do not believe it watch a game between the Patter-son and Rownd nines composed of the ladies of the two halls. Surely some of them might well play in the regular nine."

In 1895, J. E. Vance came on board as the first non-player coach and the team bounced back with a two-win, one-loss season. Lack of fan sportsmanship was noted in 1895 when the Normal Nine played an away game against Western College in Toledo, Iowa losing 16-4 and spectators revealing the sign of the pitcher and catcher to the home team. The school paper notes: "We have as good a ball team as any college with our resources and we are willing to meet Toledo at any time in a good straight game, but we object to the spirit that was manifested by our neighboring school last Saturday." As early as 1895, resources (or lack thereof), were an issue as well as the importance of sportsmanship.

1896 marked the beginning of several Iowa colleges attempting to form a new baseball league. The Inter-Collegiate Base-ball Association of Iowa had already been formed with other member teams including the State University of Iowa, Iowa College and Cornell University. The captain of the baseball team, Arthur Rhine writes a brief notice in *The Normal Eyte* encouraging young men that are committed to the sport and the idea of team to tryout. He stresses that baseball players should never be "delinquent in studies" as they are looking for young men to "whom the regular practice in baseball shall be an aid in school work rather than a detriment." Certainly games could not have been much of a distraction as the team ended the year with a record of one win and one loss.

As years passed it became evident that sports on campus were attempting to become a part of college life. However, it was not without its opponents. Student and manager of the football team, John M. Dunkerton, was rather emphatic noting how important it was to have students and faculty supporting campus athletics: "The athletes will doubtless have uphill work here for some years to come, unless some people who are trying to control everything at Normal, either change their views or cease trying to put a stop to all team work in connection with the school." One faculty member noted, "We don't want the idea to get out that we are going to athletics entirely in this school." Another faculty member noted, "O, athletics are merely a passing fad at the present time; they will soon go like all other fads." Dunkerton makes his final argument noting, "The training of the body along with the mind is a God send to the youth of our colleges and universities, and it has come to stay.

Students, make a stand for athletics to help them to be successful in every department this year."



The 1902 baseball team was often referred to as "the Normals" even though the nickname was more notably "the Tutors." Note the gloves worn in those bygone days. Do you spell "hurt" with one or two u's?

It's evident in these early years that sports may not have existed on campus without the hard work, ingenuity and voices of dedicated students. In January of 1903, Guy Lowman, a student and manager of the baseball team, was working hard to get a coach for the team. The Athletic Department supported Mr. Lowman's efforts while asking pertinent questions: "How are we to raise the money to hire a coach? Who will be the first one to devise means of securing a coach? Don't all speak at once!" It's evident that the concept of team was necessary in life as well as on the field. It's also evident that students may have been driving the justification for sports on campus and also that Guy Lowman understood the art of persuasion.

"Baseball is a clean, wholesome sport and is good to every boy who indulges in the game. It brings him out of the close confinement of the classroom. It takes the stoop out of his shoulders and enables him to build up a strong and hardy frame. It rests those organs of which have been in usage through long hours of study, and teaches the boy who indulges in the sport, self-reliance and courage. If every mother at home could fully understand what her boy means when he says he is 'in training' she would rejoice to know that he's on the college nine."

Although UNI media guides note that there was no baseball in 1903 or 1904, *The Normal Eyte* reports players reporting for practice on March 18, 1903. On April 11th, the *Eyte* reports Roy B. Fiske from Grinnell was the coach and students and faculty being encouraged to purchase their tickets. In the May 2nd edition of the paper, it reported the Normal Nine lost to Drake in five very wet innings and rain continued five days later with Iowa upending Normal 21-13 in once again muddy conditions. The Ames Cyclones were next on the bill in 1903 and a Normal Nine game with Coe College followed. Whether sanctioned or not, it is evident baseball on campus continued although not in the official record books.

1904 had a slate of eight games scheduled, including games with Coe, Ames, Iowa, and Grinnell and I.S.T.C. hoped to arrange a game with Drake and one or two with Western College that spring. However, the Drake Athletic Board cancelled as its students did not raise the requisite \$150 by April 1st. However, the Normal season kicked off with a 15-3 win against Ellsworth College. R.B. Leland agreed to coach the team in 1905 (an official year apparently) and led the team to a 2-1 record.

Charles "Doc" Pell, a member of the Physical Training Staff, served as coach in 1906 and the team played home games at Normal Field. Approximately 40 students vied for positions with early practices taking place in the gym until the weather became bearable and the field became playable. A limited number of games (five) were played against State Industrial School, State University, Ames College, Cornell College and Coe College. It's interesting to note that before any games could be contracted, \$250 "must be pledged through the purchase of season tickets." Season tickets were sold for one dollar. One-hundred and three years later, the 2009 Panthers would have to raise \$1.2 million to continue playing ball in future seasons, not to mention UNI teams of the modern era would love to have had 250 season ticket holders in the stands for each home game. The Normal Nine ended the season 1-7 under Coach Pell who shortly thereafter left for Drake. John Fitzgerald agreed to coach the 1907 team, although it would not be an easy year.

1907 saw a slight expansion in games and also a better team, yet still challenged to beat the State University team and Ames College. The school paper contin-

ued to raise support for the team as did several faculty members leading the cheers. Chapel exercises were "shortened in order to practice Ki-yip-a-ki-yi, and the siren yell." However, with three games left in the season, the team was "disbanded". Two players had broken team rules and when other team members refused to report to practice after two days in apparent protest, the decision was made to end the season with three games yet to be played. Differing viewpoints arose in the school paper the following week: "A Czar may work all right in the east...but when a man comes out among the agriculturists of the west, he must show at least that he believes in a square deal and treat another man the same as another." 1907 ended with an official 4-2 record. The 1908 team was led by Captain W.G. Moorhead providing leadership to keep a team together that still had a "chip on its shoulder." Professor Seymour coached the team to a 2-5 record.

The April 7, 1909 *Eyte* reports Moorhead would select the team and assign positions with final approval given by the Athletic Board committee led by Professor Seymour. Season tickets were sold with games against Iowa, Grinnell, Drake, Cornell, and Simpson College scheduled. The April 10th 1910 edition of the *Eyte* reports the Athletic Board authorized Professor Seymour (as coach of the baseball team) to schedule five games in 1910 with games in fact being played. Why are specific seasons as 1903, 1904, 1909 and 1910 reported as "No baseball" in UNI media guides? To quote the character Phillip Henslowe in the film *Shakespeare in Love*, "It's a mystery."

The 1912 *Old Gold* yearbook looks back at the 1911 baseball season notes, "The spring of 1911 saw the best baseball team the past five years" which is further evidence that baseball did exist in 1909 and 1910. Thirteen players comprised the team of 1911 with Coach Seymour and Captain Bolz leading the team to a 2-5-1 record. The coaching carousel continued in 1912 with H.F. Pasini taking the helm. A record of five wins and six losses were posted with H.D. Ludeman as the elected captain. There were no makeup games at this time in I.S.T.C. baseball history as three games were rained out. The 1914 *Old Gold* refers to the 1913 team as "The best Baseball Team in the history of the school." The second-year Coach Pasini team won the Hawkeye Valley Championship with a record of 4-3-1. The "Wonderless Hitters" of 1914, led by former teammate H.G. Lunde-

man, “the mainstay behind the bat” in 1913, posted the “best team batting average of the past 10 years” (.225), as the Normal Nine posted a 4-4 record. Professor Seymour returned to the diamond in 1915, yet the Old Gold noted inexperience may have hampered the 1-3 team as it was without Shorty Reinhart who had “kept things lively around third base” in 1914, and if “he hadn’t gone and got married, he would be there yet.”

Give credit to Professor Seymour as he was one of the more consistent coaching faces the Normal Nine had seen. Returning again in 1916 and with a new diamond being built on campus, the team posted a 6-4 season record. Seymour returned for the third year in a row in 1917 and perhaps the highlight of the season was working alongside captain and future baseball legend, L.W. Whitford providing senior leadership. Rain must once again have played havoc on the schedule as 16 games were originally scheduled. Access to outdoor training is referenced in the College Eye as the team first stepped outdoors in mid-April. However, the Dubuque German team, slated to open the season against the Normal Nine had been practicing outdoors for approximately one month. Although the student paper provides encouragement to the team, it is noted of the Dubuque team that “their array of players this year do look as invincible as their relatives across the sea.”

World War I affected the team of 1918 with only three returning players and a new coach in Van Oot (first name unavailable) who led the team to a respectable 4-3 record. The team is alternately referenced as “Tutors” and “Teachers” in the articles of the day. The following year, the hopes of 1919 rested upon several returning players and some that returned to school following service duty. The March 19th College Eye notes “Coach Glasener has now set about to form a baseball team worthy of representation of the college.” However, Arthur (A.D.) Dickenson returned from the Army two weeks later and took over as coach of the Teachers College Nine. Pete Jorgenson, the star pitcher of the team and captain, pitched 11 strong innings in a 2-0 loss in the opening game of the season. Dickenson was putting together a competitive team as the Nine trounced Ellsworth 15-0 on a one-hit shutout by Nels Ure and Jorgenson combined. Ure was “beaned” at the plate and was out for the fifth and sixth innings, but returned in the seventh inning to close out the game.

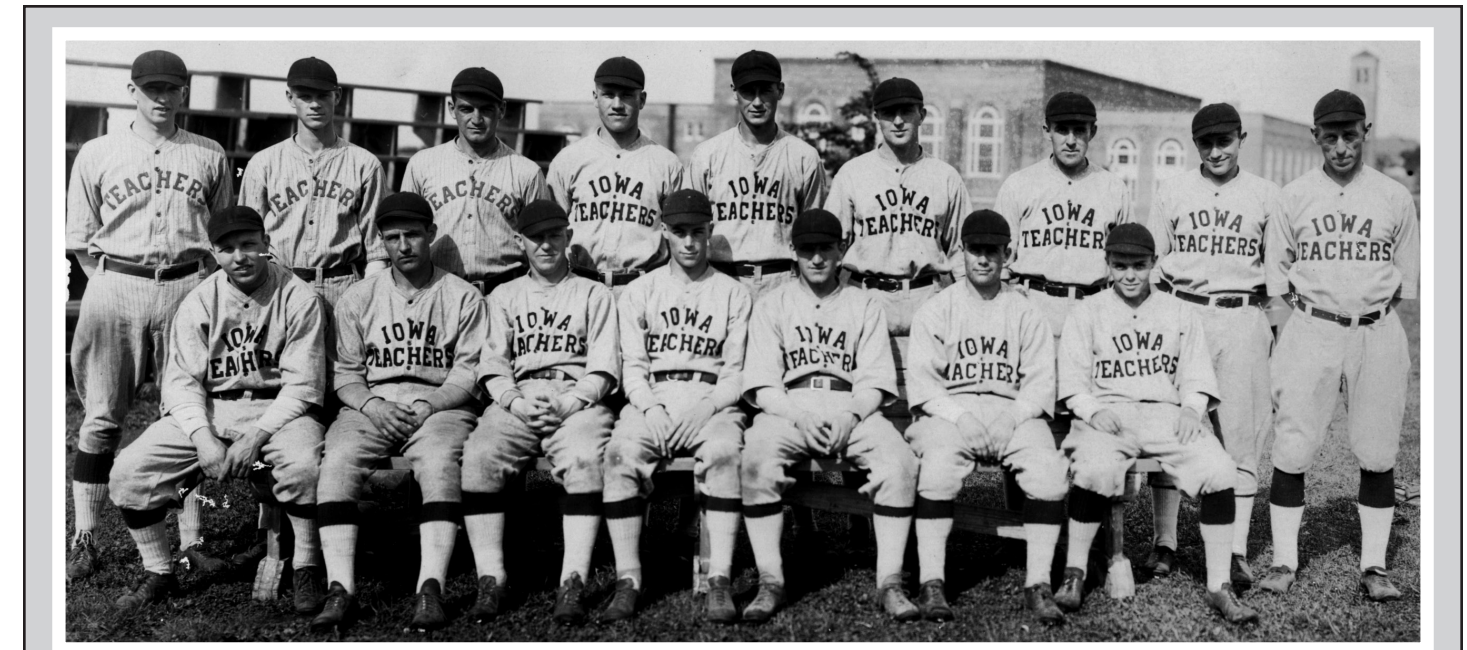
The following Wednesday, campus activities were plentiful as baseball prepared to take on Dubuque and 530 costumed dancers participated in the crowning of the May Day Queen.

Abram James took the reins of the coaching duties in 1920 and ’21 leading the team to 3-3 and 3-3-1 records respectively. “Mon” Whitford was a primary pitcher for the Tutors. James was highly touted by the Eye as knowing baseball “from A to Z” and James was active on campus as a recruiter for the team getting 60 students to try out in 1921 and also coaching semi-pro ball in the summer. Coaching changes continued in 1922 as Athletic Director L.L. Mendenhall led the team to a 4-5 record. A solid base had been formed as a 6-1-1 record in 1923 was followed up by 6-0 record in ’24 and a conference championship (coached by Osborne Coles). A 7-3 record in ’25 and another conference championship followed with yet another coach, Rosco Minton. Between 1893 and 1925, the college baseball team had a total of 18 recorded coaching changes. Most of the previous baseball campaigns resulted in less than stellar seasons, but perhaps the 1924 and 1925 championships were leading to higher expectations.

A New Era

In 1926 a sea of calm was about to take over baseball at Iowa State Teachers College as Lawrence “Mon” Whitford was to take the helm and steer the ship between 1926 and 1965. Whitford’s Tutors began with respectable seasons in 1926 and 1927 with 6-4 records each year. However in 1928, the Tutor Nine were rewarded by the college with a new baseball diamond located south of the Men’s Gym. The team responded with an 11-1 season and another conference championship including three out-of-state wins against Illinois colleges. A highlight of the ’28 season was a 5-4 win against Upper Iowa in which captain Buck Wilson pitched 17 innings giving up seven hits and striking out 11 and holding Upper Iowa scoreless in the final nine innings. The pitcher for Upper Iowa also pitched the full 17 innings striking out 16 Tutors.

A second-place finish was the result in 1929, but a win against the Iowa “B” team 15-3 and a win against the Ames Cyclones 6-2 were spring highlights. Whitford’s winning ways continued in 1930 with a 10-2 record and a six-day trip through Iowa, Illinois



Now known as the Iowa State Teachers College Teachers, the 1929 team boasted a 9-4-1 record. Coach “Mon” Whitford is shown here with the team.

and Michigan, the longest trip for the baseball team to date. Senior third-baseman Verdine Barnum was voted MVP by the Athletic Board in 1930 and capped off his senior season with a .392 batting average. For reasons unknown, the college Athletic Board ruled in 1930 that the baseball team could no longer “elect” a captain beginning in 1931. “Temporary Captains will be appointed before each game and an honorary captain chosen at the end of the season.” Wayne Heintz was the last elected baseball Captain during these early years of baseball. He would receive the MVP award in 1931.

To better prepare players and to keep the team polished between games, Coach Whitford started a freshman team and Dave McCuskey joined the staff as assistant coach and coach of the freshman. The freshman experience did not help the following year as only three veteran players returned and the Normal Nine recorded a dismal 1-13 record. The freshman team of 1931 was able to play a couple of collegiate games against Mason City Junior College and won 14-3 and 6-0.

1933 and 1934 saw respectable records of 6-6 and 6-4 respectively with Whitford’s team beating Iowa State three out of four games in ’34. Snow and cold weather hung on until mid-April in 1935 making outdoor practice difficult, not to mention getting home games played. The team finished 4-8 with senior pitcher

Everett Scott posting a 4-4 record and going out “in a blaze of glory by pitching the Panthers to a 6-0 no-hit, no-run victory over Michigan Normal.” Scott was also named the Most Valuable Player by the school Athletic Board. His pitching performance is rather remarkable as he only had one previous pitching outing (his junior year). Scott’s no hitter was the first since Whitford’s no hitter of 1919.

Thirteen lettermen, eight of who were starting players returned for Whitford in 1936; in addition, a team of 38 total players provided plenty of competition. Less than ideal weather once again forced the team to indoor workouts even after the season started. Catcher George Hutchinson is referenced in the Old Gold as “one of the best catchers in the history of the school” and pitcher George Blanchard, MVP of 1936, proved to be adept on the mound and at the plate posting a 4-3 record and leading the team in batting with a .375 batting average. The team finished the season 8-6. A 9-4 record in ’37, a 1-11 record in ’38 and 9-7 finish in ’39 reveals the constant challenges involved with coaching and placing a winning team on the field year in and year out. Hutchinson was named MVP in ’37 and outfielder/second baseman Ed Nash was MVP in ’38. Records of 8-4-1, 10-7, and 6-5-1 in 1940, ’41 and ’42 were respectable for the “Whitfordmen”. Of special note, catcher/outfielder Dick Nottger hit an unheard of .525 in 1941.

Training for the 1942 season began but was soon affected as three Panther players headed off to service. Varsity catcher Forrest Hanifan departed school in April for the Army. Hanifan was the only married Panther and was father to a baby girl. He was a two-year letterman and batted .319 in '41. Third baseman Bowen and second baseman Schaeffer had already been inducted earlier in the year. The 1942 team continued on with a season highlighted by a split to the Cyclones and an exciting double-bill with Illinois Normal resulting in a 15-5 win in game one and 3-3 13-inning tie in game two. Game one featured an exciting eighth inning with Bob Titsworth, Nottger, Jack Lansing, and Ken Dilly each hitting a home run. Although a slugfest in game one, game two featured its share of dramatics as the College Eye reports: "Besides the tussle in which an Illinois player was determined to break the tie by bending a bat around the umpire, two unidentified youngsters staged a prolonged exhibition on the 'manly art of self-defense'. Several college professors and 'Brick' Bradford were almost 'assaulted en masse by the provoked juveniles.'" In addition, a monoplane flew overhead and shortly thereafter a Cedar Falls fire truck rolled passed the stadium. It was suggested that Coach Whitford "summoned it to extinguish the fire in the opposing pitchers speedball." The '42 team overcame the loss of valuable teammates and excelled in several areas, particularly at the plate. Nottger once again led the team in batting with a .426 batting average. Changes were in store for the baseball team as Coach Whitford was the third University coach to leave for service. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Army.

In the spring of 1943, several athletic sports seasons were put on hold, including baseball due to "transportation problems, the limited enrollment of men, and increased use of athletic facilities by the army and navy." Four members of the college athletic staff were now serving in the War and remaining staff were spending more and more time "training more than 400 army air corps students." In addition, gymnasium facilities were being used by the Waves making indoor training difficult for spring sports. Therefore, baseball was not played from 1943-45.

However, in the summer of 1945 Coach Whitford was back on campus and also was involved nationally as a member of the American Association of College Baseball Coaches and was named one of eight on the

national membership committee. Upon his return to campus he proudly announced, "Collegiate baseball can be expected to forge ahead to a place in the sports world akin to that of football and basketball following the close of the war." One of the major discussions taking place at the national meeting was the relationship of collegiate and professional baseball. Famed Dodger owner Branch Rickey was vocal in pointing out his belief that there are instances where college coaches recruit their own players to play professionally or semi-professionally before they graduate. "This is a deplorable condition," Rickey declared as he believed there may be instances "where boys who have entered college might reasonably be signed a professional contract even though they had not finished their college education." However, he also wished to reduce tensions and build a positive relationship with college programs and did not press the issue. Coach Whitford apparently was not opposed to players being paid to play. The July 13, 1945 College Eye notes, "College musicians legally exploit their talents for cash and yet maintain their amateur standing. Why not allow the same for baseball players? Is a music team or a debate team any different from an athletic team?" Of course, such questions continue to be asked today.

Sixty-five men were in place to try out for Whitford's 1946 team. A handful from the 1941 and '42 team were back. They were older and wiser men, men now able to take advantage of the G.I. Bill which Franklin Roosevelt signed into law on June 22, 1944. Colleges and universities would quickly see enrollment increase. A Fortune magazine survey of the class of 1949 (70 percent of whom were veterans) concluded, it was "the best...the most mature...the most responsible, the most disciplined group of college students in history." Certainly, the same could be said of the Whitford men.

True to the polite and respectful nature of all Iowans, Coach Whitford personally demonstrated such qualities as illustrated in a May 10, 1946 College Eye story when questioned why visiting teams sit in the third base dugout and the Panther nine in the first base dugout? Whitford explained "... it is merely a courtesy to the visiting club to give them the benefit of the warmth of whatever spring sunshine there is during the late afternoons rather than having them use the usually cooler side of the field." The polite '46 team had a respectable 6-6 record and shortstop Don Shupe paced the club with a .302 batting average.

Ninety-three baseball candidates were on hand to try out for the 23 varsity positions in 1947 with 10 letter winners returning. Stands were often full and the team responded with the best baseball record since 1940 posting a 10-3 season and a nine-game winning streak. Carl Dresselhaus finished his senior season with three shutouts and a 5-1 record. The left-hander allowed just six runs (four earned) and 30 hits while striking out 33 and issuing only seven walks in 54 innings with an ERA of 0.75. In addition, he batted .285 for the Panthers. Freshman Don Dalke was 3-0 on the mound and was described as a "clutch hitter" and played left field when not on the mound. Catcher George Dorr paced the Panther batsman with a .360 batting average with Shupe second with a .320 average.

Eighty players participated in fall workouts. Making the team could not have been an easy prospect as Whitford had 11 lettermen and 14 reserves returning. Fan support was evident in '48 and there were many highlights for the 12-4 team including an opening day double-header sweep of Iowa State 7-2 and 4-2. Throughout the season, John (Jack) Demitroff pitched 20 scoreless innings against Big Ten teams, but lost a heartbreaker to the Minnesota Gophers giving up one earned run. The Panthers had a rather fun-filled win against Illinois Normal, 21-2 and Dorr hit .371 for the season, pitcher Dalke won six games with a 0.90 ERA and contributed at the plate with a .346 average. Rounding out a great season, Dalke had zero errors in 38 chances. It is apparent he was one of the standout players of this era.

1949 could not have started any better as the Panthers knocked off the Gophers twice by identical scores of 4-3 over a Friday and Saturday with game two being rather historical. On Saturday, April 9th the longest game in Panther history took place against the Gophers with a 19-inning marathon lasting four hours, 18 minutes. Demitroff came to the mound in the eighth inning with the Panthers down by two. With the Panthers making a comeback and tying the score, Demitroff continued for the remaining 11 innings to pitch shutout ball. Demitroff also got three of the teams 10 hits in the game.

April weather was once again causing schedule challenges in the spring of 1950 as snow, rain, and cold delayed the mid-week opening with Minnesota until the weekend. Beating the Gophers appeared a grand

way to begin a season as standout Dalke pitched 12 innings for the Panthers beating Minnesota on Friday, April 7th 6-5. Dalke struck out nine while allowing zero earned runs. It was also his second straight game without a walk. Errors continued to plague the Panthers the next day unfortunately as they lost 11-5 to Minnesota. The freshman team concept continued in 1950 with 50 students attempting to establish themselves for future seasons. Leading the freshmen were coaches Burdette Hansen and Jim Bayne. Dalke once again had an excellent season hitting .423 and establishing a 5-1 record as a pitcher with a .964 ERA.

All too often the impact a coach has had on the life of a young ballplayer can be overlooked. However, in the fall of 1950, Coach Whitford was honored during "Mon's Day" at the South Dakota State-Teachers College Football game with 42 former players attending to honor the legendary coach. Although appreciative, Coach Whitford still had a lot of years and games left before passing on the leadership of Panther baseball to someone else.

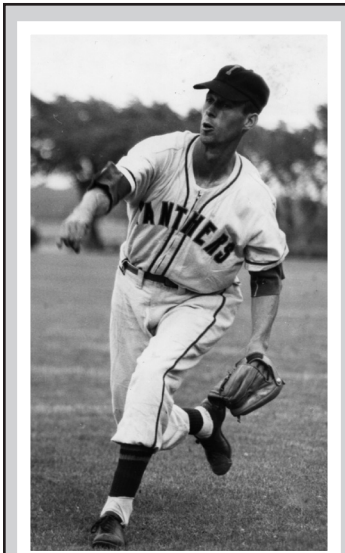
Whitford labeled 1951 a "rebuilding" year for the Panthers and perhaps the 5-8 record indicates Coach's intuitive nature and the fact that none of the starting nine hit over .300. It should be noted that the Korean Conflict affected the 1951 roster. Eight lettermen returned for Whitford's 20th season in '52 and a record of 8-6 went into the books. 1953-54 resulted in .500 teams, but 1955 resulted in a 12-5 record with



Pitcher Bob Boderman and catcher Duane Newton discuss "the plan" with Coach "Mon" Whitford. The Tutors finished the 1955 season with a 12-5 record beating the likes of Mankato Teachers, Iowa State, Omaha and La Crosse Teachers.

Derald Swisher as the leading pitcher with a 5-2 record and Duane Newton leading the team in hitting with a .415 batting average. Sonny Horn finished second to Newton batting .383 and first-baseman Howie Pigg was the defensive standout with zero errors in 17 games. Swisher's best pitch apparently had a mysterious side to it. Called his "skidding fastball," Coach Whitford said, "I've studied his motion and his grip, and I can't see that he does anything different when it breaks. It's the best pitch he's got and it will make him tough to hit if he can learn to throw it when he wants to. But, what he does to it is a mystery to me."

Would you believe it, cold weather affecting the team in 1956? According to the Old Gold yearbook, "Weak hitting and cold weather contributed to 7 straight Panther losses during April." The opening series against the Cyclones resulted in a six-inning 5-3 loss on April 6th as the game was called due to a "blinding snow-storm." Game two of the series was also cancelled due to snow. In a three-game series against undefeated Minnesota, the Panthers were pounded



"Swish" Swisher was one of TC's ace pitchers during the late 50s.

for 13 home runs in losses of 7-1, 6-1, and 13-1. However, after loss number seven, the Panthers outscored their opponents 77-39. And as warmer weather finally welcomed spring, the Panthers battled for nine straight wins in May. Merle "Lefty" Garman, a switch-hitter, led all hitters with a .392 batting average. Whitford noted in '56 that New York Yankees switch-hitting Mickey Mantle started the trend regarding the art of hitting from both sides of the plate as more southpaw pitchers began having success against left-handed hitters and Whitford saw no reason why players could not adjust to being a switch-hitter. "After all," said Whitford, "the most important fundamentals in hitting are a good eye and good timing. A player who has this eye and timing from one side of the plate should still have it after he

switches, provided he practices enough to gain coordination."

An inexplicable '57 season resulted in a 2-10 record. Individual highlights include Frank Sovich topping all hitters with an outstanding .436 mark, Larry Pook followed with an impressive .405, and Bob Elmore at first-base committed only one error all season.

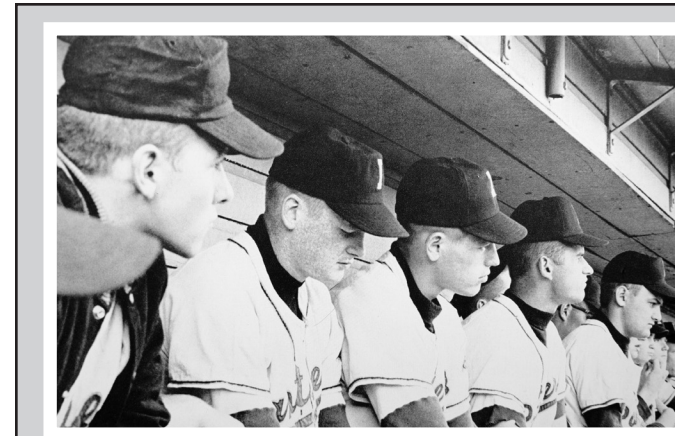
Finally, in their first year of conference play, the 1958 Panthers with 11 lettermen returning struck a mighty blow and won the North Central Conference beating six out of seven opponents and posting an overall 12-8 record with two losses to the University of Missouri in the Region 5 Tournament in the National Collegiate Playoff. Third-baseman Danny Boardson led the team in hitting with a .349 batting average. The conference win is even more impressive considering Coach Whitford was hospitalized with pneumonia. Coach Jim Witham led the team in his absence.

An impressive 11-3 record is on the books for the '59 team and the Panthers were undefeated in conference play, but lost to South Dakota State 3-2 in the championship game. Panther pitchers had an impressive year holding opponents to a 0.18 ERA. John Zahn was 5-0 with an ERA of 1.29 while Dave Ray and Kent Folsom each won three games. The Achilles heel of the team may have ultimately been its .228 team batting average.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the success of the '59 Panthers is due to UNI Hall of Famer and two-sport letterman Eddie Watt who played at Northern Iowa in basketball and baseball. He left school in 1961 to sign a major league contract, but later returned to complete work on his degree. While at S.C.I he earned All-North Central Conference honors in 1961 and was the top pitcher on a team that participated in the NCAA play-offs. He led UNI in 1961 with a 5-1 record and 1.98 ERA in 50 innings, yielding just 29 hits and 18 walks while striking out 56.

In 1962, he signed with the Baltimore Orioles, playing in the A, AA, and AAA leagues until 1965. From 1966-73 he played with the Baltimore Orioles on four American League championship teams in 1966, '69, '70, '71, and two world championship teams in 1966 and 1970. His major league career also included playing for the Philadelphia Phillies and Chicago Cubs.

Watt's major league career record stands at 38-36 with 80 saves. He pitched 659 innings in 411 appearanc-



The 1961 Panthers were 11-4 and earned a bid to play in the District Five NCAA play-offs. The bench, as shown here, is taking the game seriously. From left: Eddie Watt, Larry Kehoe, Dennis Olejniczak, Jerry Holbrook, and Dave Cox.

es, recording 254 walks and 462 strikeouts. Following his major league career he coached professional baseball with the San Diego Padres, Philadelphia Phillies, and Houston Astros.

1960 resulted in a 9-8 season and a third-place conference finish. Shortstop Ed Ware topped the team with a .361 average while hitting .429 in league play. Ware and outfielder Jim Steifert were named to the All-North Central Conference team. A second conference championship in four seasons was the reward for a record of 7-0 in league play and an 11-4 overall record in 1961. In league play, the Panthers scored 59 runs to only 10 for their opponents. The team's .333 batting average led the conference as it posted a .969 fielding average. All-conference players included pitcher Watt, first baseman Larry Kehoe, shortstop Ware, outfielders Steifert and Lyle Thomson. Honorable mention all-conference players were Norm Blake, Dave Ray, Darrell Bunge and Jack Heaton. Kehoe led the league with a whopping .588 batting average and Watt and Bunge had ERA's of 0.00 in league play. The Panthers went on to challenge Oklahoma State in the NCAA Tournament, but lost two to the Cowboys, 10-0 and 11-8.

Whitford was honored in Chicago in January of 1962 by the American Association of College Baseball Coaches with the 25 Year Award and his team would go on to honor its coach on the field. Another conference title lay in store in '62, albeit a tie as the championship game ended in a 3-3 tie after 11 innings. Rain of

course was the culprit. Third-baseman Jerry Holbrook led the team with a .412 batting average and drove in 24 runs. Duane Josephson, Steifert and Bruce Lein all batted over .300 and on the mound, Bunge pitched nine complete games and posted a 7-1 record and an ERA of 1.25.

The Panthers were growling loud in the early 60's as another North Central Conference Championship came to campus in 1963 as the Panthers posted a 14-4 record. Coach Whitford was named Fifth District "Coach of the Year". Mighty 5-6 lefty Tom Simpson pitched a record 40 1/3 scoreless consecutive innings and as a team, the Panthers established records in wins, home runs, and stolen bases. Coaches of the North Central Conference selected five Panthers to the all-conference team, including future UNI Hall of Famer and major league catcher Josephson, third baseman Dick Lane, right fielder Cal Uhlig, future UNI Hall of Fame pitcher Simpson and utility man Gary Anderson.

Although the overall record of 11-10 in '64 was not overly impressive, the winning tradition did continue for the Panthers in league play as they shared the conference title with Morningside College with 8-3 league records. Josephson was named the top college division catcher in America hitting 10 home runs and batting .402 and teammate Simpson led the staff with a 5-1 record on the mound and a 1.34 ERA.

Josephson, a basketball player as well, was named to the All-North Central Conference basketball team as well as the Little All-America baseball team. He played baseball at UNI from 1960-65 and is the first player in school history to be named all-American in baseball as well as becoming the first to hit 10 home runs in a single season. His 10 round trippers in 1964 led the nation. His career statistics at UNI included a .365 batting average (.455 in conference play), 20 home runs and 75 RBI's in 57 games. He committed just one error in his entire UNI career and led the State College of Iowa to the NCAA Tournament and three conference championships.

Upon graduation in 1965, Josephson pursued baseball and was the "All-Star" catcher for the Southern League in '65 and the Pacific Coast League in '66. In 1968 he was an American League All-Star as a Chicago White Sox. During his career he played for the White Sox and Boston Red Sox. His lifetime major league stats

include a .258 batting average, 23 home runs and 164 RBI's appearing in 470 games.

Sometimes the stars line up and great things happen...or not. 1965 was a special year as "Mon" Whitford entered his 37th year of coaching a Panther team and his final year at the State College of Iowa. Winning six Conference championships in the previous 8 years, the '65 team honored Whitford with a 10-4-1 record. On Friday, May 4, 1965 the Whitfordmen notched their 300th win for their coach against Iowa State with a 7-1

victory. This win was particularly gratifying as Iowa State was the only team on the schedule to have a winning record over Whitford's teams. His last home game as coach of the SCI Panthers resulted in a 12-5 win against Wartburg for his 302nd win. Winning pitcher Simpson started off the second inning with a home run and Larry Gabe knocked one out of the park in the sixth. Strangely, the Panthers were on pace to win the crown one last time for their beloved coach, but lost a chance to win the conference due to a rainout with Morning-

Lawrence "Mon" Whitford

A number of coaches piloted the baseball teams in its infancy. On several occasions, the captain of the team assumed not only the responsibility of leadership, but coaching duties as well. In 1926, the former Normal Nine standout assumed the role of "coach" and for 37 years served the University and his players with distinction. Lawrence Whitford attended high school in Edgerton, Wis. and won 12 high school letters across three sports: football, basketball, and baseball. After graduating in 1915 he attended Iowa State Teachers College his freshman year before departing to enlist and support his country in World War I.

With his service to our country concluded, he returned to college, but went on to coach in Pocahontas, Iowa. In 1922 he returned to college once more to complete his degree with a major in Social Science and a minor in English. As an Iowa State Teachers College student, Whitford won four letters in football and baseball and three in basketball. He was elected captain of the football team twice and once in baseball. After graduation in 1924, he taught and coached in Monticello, Iowa until April of 1926 when he then returned to his alma mater to coach baseball for 37 seasons. "Mon" Whitford coached baseball at the University longer than any other coach and won more games than any other coach. UNI baseball media guides note Whitford's record from 1926-1965 as 303-210-4 .590 winning percentage.

Yet, throughout his career he did much more than coach baseball. He continued to challenge himself in the classroom earning a Master's degree in 1939 from the University of Michigan in Education with an emphasis on Physical Education. He worked as a basketball referee for 35 years including "13-14 years in the

Big Ten." He was also a professional baseball umpire. He coached freshman football for 15 years on campus, varsity football for three years and coached freshman basketball on three occasions. And his objectivity as a coach and referee was to be admired. "When I'm coaching, there are no real good officials; some are a little worse than others. When I'm officiating, there are no real bad officials; some are better than others." Obviously, Coach also had a sense of humor. Acknowledging that baseball attendance could always be improved, he was quite honest in his reply as noted in a 1961 College Eye article, "If we played at night, with good weather it would help.... We have too many five-day students. After five days, they take off for Momma."

How did he get the nickname "Mon"? Well, when he was about 15 years of age, "It came from a group of boys. One was on an allowance, I wasn't, but I always seemed to have money jingling in my pocket. The other fellows were always tapping me for money, and one day I said, 'Money! Money! Money!' The name was shortened to Mon and it's still with me." Lawrence "Mon" Whitford is a member of the charter UNI Hall of Fame Class of 1985.

Coach Mon Whitford discussing the finer points of ball control with Panther pitchers Demitroff and Don Dahlke.



side College. Once again, the weather penalized the sport of baseball on campus. South Dakota State won the conference with a 6-4 record while the Panther team finished with a 5-1 record. Conference rules mandated that a team must play a minimum of seven games to be considered for the championship. It is reasonable to assume the team had another championship in its grasp, but weather cancelled a total of six games in 1965. Highlights however included Jim Videtich leading the team with a .326 batting average and Gabe concluding his career with a .312 batting average. Phil Johnson was a valuable weapon on the mound with a record of 3-1 and an ERA of 2.00.

The remarkable Simpson led the team with a 4-1 record on the mound and a 1.84 ERA and 50 strike outs in '65. As a Panther, Simpson had a career 14-2 record and 1.17 ERA. A Waterloo West High School standout, this dynamic left-handed pitcher compiled a 35-18-1 record as SCI played its way to two North Central Conference championships in three years. Simpson still holds UNI pitching records for consecutive wins (10), consecutive scoreless innings (40) and complete games (15), while sitting second on UNI's all-time pitching records for career ERA (1.17), single season ERA (.38) and strikeouts per nine innings (11.10). Simpson earned North Central Conference first-team honors in 1963, 1964, and 1965. Simpson continued playing ball after college completing one season with the Boston Red Sox's farm system. He then returned to Iowa and West High School to begin a 30-year coaching career. He also is a member of the Waterloo West High Hall of Fame.

With the Morningside game rained out, no post-season play, and the Iowa State win marking Coach Whitford's 302nd win, it is unclear where or when win 303 occurred as stated in UNI media guides. As noted at the beginning of the chapter, statistics and memories may change over time, yet the accomplishments of the legendary coach will never be forgotten.

The J.D. Anderson Era

James (J. D.) Anderson was named Whitford's successor before the 1965 season had even started. Shortly after his arrival, facility changes were to occur rather quickly as in August of 1965 the State Fire Marshall's office recommended the "condemnation of the SCI

baseball stands" as an inspection had shown the stands to be "dilapidated and unsafe." The Panthers would use their field for one more season before moving across Hudson Road where a new field would be constructed. The State Board of Regents approved a \$3,500 grant at their November meeting for "ground development and drainage system for a baseball diamond to be located west of the stadium." The new field known as Panther Park, located just northwest of the UNI-Dome would serve as the home of Panther baseball until it would move to Waterloo in 1992. The grounds, strangely updated after the demise of UNI baseball, with refurbished dugouts and new fencing, were then used by the Northern University High School baseball team and the Cedar Valley Iowa Baseball League.

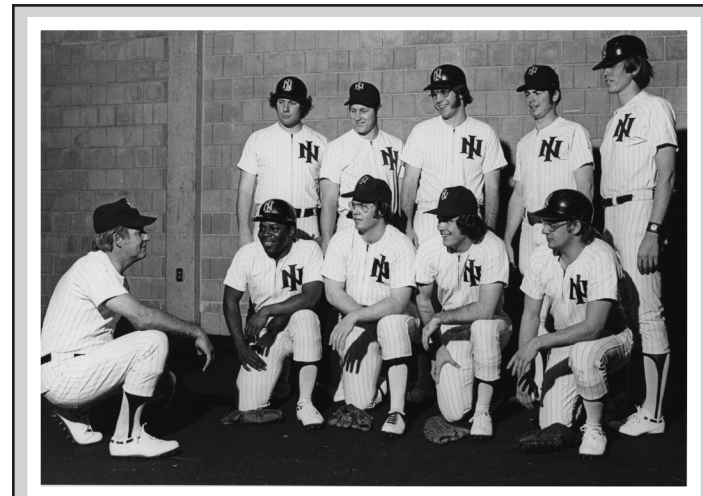
Anderson came to the State College of Iowa from Northern Illinois University where he previously served as head of the gymnastics team. He also served NIU as head coach of tennis and cross country and as assistant coach in baseball. His baseball coaching skills were best showcased in Key West, Fla. when he led the high school team to two consecutive state championships and guided a young John (Boog) Powell of Baltimore Orioles fame. A graduate of Eastern Illinois University he was, like his predecessor, a diverse athletic talent lettering four years in baseball, three times in football, and twice in basketball. He also played professionally in the Philadelphia Phillies organization and served in the U.S. Army. He led the Panthers for an impressive 19 years and to a record of 266-253-1.

Anderson would rely on speed and a competitive spirit as his new squad and his career at SCI began with a record of 13-9 in 1966 and a respectable tie for second in the conference standings.

Although certainly accustomed to cold weather at NIU, Coach Anderson soon learned of the unique challenges Cedar Falls could offer in terms of weather. Norm Azbell, Sports Editor for the College Eye summed up his personal observation of the April 8, 1967 opening-day planned double-header: "What a day Saturday was for a baseball game! Beautiful! That is aside from the steady deluge of rain, the 45 mile-an-hour wind, and the chilling temperatures it was beautiful . . . They swam through two innings of baseball . . . before the game was called." Besides battling the elements, '67 was a difficult year for the Panthers with various injuries

contributing to a 7-16 record, the first losing season in 10 seasons.

However, the previous season was quickly forgotten as the team rebounded in 1968 with an outstanding 17-5 record and won a North Central Conference. Led by Doug Darnell with an 8-0 record and a 1.88 ERA, pitchers were a key to the Panther success as Laverne Koeperich also held batters at bay with a 3-1 record and a 1.90 ERA and Jim Young posted a 3-1 record. Center-fielder Rick Kriz batted .447 and the team swatted 30 home runs and scored 164 runs in 20 games. To top off an outstanding season, Coach Anderson was named Regional Coach of the Year.



Coach J.D. Anderson has his team lined up to make a bid for the conference title.

1969 began where '68 left off as the Panthers roared out to a 6-0 start including an impressive 22-3 win over Wartburg behind 19 hits, including five home runs. The power-hitting Panthers were sparked in '69 with the bats of Kriz, Gary Reiners and Tom Mayer hitting three, four and five in lineup. Mayer, an all-conference 5th District catcher in '68 was leading the charge batting .500 and .714 in conference play, followed by senior outfielder and all-conference player in '68, Kriz, with a .457 average who had an impressive 20 RBI's in just nine games. Lastly, senior shortstop Reiners was on a .441 pace hitting safely in all nine games thus far. Darnell and Dave Chase were pacing the Panthers at mid-season with 4-0 and 3-0 records. A disappointing end to the 15-6 season came as South Dakota State determined their championship fate and the Panthers finished second in the conference. Individual honors went to several players as seniors Kriz

and Mayer were named to the Topps College Division Fifth District baseball team and honorable mentions were awarded to pitcher Chase and second baseman Ron Foell. Chase, from Cedar Falls, ended the season with a 5-1 record and a 2.29 ERA hurling six complete games. The highlight of the season came during the first week of May when the Panthers were ranked 17th in the nation by the Associated Press poll.

As baseball heads into the '70s it is apparent that the college game is expanding as more games are being played and travel to other states is becoming more common. Of course, with such expansion, two primary challenges exist: 1) funding for additional games and travel and 2) keeping players on top of their academics. The latter is especially difficult as players do not schedule games and the age of the internet is not yet upon us during this time. As years pass, the season would begin much earlier, travel would become much more expansive (and expensive), and the number of games played would more than double.

The Panthers continued their winning ways under Coach Anderson posting a 16-10 record in 1970. Freshman and left-handed pitcher Chuck Burns, ranked fourth in the NCAA, posted a 0.62 ERA in 11 appearances and a 7-0 record. Burns and fellow freshman shortstop Tim Hackenmiller were also named to the all-conference team as Hackenmiller hit .333 and placed in the top five in all hitting categories. The Panthers of 1971 slugged their way to a 15-10 overall record and 11-7 in the conference for a third-place finish. A 28-game schedule was planned for 1972 and the Panthers would finish 16-7-1 on the season. Playing enough league games to qualify for the championship was a foremost concern of Coach Anderson late in the season as several games had already been rained out. As the rain gods would have it, the Panthers won the championship title sitting in a motel room in Vermillion, S.D. due to the fact that all three games scheduled were rained out. Therefore, the league-leading Panthers swam home to victory. Anderson was selected as the North Central Conference District Five Coach of the Year and junior Hackenmiller was named to the all-conference team, hitting .425 in league play and .373 for the season. The '72 Panthers finished third in the Midwest Regional Playoffs.

The spring of 1973 marked the first Florida trip for baseball as UNI was invited to the University

of Miami Invitational. Playing such teams as Michigan State, Army and the University of Miami, the Panthers' highlight was a twin-bill sweep over Michigan State. From sand and sun back to reality in Cedar Falls, the struggling Panthers of '73 faced a mid-April "blizzard" to open their home stand. However, the boys of April bundled up and took two out of three games against South Dakota. One game was cancelled. A nearly .500 record of 17-16 would begin a stretch of non-eventful seasons in terms of wins.

A 36-game schedule and trips to Texas and Oklahoma challenged the Panthers of '74 who would end up 15-14 (with seven games being cancelled due to weather). Their two first wins of the season finally came against Wartburg and one has to wonder how valuable a southern swing can be when a team loses seven in a row? Most athletes savor competition, but it is extremely difficult for northern teams to be competitive when the majority of their spring practice has been indoors, not to mention that many of the Division I schools the Panthers were playing had more extensive budgets, more scholarships and overall support, thereby recruiting some of the best players in the nation. However, the Panthers rebounded strong in conference play and by mid-season were leading the league after a three-game sweep of Morningside College. UNI battled strong at the end of the season and placed second in the conference. Individual all-conference honors would go to sophomore second baseman Kevin Roberts batting .340 and sweeping up most anything that came his way, senior Mike Dutcher, an outfielder with a .327 average in league play, and pitcher Thor Rastetter, a senior who compiled a 5-1 NCC record. Honorable mention honors went to Bob Lemon and Bill Thomas.

A snow-plagued first week of April in 1975 cancelled the first three games of the season and week two games were doubtful. For a third-straight week the opening of the home season was in doubt as Anderson explained to the Northern Iowan, "Right now it depends on how much rain we get in the next couple of days. The snow is all gone but with all this rain and snow we need some warm weather to get the frost out." With an 11 league-game minimum required to be considered for the championship, every conference game was important to the Panther squad. Moving south to La Porte City, the Panthers played their scheduled double-head-

er against South Dakota winning 8-1 and 4-3. A disappointing 12-16 record was the end result in '75.

1976-1980 would continue a trend of challenging times for UNI baseball with near .500 records of 12-18, 15-18, 17-16, 11-17, and 12-16. However, Coach Anderson would have one final year of excellence as a Panther coach on the horizon in 1981. The April 22, 1997 Northern Iowan featured a baseball article of the week, which highlighted various Panther accomplishments since joining the North Central Conference including individual accomplishments from 1976 noting Jim Varner's .426 batting average and Jim Blythe batting .400 and Joe Przychodzin with a league ERA of 1.93. Of special note, the Northern Iowan quotes a Sporting News article of the week in which Yankee owner George Steinbrenner is quoted as saying, "I am dead set against free agency. It can ruin baseball."

1978 honors went to outfielder Rich Johnson and catcher Greg Beer as both were named to the 1978 All-NCC squad. NCC honorable mention players were outfielders Steve Marlow and Tim Weber in addition to pitcher Greg WaHon. Panther athletics would soon say goodbye to the North Central Conference as plans were being made to join the Mid-Continent Conference with other charter member schools being Youngstown State, Akron, Northern Michigan, Eastern Illinois, and Western Illinois. A new wrinkle to the dugout environment was perhaps on the horizon as well as noted in The Northern Iowan, "Any UNI coed interested in being a bat girl for the 1979 varsity team should pick up an application from the baseball office." In the fall of '79, Coach Anderson also became coach of the women's basketball team and was hoping their winning ways could carry over to the spring '81 team and his 16th season. In their first year as a Division I club, the baseball Panthers were off to an 11-7 record as early as April 10th. They beat Kent State 8-2 and were "Hittin' the livin' crap out of the ball" as NI reporter and future Panther ball player Mike Leavenhagen noted in the Northern Iowan with three players hitting over .400.

Just as the Panthers were headed toward their best baseball season in several seasons, the possibility of cutting athletic teams, including baseball, was on the discussion table as noted in the April 24, 1981 Northern Iowan as a Title IX grievance was filed and a five percent budget cut to the athletic department was on the table. Recommendations included cutting sever-

al sports including women's field hockey, men's and women's gymnastics and possibly baseball to "meet a budget deficiency of somewhere between 70 and 80 thousand dollars. The men's baseball team goes only in case of absolute need." As for baseball, Associate Athletic Director Jersey Jermier noted, "It's almost un-American to cut baseball." Seemingly unfazed, the '81 Panthers went on to have one of the best seasons to date with a school record 26-10 season. Baseball was saved for the moment, but a disappointing 11-16 season would follow and even more disappointing was the 7-15 record in '83. Cold weather and rain caused several cancellations throughout the spring season. Denton Ketels, Sports Editor of the Northern Iowan reports that Anderson was relieved of his baseball duties in an April 29, 1983 article. Athletic officials cited "continuing general problems" with the UNI baseball program. Assistant Athletic Directors Sandra Williamson, Bob Bowsby and Jersey Jermier were assigned to look into several areas of the baseball program including "personnel management and relations, skill development, financial management, player relations and recruiting policies." Previously, two scheduled double-headers in Des Moines and Cedar Rapids were cancelled "due to budgetary problems." Assistant Coach Russ Bloom replaced Anderson on an interim basis.

To make a rather bizarre season even worse, a few days later in a make-up game with Luther, the game finally started after a one hour rain delay when in the first inning, first baseman Gary Swanson was called out on strikes. After returning to the dugout, Swanson had words with umpire Frank Mahan. After an exchange, "Swanson charged Mahan knocking him to the ground before anyone could restrain the burly first baseman." Swanson later called the umpire and talked with him for about 10 minutes apologizing for the incident. Mahan was surprised at Swanson's actions noting, "I've never seen him react like that. He's usually so easy going." Mahan also conveyed to Swanson in their conversation "not to worry about it anymore." After a comprehensive review of the baseball program, Coach Anderson was reinstated. However, it was announced in February of 1984 that it would be his last season at UNI effective June 30th. The 1984 squad had a record of 12-18. The bright spot in the season may have been a double-header sweep over the Hawkeyes 5-1 and 4-0. Second only to Coach Whitford in length of service and wins, Coach

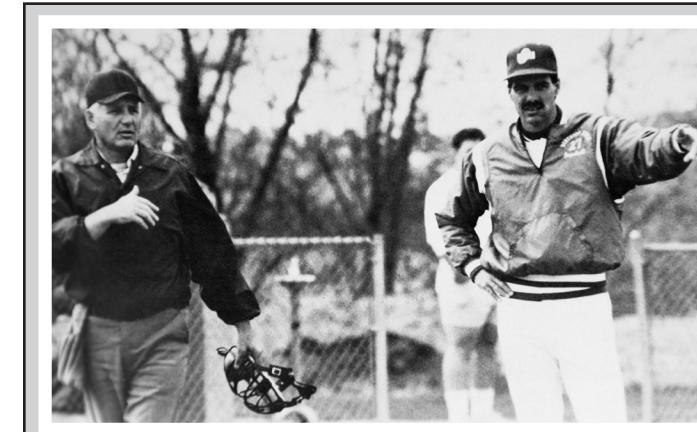
Anderson's record at UNI was 266-253-1 for a winning percentage of .513 over 19 seasons at the helm.

Youth and familiarity would take over the Panthers in '85 as now Assistant Coach Gary Swanson would take over as head coach. A bright spot for the young coach was walk-on first baseman Todd Barkalow who had answered an ad in the Northern Iowan regarding tryouts for the Panther squad. As of May 3rd, Barkalow was hitting .347 and leading the team in RBI's with 34 and home runs with 13, breaking the record of 10 set by Duane Josephson in 1964. Senior center fielder Scott Schmelzer set team records which had been around since '77 including most doubles and stolen bases. And according to the Northern Iowan, 38 baseball records were set in 1985 between Barkalow and Schmelzer. Records would continue to be broken for years to come. Various records would be set due to outstanding play of course, however, records would also be broken due to the number of games and increased opportunities as seasons would continue to expand.

Swanson's '86 team rebounded with an impressive 23-9 start but various injuries resulted in nine straight losses for a record of 23-9-1. The Panthers beat nationally-ranked Creighton 3-2 and 6-5 and pitcher Paul Boffeli set an impressive season record of 14 pick-offs, ending with a career saddened 23 base-runners. The Panthers of '87 again did well recording a 26-21 record and impressing Division I schools as they became a national leader statistically. In late April the Panthers were ranked third in team batting with a .378 average and second in stolen bases with 4.13 per game. Senior shortstop Eric Snider was 20th in the country batting an impressive .458 and pitchers Mike Gerlach was averaging 16.2 strike outs per nine innings! In league play Gerlach's per game strike out average was 14.82 followed by teammate Bill Haliburton with a 12.01 strike outs in nine innings. 1987 would be Swanson's last at UNI as he was hired away by Gordie Scoles, a former UNI assistant admissions officer to coach NAIA St. Andrew's College in North Carolina. Swanson was the first coach to have back-to-back 20 win seasons and ended his three-year coaching career with a 66-77-1 record.

Gene Baker was hired to take over the Panthers in 1988 from Austin Peay University where he had served as an assistant coach for two years. Prior to joining UNI, Baker had various coaching positions at seven schools including a two-year head coaching posi-

tion at Bristol College in Tennessee. He would inherit a 58-game schedule which included games against powerhouse and top-20 teams Oklahoma State, Arkansas, Oral Roberts, and Nebraska. Although the '88 team set team records with 417 hits and 43 double-plays, the 11-43 record was extremely disappointing.



Coach Gene Baker tries to tell the umpire that the slicing hit was good before it went foul. Had he won his point, the game may have had a different ending.

Coach Baker was looking forward to an improved team in '89 as the fall '88 schedule resulted in a 10-1 record. However, the improvement would ultimately be limited as the 12-37 record reflects. The southern road trip resulted in losses against Kansas, Kansas State and Arkansas. Meanwhile, back at home, baseball was facing traditional challenges such as weather and budget. The April 4th edition of the Northern Iowan points out that all home workouts were forced indoors due to "adverse weather and poor field conditions". Lack of scholarship funds were also a concern to the new coach. "The money is not under my thumb," he said. "Whoever decides who gets it, doesn't think we should at this point." Coach Baker continued, "It's just a matter of putting baseball as a high priority." At this time, Panther baseball was receiving the "equivalent of one-and-a-half scholarships."

Baker's 1990 team did improve winning 20 games but also dropping 39. Yet it's difficult for a team to beat the likes of teams such as Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Nebraska, Wichita State and others mentioned previously that had the gift of warmer weather, better facilities, and financial support to recruit Division I level athletes across the board. Although another difficult season, there were several bright spots. For the first

time since 1986, UNI beat Iowa State 5-1 and pitcher Steve Dreyer was selected to the AMCU first team and outfielder John Pratt and shortstop Mike Morony were selected to the second team. On the same day that Dreyer and his teammates were notified of their AMCU selection, Dreyer, a junior, was selected by the Texas Rangers in the eighth round and owns the distinction of being the first UNI player to be drafted in baseball's annual draft. Although details of his contract were not provided, Dreyer did negotiate a stipend to ultimately complete his college education. Approximately two weeks later, outfielder Mark Chambers who had three years of eligibility remaining was selected in the 67th round by the Atlanta Braves.

Appearing in the same June 29th Northern Iowan edition, a story noting the resignation of Coach Baker appears side by side with the Chambers article. Baker was hired by the University of Louisville in which Baker would have seven scholarships to work with, warmer weather and a Metro Conference that earns an automatic bid to the College World Series. Baker's three-year stint at UNI resulted in 44 wins and 119 losses. Success cannot always be measured in wins and losses and apparently Louisville saw something in Coach Baker as he moved on to coach five seasons at Louisville.

The Panthers stayed close to home in the hiring of Dave Schrage as their next coach. Coach Schrage was a former head coach at Waldorf College and led it to the junior college sub-regional championship game twice in three seasons. His knowledge of baseball also took him to Australia coaching and playing for the National League champion Queensland Rams. However, perhaps most attractive to UNI was his accomplishments as a four-year starter in center field at Creighton University where he earned MVC All-Conference honors in 1982, led the MVC in hitting with a .400 average in '82 and was also named to the GTO/CoSIDA Academic All-America Team in 1983.

A renewed spirit of optimism was on the horizon with Dave Schrage as coach and a specific set of expectations were laid out not only on the field but off, as noted in the 1991 baseball program with an entire page devoted to a statement regarding "Panther Pride." Although expectations and intentions may have been the highest, Division I college baseball can be a difficult challenge as Coach Schrage discovered in '91 when

his team recorded a 12-44 record. Perhaps the team's highlight was stunning the Kansas Jayhawks 7-3 when Marty Schilmoeller belted a three-run home run to send Kansas back to Lawrence. This was UNI's last season in the Mid-Continent Conference before joining the Missouri Valley Conference. In the meantime, pitcher Steve Dreyer was racking up the lowest ERA in the Texas Rangers organizations with a 2.39 ERA for the Class A Gastonia (N.C.) Rangers and then returning to UNI to complete his education after the season ended.



Coach Dave Schrage was eight years at the helm of Panther baseball. He left UNI with a 210-287 record.



Putting the runner in the dust, first baseman Mike Himmelsback almost gets the out. The throw is just a bit late.

In 1992, Coach Schrage worked to get Panther games broadcast. Radio station KCFI of Cedar Falls joined the team for 36 scheduled broadcasts. The Panthers' first MVC win came against the 22nd ranked Indiana State Sycamores 10-1. A change in home venue was on the horizon and ironically, student Jeremy Bryan may have been on to something in his article "Diamond Dilemma" in the March 31, 1992 Northern Iowan. He notes his embarrassment when visiting teams come to Panther Park as dugouts needed painting, a scoreboard was not present, an announcer was not available for

home games, and the batting cage and bullpen benches were less than desirable according to his observations. Most of all, the field did not have a flag or flag pole for that matter, and he profoundly stated in one of his three paragraphs devoted to the flag, "I think it's a tradition to have Old Glory waving in the wind."

UNI's new home field would now be in Waterloo at Municipal Stadium, then home to the Waterloo Diamonds, a class A affiliate of the San Diego Padres and now known as Riverfront Stadium and home to the Waterloo Bucks of the Northwoods League, a summer league featuring top college players from across the nation. The new location was based on the fact that Panther Park did not meet various guidelines set forth by the Missouri Valley Conference. Rather than address such deficiencies, the team moved to a stadium which would now have the largest seating capacity of any MVC stadium. In hindsight, it might be wondered at what cost? It had never been easy for baseball to attract a fan base of any respectable size on a consistent basis. Would attendance improve if students, faculty or community members had to drive to Waterloo to support the Panthers? And is a 4,000-seat stadium necessary when 500-seat bleachers can't be filled on campus? Certainly, a better field and overall baseball environment does go a long way in creating a sense of pride for any team.

However, there are times one wonders how baseball survived as long as it did at UNI? As the excellent Kevin Costner baseball film title states, perhaps it was For the Love of the Game. In 1992, 21 games were cancelled in total and 17 of 31 home games were cancelled due to damage to the stadium. The Old Gold notes that "snow, rain and flooding" sums up the '92 season with the team having to shovel snow off of the field at Municipal Stadium on one occasion. 1993 resulted in an all too familiar difficult season as the team ultimately managed a 12-39 official record. And of course, the season wouldn't be complete without its weather challenges. This time, as the Panthers headed south to Florida (by bus), the team was stranded in Birmingham, Ala. when 13 inches of snow hit the area in what forecasters called the worst snow storm in the area in 100 years.

Spring of 1994 had the Panthers off to their best start since 1987 and bringing home a winning 11-6 record after the traditional spring trip against Vermont, Central Connecticut, Wright State, Harvard, Bowling

Green and blasting Colgate 28-5. UNI also split with the Hawkeyes in '94, defeated the Kansas Jayhawks and beat Creighton for the first time since joining the MVC. With a record of 24-32 there was plenty of improvement in Schrage's Panthers with 10 team records set and outstanding contributions from senior outfielder Monty Muller batting .364 followed by Brian Jergenson (.358), Matt Paulson (.336), Kevin Sanders (.328) and Grady Murphy (.314). Senior pitcher Brad Hames was named to second-team all-conference and Muller and Paulsen were named to honorable mention all-conference.

Times had certainly changed as more and more games were played and the season began earlier each year. 1995 started off in a very positive fashion as the Panthers beat Kansas State with 16 hits and swept two from Missouri Western highlighted by Jeff Johannsen's no-hitter. The now traditional southern swing resulted in the Panthers' stunning 10-0 win over no. 29 ranked Central Florida. It's important to note that Central Florida had as of the last week of March already played 32 games. An April '95 highlight included knocking off rival Iowa 6-0 as senior Jon Goerish owned the mound hurling a complete game and a four-hit shutout while striking out eight Hawkeyes. Shortly thereafter the Panthers split with powerhouse Wichita State winning two out of four games. The first winning season in eight years resulted in a 28-27 record. Senior third baseman Tom Owen set 10 school records including runs scored (56), doubles (23), triples (6), total bases (141) and extra-base hits (39), triples (10) and finishing with a .394 batting average. Owen and Jeff Johannsen were selected to the all-conference second team and teammates Brett Lagerblade and Bryan Duncan were honorable mentions. Schrage was honored with the MVC Coach of the Year Award. Capping off a year of highlights, two Panther pitchers were drafted. Senior Scott Eibey was selected in the eighth round by the Baltimore Orioles and Mike Eibey, a sophomore from Waterloo was selected in the 17th round by the San Diego Padres.

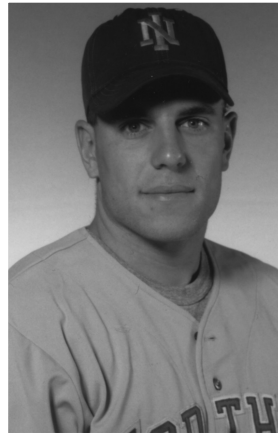
The Panthers did make it to the league tournament for the first time and pitcher Johannsen became the first UNI player to receive first team All-MVC honors posting a 9-3 record. After a very respectable year in '96, respect in the MVC Coaches Poll appeared to be lacking in '97 as UNI was picked to finish eighth in the conference. With the theme "Taking the Next Step"



Second baseman Todd Rima practically rewrote the record book with 206 at bats. He led the team in doubles during the 1996, '97, and '98 seasons.

the Panthers charged into '97 with a sense of purpose. In the early standings the Panthers were off to a 6-2 record in league play and in second place behind Wichita State. Over the next two weeks there would be a win over the Cyclones and Hawkeyes and as of April 22nd, the Panthers would be 13-3 in league play and stand at the top of the conference and definitely "Taking the Next Step." UNI ended the season 18-8 in the conference and finished second in the MVC with an overall record of 32-23. Schrage earned MVC Coach of the Year honors for a second time and his "Cardiac Panthers" won 13 of 19 one-run games. Brian Jergenson completed his baseball career at UNI as the first Panther ever selected as the MVC Player of the Year. He was drafted by the San Diego Padres ending the year batting .374, with 14 home runs, 12 doubles, and a school-record 66 RBI's.

The 1998 baseball headlines were dominated in the early season by an incident between UNI and Oklahoma State in March. After being pounded by Oklahoma State 20-0 in game one of the series, UNI was playing competitive in game two on March 4th leading 4-3 in the fifth inning. UNI's Ryan McGuire hit a home run but it was called off by the first-base umpire because he had called "time" before the pitch. The detailed Northern Iowan account of the story of Friday, March 13th notes words were exchanged between UNI Assistant Coach Scott Douglas and OSU Head Coach, Tom Holiday. One thing led to another with Coach Schrage stepping between the two men (as the umpires had not) and OSU second baseman Billy Gasparino "came in (and) landed a punch to Schrage's face." Senior second baseman Todd Rima was stunned. "I was in a state of shock."



The Woodstock, Ill. Native was taken in the 38th round of the amateur baseball draft by the Montreal Expos out of high school. A two-time MVP, three-time all-conference and all-area player, Steve Beard chose UNI to play two sports, football and baseball. His accolades are many for his QB talent as well as his pitching for the Panthers. Beard

is first with 298 career innings pitched and holds the record for most strikeouts (247). Said Beard, "I'm a better person, teacher, coach, father and husband because of my athletic and academic experiences at UNI."

"I've never been associated with anything like that." No UNI players were involved in the incident. Players wanted to help but the team understood the ramifications if they had stepped in. Rima continues, "The way he [Schrage] handled things showed a lot of class. It was tough, but I believe we acted in a way that can make the whole university proud." Professional baseball scouts at the game backed up Schrage's account of the incident. The Missouri Valley Conference later suspended the two umpires for the rest of the season including the conference tournament as they had not included details of the incident in their MVC or NCAA report.

The 26-30 Panthers of '98 did have baseball highlights with UNI sweeping their in-state rivals and Rima setting a new all-time hits record. In addition, Panther pitchers Brad Moore and Scott Sobkowiak were drafted by the Oakland A's and the Atlanta Braves respectively. Sobkowiak was the highest Panther selected to date going in the seventh round and Moore, a Waterloo West graduate was taken in the 35th round. Freshman Ryan Brunner was the MVC Newcomer of the Year as well as being selected to the 1998 Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American team. He hit .331 with seven home runs.

Coach Schrage would enter his last year as a Panther coach in 1999 and have a team that would post a respectable 28-26 record after which he would continue to have success coaching at Northern Illinois, Evansville and Notre Dame. He would leave the next coach



The pitching crew for 1998 included (l-r): Scott Sobkowiak, Scott Brickman, Kevin Briggeman, Luke Sabers, Brad Moore, Kirk Chamberlain, Scott Vrba and Scott Hoey; all right-handed pitchers. The Panthers were 26-30 for the season.

(and last baseball coach at UNI) a dedicated and talented group of young men.

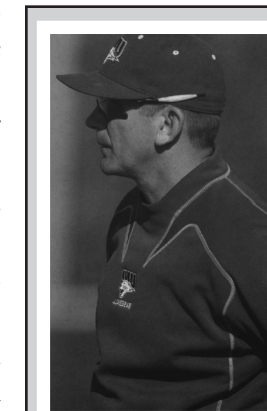
The Rick Heller Era

When a new coach is hired, every university is searching for the best possible candidate. Players want a proven commodity and in August of 2000, after closely examining 89 applicants, UNI got its man in Rick Heller. As a player at Upper Iowa University from 1982-86, he was a four-year starter at shortstop and also lettered in football and basketball. In an almost unheard of course of action, a young Rick Heller moved from player to coach in 1987 at UIU, quickly setting standards for years to come. His track record at UIU was impressive, including Iowa Conference Coach of the Year in 1989 (just two years after stepping into the shoes as a head coach). Success continued as he led Upper Iowa to its first winning season in 17 years in 1990. In 1993, his team won its first conference championship and first for any UIU program in 20 years while also advancing the team to the NCAA Division III Regional Tournament. Heller's team returned to the NCAA Regional Tournament in 1995 and he picked up his third Coach of the Year honor while Upper Iowa finished 19th in the national rankings. Coach of the Year honors were again bestowed upon him in 1996 when the Upper Iowa

Peacocks won the conference title and Central Regional title to advance to the NCAA Division III College World Series. He was named Central Region Coach of the Year, the team was ranked sixth nationally at the end of the season and it posted a 39-12 record. The awards kept coming for Heller and Upper Iowa in 1997 as they won the Iowa Conference Tournament. His team was ranked as high as 10th nationally in 1998 and finished with an impressive 38-8 record. His final year at UIU finished 30-15-1. During his 12 years at UIU, Heller recorded a 291-194-3 overall record and was named the Iowa Conference Coach of the Year four times and is now a member of the Upper Iowa Athletic Hall of Fame.

Although expectations are high for any new coach, the MVC apparently had little confidence that the 2000 Panther team would be a threat as UNI was selected to finish eighth in the pre-season poll. Two soon-to-be familiar Panther players would anchor the team in pitcher Nic Ungs and slugger Ryan Brunner. Pitcher Matt Cobb, a first-team MVC reliever in '99 also was expected to provide leadership to a highly regarded Panther pitching staff. Although Panther teams headed south throughout the modern era of UNI baseball to avoid less than ideal weather in Cedar Falls/Waterloo and also to play a higher level of competition to ultimately prepare for MVC action, there has always been plenty of competition in the MVC. In 2000, the Creighton Blue Jays were one of those teams and in early April the Panthers split four games with Creighton.

Freshman Shawn Gardner made his first MVC appearance and shut down the Blue Jays in the last two innings and the Panthers pulled out a close game 12-11. Later in the season UNI outscored Western Illinois 10-3 and 16-0 with the team running on all cylinders with quality pitching, outstanding fielding and aggressive hitting at the plate. However, it was not an easy season in a league filled with talent and UNI finished the season 23-33 and 9-22 in MVC play. Individual highlights were numerous as they would be throughout the next nine years as Travis Welsch won the team batting title barely edging out first baseman Brunner .375 to .374. Senior Matt



Coach Heller was the last coach for UNI baseball.

Cobb finished his career with a complete game win, which is rather remarkable considering he had battled through two bouts of leukemia. Cobb was honored with the Panther Courage Award and the Missouri Valley Conference presented him with the first Dr. Charlotte West Scholar-Athlete Award. The man with the big bat, Brunner slugged 15 home runs with 63 RBI's to gain MVC first-team honors alongside senior centerfielder Scott Schirmer who tallied a .338 batting average. Honorable mention MVC honors went to Welsch while third baseman Aaron McEachran was named to the 2000 Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American Team with a batting average of .322. Not looking back, Heller and his Panthers prepared for what would be a memorable 2001.

Dan Davis joined the Panther staff as pitching coach alongside Heller and former Panther standout, Todd Rima. Davis, a former Saluki, led the '95 SIU team in ERAs, strikeouts and the school-record 118 innings pitched. In addition, he had played professionally in the Frontier League. As always, the Panthers were on the road in the early spring (or late winter depending on personal perspective). The Panthers tackled the University of Louisville in February winning two out of three at Cardinal Stadium. In early March, the Panthers pummeled Air Force in Colorado Springs in a 28-hit, 20-9 win which was also a day for the record books. McEachran hit for the cycle, which hadn't been done since 1964. Brunner slammed three home runs to go along with his seven total hits and seven RBI's passing former Panther standout, Todd Barkalow as the career RBI leader. And as of April 8th the Panthers were in fourth place in the MVC with a 9-7 league record while first-place Wichita State stood at 11-1.

"Do you believe in miracles?" Although not the Olympics and Al Michaels was not announcing Panther games, certainly there was a Panther coach, player or fan that said this immortal line during UNI's improbable run. The fifth-seeded Panthers, once again chosen to place eighth in the pre-season poll, took four games from league-leading Southwest Missouri State at the end of the regular season. Full of confidence and momentum, the Panthers' first opponent in the MVC Tournament was perennial powerhouse Wichita State who the Panthers promptly slid under the rug with timely hitting and the arm of Ungs in a tight 4-3 win. In true nail-biting fashion Evansville and Indiana State were

set aside respectively 6-5 and 6-4. The Panthers faced Indiana State again in the championship game. Using five pitchers and needing all bats on deck, the Panthers climbed to the top with a 13-10 slugfest and captured the championship becoming the first UNI baseball team to win the Missouri Valley Conference title. Brunner hit his 24th home run of the season in the final game and was named the Outstanding Player of the MVC Tournament.

UNI was the only MVC team selected for the NCAA Tournament and was representing UNI in the tournament for the first time since 1968. Opening against Nebraska, UNI lost 16-6, but it rebounded against Brigham Young University in game two winning 10-1. Unfortunately the team lost a close one to Rutgers 6-5 to end its dream season with a record of 35 wins and 28 losses. The game of baseball was not over for three very special Panther players however. Ungs, Brunner, and McEachran were all selected in the Major League baseball draft on June 5th. Ungs was selected by the Florida Marlins in the 12th round, Brunner by the Boston Red Sox also in the 12th round, and in the 18th round, McEachran, a red-shirt sophomore was selected by the Toronto Blue Jays.

2002 started strong as the Panthers came back from the Florida trip with four wins and one loss and in the early spring beat the mighty seventh-ranked Shockers on their home field for the first time. However, tough

times were ahead for the Panthers as winning consistently was not to be in 2002 and they slid to 5-11 in league play by mid-April. Yet, there's nothing like a Big Ten win and the Gophers of Minnesota accommodated the Panthers with several errors to hand the Panthers a 13-6 win. Another 30-win season was the result in '02, but no championship. There was still much to be proud of.

2003 resulted in a 27-28 overall record and a 16-15 MVC record, both quite respectable. One surprise for many was that 15 of the Panther losses were by one run and the Panthers finished fourth in the MVC, their best finish in six years and Heller's Panthers were in the MVC Tournament for the third year in a row. Even more impressive was that at one point, UNI's conference record was 1-10, but it turned it around to win 15 of its final 21 conference games. The Panthers lost three out of four games to the no. 1 nationally-ranked Shockers, but winning one game is still something to be proud of when playing the no. 1 team in the country. The University of Minnesota once again was a target for the Panthers as UNI won 7-4, although the Gophers beat UNI later in the season and in an always difficult match-up, UNI swept Creighton in important MVC play.

A running team in '03, Adam Boeve led the MVC and the Panthers with 29 stolen bases followed by Tyson Hanish with 26 (fourth in the MVC). As a

team, 130 bases were stolen. At the plate, Adam Boeve, Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year led the league with 18 home runs, 29 stolen bases, a .745 slugging percentage, and on-base percentage (.471). His .368 batting average was second in the MVC as were his RBI's with 68. Boeve also earned first-team all-conference, Louisville Slugger second team, and All-American CollegeInsider.com honorable mention honors, and was recognized as a National Player of the Week. As with various Panther players before him, he was selected in the 12th round of the Major League draft by the Pittsburgh Pirates.

In January of 2004, UNI extended Coach Heller's contract through 2007 rewarding him for his accomplishments thus far. The spring break Florida trip resulted in a 6-2 record. This helped renew the Panthers' confidence. However, a four-game sweep by 11th-ranked Wichita State did perhaps bring a sense of urgency to the dugout. In the first game of the series the Shockers blanked UNI 8-0. It was the first time in 196 games the Panthers had been shut out, a rather amazing statistic. Of course, the season had its highlights including Jake Hansen's one-hit shutout of Illinois State, the Panthers battling back from a 6-1 deficit against Minnesota and Armondo Lara smacking a walk-off home run against the Big Ten team in the 10th inning. UNI swept three games from Iowa, its second Big Ten team of the season, in the Corridor Classic. Individual honors went to pitcher Eric DeJong, All-MVC Second Team, and MVC Honorable Mentions were awarded to second baseman Pat Moran, third baseman Dan Grant, and outfielder Armando Lara.

The plan in 2005 was to rely on depth and balance. As always, it's easier said than done as evidenced by the 10-0 first-place position for Wichita State and UNI in sixth place at 3-4. Catcher Nathan Trumm was named MVC Outstanding Scholar-Athlete of the Week as he batted .583 in a three-game series with Texas Tech and his three-for-five day at the plate helped the Panthers topple the 22nd-ranked Red Raiders 9-7 in game one of the series. The Gophers of Minnesota popped their heads up and once again were frustrated by a Panther shutout in what was a true pitcher's duel. Coach Heller used seven pitchers in the game as a strategy to have a fresh staff when facing the upcoming MVC series against Evansville. Unfortunately, the strategy didn't pay off as UNI was swept by the Purple Aces. The final record of

'05 was 26-28 and 12-20 in the MVC for an eighth-place finish. Pitcher Brandon Rinnan was notched a second-team MVC spot and honorable mention honors went to catcher Trumm and outfielder Mark Frieske.

As noted at the beginning of the chapter, we often hold on to the positive memories and slowly let the bad memories fade. However, it is important to note the extraordinary dedication the Panther players, coaches, and staff had to their team, often having to perform the grounds keeping duties themselves, a coaching duty rather unheard of in the Missouri Valley Conference and in Division I baseball. Such duties were fulfilled not only out of respect for the game and the Panther team taking the field, but also out of respect for visiting teams and to make sure that UNI baseball represented the university in the best possible light. "Mon" Whitford would be proud.

On Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2005, Coach Heller was seriously injured while preparing the field at Waterloo's Riverfront Stadium alongside his staff. Heller was "struck by the tongue of a large, steel roller he was attempting to attach to a tractor on the infield. He suffered a broken collarbone, six broken ribs and a bruised lung." He was transported to Allen Hospital and was in intensive care. In a Nov. 2 Waterloo Courier article, Pitching Coach Dan Davis noted the coaches were rolling the infield, which helps pack down loose dirt, a procedure the coaches have done hundreds of times. "It was just one of those freak accidents. We do it all the time." Assistant Coach Marty Sutherland said he was standing approximately 15 feet away when the roller got away from Heller and swung violently into his body. "The tongue went about 180 degrees and took him with it," said Sutherland. "It is horrible, knowing what kind of force it has. A lot of horrible thoughts ran through my head, but you have to get rid of those in a hurry and react to the situation." Of course, knowing how to react to unexpected situations is something all coaches must be able to do to be successful. And in 2005, Assistant Coaches Davis and Sutherland reacted well to a crisis and ultimately, Heller did recover.

2006 had an up and down start and the season seemed to progress the same as the Panthers finished a respectable 28-27, but were 10-14 in conference play for a seventh-place finish. There are times one has to wonder how the Panthers would do in the Big Ten for after an earlier error-plagued game against the Gophers,



The 2001 MVC champions led by all-Americans Ryan Brunner and Nic Ungs. UNI batted .333 as a team to rank among the national leaders and the team set school records in nearly every offensive category.

UNI came back to win on the road 9-6. Five Panther players received All-MVC honors and some were destined to repeat in major ways. In '06, shortstop Brandon Douglas received first-team MVC honors as well as being named to the Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American team. First baseman Brett Featherston and second baseman Brett Douglas received second-team MVC honors and outfielder Curt Bradley and versatile second baseman Mark Frieske were awarded honorable mention status.

Standout pitcher Taylor Sinclair was recognized in 2006 for his achievements on the field and in the classroom earning honorable mention on the MVC Scholar-Athlete Team. A major in Geographic Information Systems, the Indianola native posted a 3.67 GPA. Sophomore Douglas was back at shortstop in 2007 and was named to the pre-season MVC team and also named on the Wallace Watch List (a pre-season potential Player of the Year list). Heller returned six starters and 14 letter winners and the Panthers were picked to finish fourth in the MVC. Winning consistently was the challenge for UNI in '07 and it's difficult to find a bright spot with the exception of a split with Big Ten Iowa. A 23-28 record and 8-16 in the MVC resulted in a sixth-place MVC tie for the Panthers. Douglas and outfielder Deric Manrique were selected first-team All-MVC, pitcher Aaron Jenkins to the second team and honorable mention honors went to outfielder Eric Hoffman. Free agent signings included Curt Bradley with the Los Angeles Dodgers and Taylor Sinclair with the Arizona Diamondbacks. Shortstop Douglas was selected by the Cincinnati Reds in the 32nd round but he chose to return to UNI for another year. The Missouri Valley Conference was celebrating its Centennial in 2007 and former Panthers Adam Boeve, Ryan Brunner, and Nic Ungs were named to the All-Centennial team.

Opening day at home in 2008 could not begin any better (if you don't consider the "frigid" weather). However, Nick Kirk decided to heat things up for everyone throwing the first no-hitter in 13 years, a complete game with 15 strikeouts against the Evansville Purple Aces. His outstanding day on the mound earned him the Missouri Valley Conference Pitcher of the Week and "Louisville Slugger's" National Player of the Week. In the meantime, fellow pitcher Guido Fonseca was rolling along with a 6-0 record. A three-game sweep against Illinois State and a ninth-inning rally to defeat the

Ryan Brunner's name shows up in the record book a lot. He played in 216 games (1st), 801 At Bats (2nd), 285 Hits (2nd), 185 Runs Scored (2nd), 226 Runs Batted In (1st), 56 Doubles (2nd), 59 Home runs (1st), and 526 Total Bases (1st)



Gophers 9-8 and winning two of three against Creighton were outstanding achievements for a team of extremely talented players. A 30-24 season and 14-10 in the MVC earned the Panthers a fourth-place finish in the Valley. Seven Panthers earned MVC honors including first-team honors to Brandon Douglas and second baseman Brett Douglas, second-team honors to outfielder Dane Embry, first baseman Brett Featherston, starting pitcher Fonseca, and relief pitcher Joe Gonzalez. Centerfielder Manrique earned honorable mention honors. Douglas, one of the all-time best UNI players was named MVC Player of the Year and topped off his season by being drafted in the 11th round by the Detroit Tigers.

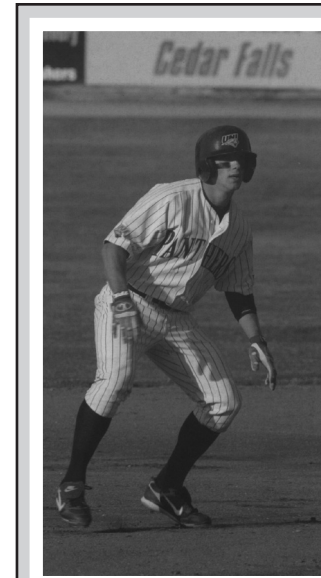
The Final Season

What does one say about baseball in 2009? Entering his 10th season in 2009, Rick Heller never realized it would be his last at UNI. Certainly, rumors had swirled for years. Coach Jack Dahm of the University of Iowa noted after hearing of UNI's decision to bring a tradition to an end, "We've heard the rumors for years that Northern Iowa was going to drop baseball." And certainly anything was possible as Iowa State University shocked the state when Cyclone baseball was cut in 2001 after a 109-year existence. And it has not been unusual for mid-west and northern universities to drop the sport. Programs at Wisconsin, Providence and Boston University had dropped baseball. The University of Vermont baseball and softball teams were another victim of circumstances in 2009. Vermont Athletic Director, Dr. Robert Corran addressed the weather challenges. "The weather is so unpredictable, other than we know it's not going to be very good. It's just, how bad is it going to be?" A May 16, 2009 Associated Press arti-

cle continues, "Most cold-weather programs start the first month of the season on costly road trips to the South. The weather is often far from tropical when they return home, making it tough to generate local interest and revenue as many fans are unwilling to bundle up for a game."

New UNI Athletic Director Troy Dannen intended to address UNI's Title IX concerns without any intention of an additional women's sport affecting other UNI programs. However, he could not anticipate another budget cut (one of many) that UNI would receive. Rather than making an across the board cut to all UNI athletic programs, the difficult decision was made to address a sport that did not have an on-campus facility, an outdoor sport which throughout its history had been affected by weather, and a sport in which loyal fans and donors were appreciated (yet many more were needed). Ashley Lathrum's Feb. 27, 2009 Northern Iowan article notes that Dannen "pledged that the decision was financially-based and the Title IX equality in athletics does not pose a threat to men's sports at UNI."

Rick Heller, perhaps the top fund-raiser amongst UNI coaches and his supporters made a valiant effort to raise the financial support of \$1.2 million dollars Dannen said was necessary to continue the program in the future, but Dannen also acknowledged that in regards to raising the necessary funds, "You never know, something could be out there. But if that fails, then there's a whole other set of problems." Although it may not be politically intelligent to admit it, it is reasonable to believe that the Title IX issue was ultimately a factor as Lathrum notes: "As an institution with 57 percent female enrollment and 39 percent athletic participation, cutting a women's sport was not considered an option." Still, there are others that wonder if pressure from facul-



Deric Manrique led the Panthers in stolen bases. The Sioux City North High athlete was a 2008 All-MVC honorable mention pick and a first team All-MVC selection in 2007.

ty on campus was a factor and baseball the ultimate sacrificial victim.

But still...drop baseball? America's Game? The National Past Time? Mike Stout, Sports Editor for The Northern Iowan wrote an honest forthright article in the Feb. 24th edition. Having sought out recent UNI standout and current professional baseball player Brandon Douglas for a comment, it was clear Douglas was upset, "The first thing I wanted to do when I got paid was to donate money back to UNI. They've given so much to me. But I'm never giving a penny now. How can a team that stands out in the cold to take money from parking at the UNI-Dome be broke? The players already pay a hefty chunk themselves, buying a lot of their gear out-of-pocket." Certainly, Panther Scholarship Club members attending a winter Panther basketball game remember the players in below-freezing temperatures guiding traffic into the west Dome parking lot.

An unfortunate public relations incident occurred when players began to find out about the planned action of the University before the official announcement was made public. In addition the team was departing for a road trip. Certainly emotions were high and heads were spinning as the futures of players and coaches were suddenly in question. Their spring road trip was a bit bumpy. However, the Panthers channeled their energy and talents against Big Ten Indiana in a wild contest as UNI topped the Hoosiers 28-17. As luck would have it, the Panthers returned to the Cedar Valley to have their first home stand rained out.

Highlights of the '09 season included a 9-7 come-from-behind win against no. 25 Minnesota, defeating Iowa 9-3 in the final game ever in the Corridor Classic, and winning their final game against Bradley 3-2 behind a ninth-inning bases-loaded single by Jason Summers. Individual honors were plentiful for the Panthers once again. Douglas and Nick Kirk were second-team All-MVC selections and Shuhei Fujiya and Jason Summers honorable mentions. Travis Bennett was MVC Newcomer of the Year and was also named to the All-MVC second team as an outfielder leading UNI with a .338 average and 43 RBI's. Fujiya was selected by the San Diego Padres in the 18th round and Kirk by the Cleveland Indians in the 19th round. The Panthers finished the season 23-26 overall and 7-15 in league play.

Finding new homes for the players was a priority for the Panther coaches throughout the spring, not to mention new jobs for themselves. “UNI will be losing a big part of what we thought this place represented, and that was a group of kids and coaches that not only worked extremely hard at their sport, but also did a great job on campus as far as being good citizens and doing a good job in the classroom,” said Heller. “You’re losing a bunch of guys who fought hard and over-achieved and really represented the university in a first class way and that won’t be replaced unfortunately.” As all but two players left UNI to play for other colleges and universities, UNI’s budget may have saved dollars on one end of campus, but also lost valuable revenue on the academic side as baseball players were like many other UNI students paying tuition and other expenses.

The Cedar Valley also lost a Panther coach, assistant coaches and players that helped young boys and men from throughout the Cedar Valley and beyond that participated in various baseball camps and hitting leagues throughout the winter months in an effort to help them become better players in the Iowa Baseball League or their high school. The camps allowed many fathers and sons to spend additional time togeth-

er during the cold winter months, and no matter how distant or remote, it was not unusual for camp participants to dream of becoming a Panther.

Many accomplishments can be attributed to Heller, his staff and players including one Missouri Valley Conference championship in 2001 (with a school-record 35 wins), four MVC Tournament appearances, and a trip to the NCAA Regional Tournament in 2001 which was UNI’s first since moving up to Division I in 1981. In 2001, the Panthers were ranked 10th in the nation in hitting with a team average of .333 and also broke team records for hits, runs batted in, doubles and extra base hits. In 2003, the Panthers were sixth in the country in stolen bases with 130.

With a total of eight in-state scholarships divided amongst a roster typically consisting of approximately 35 players, Heller and his staff developed three MVC Most Valuable Players in Ryan Brunner, Adam Boeve, and Douglas and one MVC Pitcher of the Year in Nic Ungs. During his tenure as coach, Heller’s teams broke numerous team or individual records. In 2008, shortstop Brandon Douglas earned MVC Player of Year honors in addition to second-team all-America honors. A coach

that loves the art of hitting, Heller’s teams led the MVC in hitting three times and finished second once.

During Coach Heller’s tenure at UNI, his Panthers exceeded the number of previous Panther players moving on to play professional baseball. A total of 20 of Coach Heller’s Panther players have gone on to play professional baseball.

Panthers in the Pros

The baseball team has had many of its players enter a professional career. One was Ryan Brunner. “My thoughts on my time at UNI playing baseball are all positive. I didn’t have any other opportunities to play Division I baseball after high school other than at UNI. During my time playing baseball at UNI I had the chance to play against some very good competition and play in the NCAA tournament my senior season. Playing at UNI gave me the opportunity to show my abilities and eventually get drafted and live a dream of playing professional baseball. It’s disappointing now knowing high school kids growing up wanting to play Division I baseball mostly have to look out of state and many times do not get the opportunity I had.”

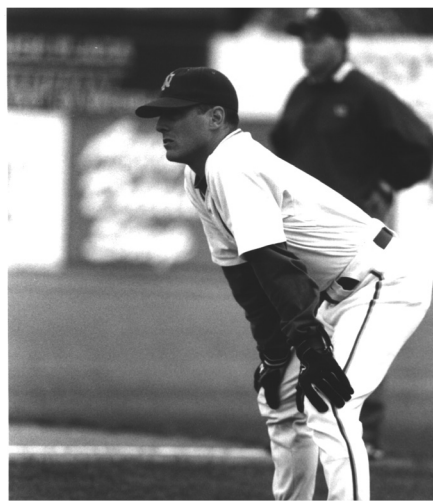
The Panthers’ 10-year record of 270 wins, 278 losses and one tie hardly tells the entire story of their success under Coach Heller’s leadership. Coach Dahm perhaps said it best in a March 30, 2009 interview: “I tell you what, he’s done more with less,” Dahm said. “Rick Heller is just a tremendous, tremendous baseball coach.”

Heller has rebounded and after initially being hired as hitting coach at Creighton University, he was quickly hired away to Indiana State University as head baseball coach leading the Sycamores to a 2010 record of 35-19, the “most wins for any first-year coach in ISU history.” Bob Warn Field at Sycamore Stadium underwent extensive renovations and three former UNI play-

ers now play for Rick Heller. On a personal note, a new baby girl arrived on Sept. 20, 2009 in the Heller household. A new job, a new team, a renovated stadium, a new home, and a new baby; life is good for Rick Heller.

Colleges and universities around the country have been facing financial challenges for years and now more than ever difficult decisions continue to be made across many campuses. UNI baseball was a victim of the times and of the impending circumstances. The fact that baseball survived on campus for as long as it did battling weather, inconsistent fan support, lack of scholarships, and financial support consistent with similar programs is rather amazing. Hopefully in time, the players and coaches of the 2009 team will remember the fond memories while at UNI whether on the field, in the classroom, on campus, or on a long bus trip and recognize that their presence and efforts to keep America’s game alive was then and still is much appreciated and not forgotten.

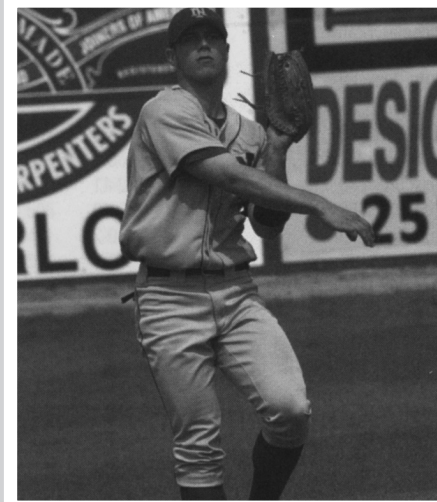
As noted at the beginning of the chapter, it’s impossible to mention all of the individual accomplishments of everyone throughout the years. However, for details of personal and team records, the 2009 baseball media guide is an excellent resource and as of this writing can be found online. Also, special recognition must go out to all of the student sports reporters at UNI’s school newspapers over the years. More than any other source, *The Student’s Offering*, *The Normal Eye*, *The College Eye*, and *The Northern Iowan* were the consistent resources throughout the years highlighting baseball activities on campus. And as the reporting was done on a weekly basis, it may have been the most accurate. The reporters informed, encouraged the campus community to support baseball, were forthright in their editorials, and recognized the value of the sport on campus and ultimately of America’s game.



Brandon Douglas: The shortstop from St. Charles, Iowa was named the 2008 MVC Player of the Year and was drafted in the 11th round by Detroit.



Adam Boeve: Named Freshman All-American honorable mention in 2001 and the MVC Player of the Year in 2003.



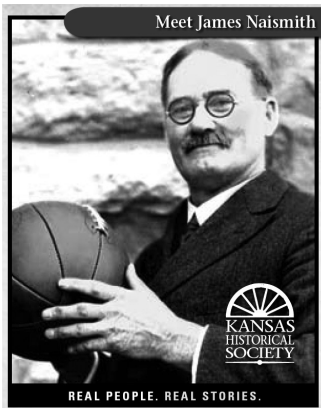
Nic Ungs: Named MVC Pitcher of the Year in 2001. Played on the USA Baseball Regional Olympic qualifying team in 2005 recording two appearances on the mound as USA finished 5-0 in the tournament.

Men's Basketball

James Kelly

Basketball: From the Very Beginning Through the Teens

In 1891, Dr. James Naismith created the sport of basketball. It was his intention that this game should be one of skill as opposed to one that relied solely on the physical strength of the players that was specifically identified with wrestling and football. He wanted this to be a game that could be played indoors and in a relatively small space. From the very beginning, the rules that were established in order to play the game of basketball were meant to allow a player's skill to shine and the use of physical force to have consequences. Dr. Naismith envisioned that a ball would be used and putting the ball into a basket that was elevated on a 10-foot pole would be the means for accumulating points. Played in two 15-minute halves with a five-minute rest period



James A. Naismith, founder of the game of basketball became a faculty member at the University of Kansas where the basketball arena is so named in his honor. The Naismith Award is given today for the best all-around basketball player. (Photo courtesy of Kansas State Historical Society, Copy and Reuse Restrictions Apply.)

between the two halves, the team with the most points at the end of the game would be declared the winner. The ball that was readily available to be used at that time was a soccer ball so it became the ball of choice. In the original game the ball was not dribbled, but rather players simply ran around the confines of the room seeking an open space in order to put the ball in the basket. The individual who was standing with the ball in his possession would pass it to another member of his team. Once a player had the ball or received it while running for that open space, he had to stop. He

could not move; so having a ball that could be dribbled was of little concern.

It wasn't until 1910 when the rules changed that the ball could be dribbled. By that time the ball used had gone through a number of modifications and, as a result, the quality of the ball's construction offered its own concerns. By 1942 the basketball was finally manufactured as a molded ball that offered the game a more quality controlled ball. With a better basketball at hand, the subsequent skills needed to play the game became greatly enhanced.

From its introduction by Naismith, the game of basketball caught on quickly through the expansion movement of various organizations such as the YMCA, higher education and the military. The Iowa State Normal School agreed to have basketball as one of its activities for its young men and its first basketball game was played at the end of March, 1898 when a group of ISNS men traveled to Manchester, Iowa to play the Manchester YMCA team, considered to be one of the best teams in the state or so they say. According to the historical information available, the ISNS men learned about the game from a Miss Satterthwaite, who one would suspect might now be called their coach, but a formal coach for the team wasn't really identified until many years later. Miss Satterthwaite was one of the teachers at ISNS that apparently wanted to help organize young men so they could participate in this new sport.

In the Manchester YMCA game, let it be known that the ISNS team led at the end of the first half by a score of 4-0. By the end of the second 15-minute half, the final score was ISNS 9 and Manchester YMCA 7. Whether it was a legitimate oversight or a down right intentional act, the time keeper allowed the second half to run an additional 13 minutes until the Manchester team had scored 12 points, thus allowing the Manchester YMCA team and not the "basketeers" of ISNS to win the game. As reported in the April 1, 1898 Normal Eye, the campus paper at that time, "Our team was loud in its praises of the hospitality of the citizens of Manchester, but very much incensed at the unfair treatment

The First 13 Rules of Basketball:

1. The ball may be thrown in any direction with one or both hands.
2. The ball may be batted in any direction with one or both hands, but never with the fist.
3. A player cannot run with the ball. The player must throw it from the spot on which he catches it with allowance to be made for a man running at good speed.
4. The ball must be held in or between the hands. The arms or body must not be used for holding it.
5. No shouldering, holding, pushing, striking or tripping in any way of an opponent. The first infringement of this rule by any person shall count as a foul; the second shall disqualify him until the next goal is made or, if there was evident intent to injure the person, for the whole of the game. No substitution shall be allowed.
6. A foul is striking at the ball with the fist, violations of Rules 3 and 4 and such as described in Rule 5.
7. If either side makes three consecutive fouls it shall count as a goal for the opponents. (Consecutive here means without the opponents in the meantime making a foul.)
8. A goal shall be made when the ball is thrown or batted from the ground into the basket and stays there, providing those defending the goal do not touch or disturb the goal. If the ball rests on the edge and the opponents move the basket; it shall count as a goal.
9. When the ball goes out of bounds, it shall be thrown into the field and played by the first person touching it. In case of dispute the umpire shall throw it straight into the field. The thrower-in is allowed five seconds. If he holds it longer, it shall go to the opponent. If any side persists in delaying the game, the umpire shall call a foul on them.
10. The umpire shall be judge of the men and shall note the fouls and notify the referee when three consecutive fouls have been made. He shall have the power to disqualify men according to Rule 5.
11. The referee shall be the judge of the ball and decide when it is in play in bounds, to which side it belongs, and shall keep the time. He shall decide when a goal has been made and keep account of the goals with any other duties that are usually performed by a referee.
12. The time shall be two 15-minute halves with five minutes rest between.
13. The side making the most goals in that time shall be declared the winners.

(www.kansasheritage.org/people/naismith.html)

received from the boys of the team and the officials of the evening." One might wonder whether or not we still hear about some of those same rueful feelings today?

The basket being used at that time was a peach basket. Getting the ball out of the basket was a bit of a time problem as someone had to climb up a ladder to retrieve the ball. Later the basket was modified by adding a plunger type rod to the bottom of the basket enabling the ball to be pushed out of the basket thus saving time for the length the game was played. The wonders of technology, will it ever cease?

In the early days of basketball, wins and losses seemed to be determined somewhat by the esprit de corps of the home team. For example, in a January 12, 1901 Normal Eye reporting of the game with the Waterloo YMCA, the Normal team didn't fair so well, losing 20-6. The team members felt the loss was due to the fact that the height of the YMCA basket was higher than those the ISNS team used for practice and it seemed to throw off their ability to put the ball in the basket. However, it was noted that "Joe Adams did fine work in throwing baskets from the foul line, throwing in 6 out of 10 attempts." It would seem that Joe was the high scorer and only scorer for ISNS in that particular game.

The height of the baskets were supposed to be set at the 10-foot height, but the ISNS players noted that the height or lack of control of it played a major role as to why they had trouble winning any of the games and since most games were played away from campus, the team was at the mercy of what they would find at the opponent's home court. This also seemed to be the case with the officiating of the game since the officials always seemed to support the home team over the visiting one.

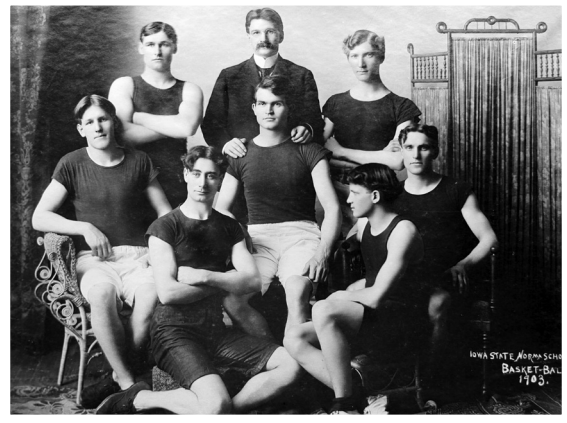
Win or lose, the number of games the ISNS team was able to play in any of the early years of its existence was few. Because ISNS didn't have a home court, it was difficult for any of the local patrons to see a basketball game and should there ever be a chance for one to be played at home they could learn for themselves what was directing all the talk about this upstart game. In order to assist with this dilemma, a group of local merchants helped bring a game to Cedar Falls to be played on the open stage of the Cedar Falls Opera House. This January 1902 contest cost twenty-five cents for admission but it allowed many of the local patrons to view their first game while residing in their theatre

seats. Unfortunately, the ISNS men lost the game as the final curtain came down.

Having a place to practice was a concern that came up often in The Normal Eye. ISNS didn't have the best accommodations, which seemed to be a reason that they didn't win many games. Practice was accomplished on an outside court. When they played the Waterloo Intermediates, they lost not only because of the suspected basket height difference, but also because the game was played in the YMCA gymnasium and they had the lights turned on which seemed to pose a concern for the ISNS pedagogues and one of the stated reasons they finished behind the Waterloo team. The ISNS team of Wallace, Wolfe, Jones, Panton, and Roberts was, at that time, considered to be one of the fastest college teams in the state, but alas, they lacked the "proper accommodations for practices."

In the early 1900s, physical education programs consisted mainly of calisthenics with some game activities included. Those men who were connected with military training carried out military drills in addition to their time with physical education. However, a change took place during the fall of 1903 that suspended military drills in favor of physical education if it was connected with athletics. Each of the men could choose which sport they wished to enroll and basketball became the most popular as the game itself was becoming more popular around the country.

As the next couple of years passed, the teams played, but continued to have problems due to their



The 1903 ISNS basketball team: (L-R top) T.E. Jones, Professor George B. Affleck, Physical Education director and coach; L.H. Wallace; Middle row: Q. Feuling, Joe Wright, unknown; bottom row: Fred Stewart, unknown. The 1902-03 team lost both of its games.

lack of facilities with which to practice. This was putting the ISNS team on seemingly unequal footing with other teams. However, new construction was underway and the new facilities would soon be the answer to any previous concerns. On January 25, 1905, the Normal School basketball team played host to its first game ever in its new gymnasium with the men from Western College located in Toledo, Iowa. Another important note should be made; this basketball team finally had a bona fide coach in Charles A. Pell.

Western College, that was later renamed Leander Clarke College, played the first game in the new gymnasium pouncing on the home team by a score of 34-10. This proved to be a tough loss, but the next game with Leander Clarke College, ISNS returned the favor winning the contest 44-29. The Normal Eye's February 20, 1907 write-up stated the official they had for this game was "conducive to fast playing and tested the wind of every man on the floor. He was Johnny on the spot." However, it would appear that "the Normal men were called a lot for holding, traveling, pushing and other indecorous acts which were largely responsible for a good part of Leander's score."

During the 1909 season, the basketball program advanced considerably breaking away from the AAU rules of play and adopting the more strenuous intercollegiate system. To carry on competition with the new changes, the ISNS Tutors were given new uniforms to wear. As it was told in the January 13, 1909 Normal Eye, "The varsity aggregation shone resplendent in their new uniforms in their work-out Thursday afternoon wearing them for the very first time. The suits are sufficiently handsome and impressive to merit especial description. The entire outfit consists of a coat jersey, shirt, flappers and socks."

By 1910, rules as to who could play on athletic teams were being adopted. An athletic board, made up of college professors drew up eligibility regulations which were given to all of the students who wished to compete on any of the athletic teams. It was also during this time that dribbling the ball began to find its way into the game and therefore required some new governance standards. The year was 1911 and a national committee was pulled together to establish some needed new rules to govern how basketball was to be played. (Note: Rather than include all of the rules, as some are redundant with the original list of 13, selected rules that bear

some similarity to those used even today are mentioned below.) These include:

1. No substitutes may enter the game until authorized by the referee.
2. Dribble ceases when the ball touches both hands at the same time.
3. A captain (the ball player designated as such) can call time out only three times in a game.
4. It is illegal to stop the motion of a player who does not have the ball.
5. A free throw is awarded when there is an attempt to interfere with the man who is trying to shoot the ball. If the field goal is successful, one free throw is awarded to the player, and if the field goal is unsuccessful, two free throws are awarded. (National Rules Committee as reported in the April 19, 1911 The College Eye, the new name for the campus paper.)

These rules were determined to help the game become "faster, cleaner and less like football."

The "teen" years were good years for ISNS basketball. In 1913, the ISNS Tutors beat Iowa for the first time in their history. However, one reporter commented on the fact that the official at that game was probably a part of the reason why they had won. The 1916-17 basketball season saw a group of young men put up some great wins. Coach Allen P. Berkstresser started the season with a convincing win over the Waterloo Y.M.C.A. The climax of the season was a 17-4 win over Coe College holding the opponent to just one field basket. The team was made up of Art Dickinson, who was closing out his athletic career; Earl Whitford; Clem Leitch, Upper Iowa's star player the year before; Russ Dickinson, brother to "lil Arthur;" and Ira Perry from the training school. Hmm, rules?

As the "teen years" came to a close, it was evident, and rightly so, the rules and regulations controlling the game of basketball did go through many alterations. Basketball was changing and its governance had to adjust with those changes. It was the changes made in the "teen years" that four years of eligibility to play was adopted, academic grades had to be maintained, the number of academic hours being carried had to be met, and receiving some kind of payment for athletic services would result in suspension from the team. Rules and regulations were altered a lot as the popularity of the

game continued to grow. As conferences were formed, rules and regulations were altered because conference governance became an important part of the makeup of respective conference members.

Scrunching the Roaring '20's, '30's and '40's for a Synoptical Look-See

The "roaring twenties," "hardship thirties," and "war era forties" saw a number of changes in the social development of people, education, and corresponding athletics. Within the athletic programming of the institutions around the country, conference alignments changed on a regular basis. ISNS was no different than any of the other institutions. During these years, rules and regulations continued to be adjusted to meet the demands of greater skilled players and respective equipment and augmented by the demands to develop winning teams. It was plainly on the minds of fans and athletic teams that winning was the apparent reason for their existence even though many tried to downplay this attitude. Palmer E. Pierce who was president of the fledgling NCAA saw this assertiveness long before the flapper years and addressed this issue in a 1910 speech. A forward thinking individual, he was very outspoken about the pressure to win being placed on teams, players and coaches. In this speech, Pierce stated, "Without a doubt, it will be a great thing for this country when all the boys and young men are filled with a love for personal participation in pure athletics and play sports knowing that it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly." We might wonder if this is something all teams aspire to today.

The NCAA, which was originally known as the Intercollegiate Athletic Association or IAA was formed because of a need to curb football, which was considered to be a violent sport. It was formed to establish a governance structure that would enable all athletic events to be guided by a single set of principles as opposed to the continuous alteration of rules as conferences were redefined. It was President Teddy Roosevelt, an avid fan of sports, who brought coaches, administrators and educators to the White House to get the sports programs in order. He put the "rules makers" on a task to create a safer game or lose them, and in essence, it was this effort that got the NCAA off to its beginning with

the support of those who would be coaches, administrators and patrons of intercollegiate athletics. But take note, it was only the beginning. As has been the case all along, on a yearly basis, rules and respective changes are discussed, altered and adopted. Alterations for the game of basketball played today include newly adopted rules that were put into effect just last year.

ISNS belonged to a number of conferences as the athletic teams developed. Throughout the roaring twenties, Iowa State Teachers College, as it was now known, was a part of the newly formed Hawkeye Conference, consisting of Buena Vista College, Columbia College, Ellsworth College, Upper Iowa University and Lenox College. Athletics had been an ongoing concern for ISTC due to two distinct, yet connected points. First there were the issues with ongoing military training that was a part of the collegiate curriculum for young men attending ISTC and second, the apparent absence of a regular identified coaching force. Through the "teen" years the basketball team had had three coaches and even a season when there was no coach assigned to basketball. The upper administration and athletic board, made up of professors, felt there was a need to get the ISTC athletic program in hand. The person they turned to accomplish this feat was Professor Ivan Doseff whom they hired with the explicit assignment of establishing a laden controlled ISTC athletic program. Professor Doseff assigned himself to coach men's basketball while he began the process of bringing athletics to a more governed part of campus life. He left ISTC, however, at the end of 1921 before his identified mission was completed. L.L. Mendenhall was then hired away from Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. to continue the work of Professor Doseff. His hire was significant because during his early tenure as a coach, teacher and administrator, he was credited for taking the athletic program that was still struggling and turning it into a manageable, forward thinking program.

Like Doseff, Mendenhall took on the role as the basketball coach posting three years of winning teams before stepping away. His leadership was such a prominent feature to all who had any connection with him that in 1925, he was appointed to a new title as the director of all athletic programs, a position he would hold for the next 30 years. One of Mendenhall's first acts as the new athletic director was to hire someone to replace himself as the basketball coach. In that regard,

he hired Art Dickinson, a young graduate of ISTC who had played basketball for Coach Mendenhall. With this hire, Dickinson became the first graduate of ISTC ever to be hired to teach and coach at his alma mater. Dickinson coached the men's basketball teams from the fall of 1924 through the 1936-37 seasons.

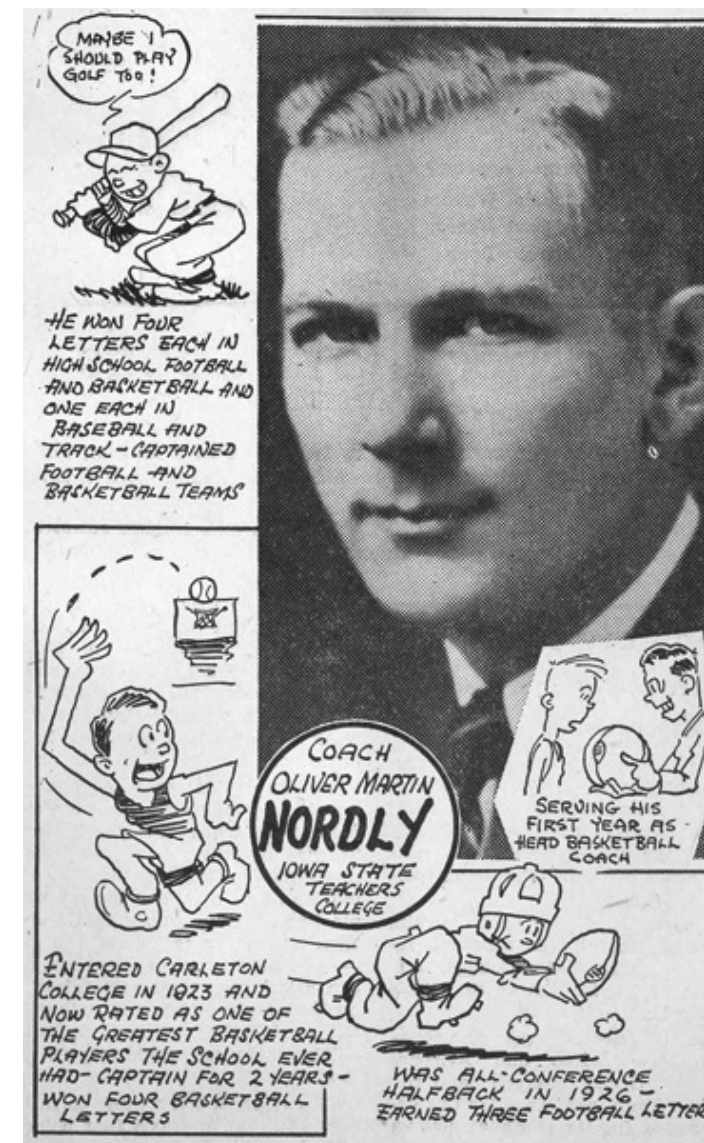
Throughout Dickinson's early years as a basketball coach, the team was not without its standout players. Lloyd Haberichter (1931) offered the offensive threat for the team. Maurice Carr (1935) was the leading scorer for the Panther basketball team and was predicted throughout the year to be one of the members to be placed on the all-state and all-conference teams. Kenneth Kimberlin (1935) was a standout freshman player in football, basketball and baseball. A protégé of Russell Dickinson, a Teacher's College graduate and brother of the basketball coach, Kimberlin had a grade school idol in Howard "Tuffy" Flower, a 1926 fashionable ISTC basketball player. (Note the new name for the athletic teams became the Panthers in 1931. See the last chapter for more of the story.)

During the 1930's a teaching license could be attained with just two years of training. Teachers were needed as Iowa schools grew and Iowa State Teachers College was the institution that provided much of the teaching force in order to fulfill those needs. Such was the case of Paul Beckman who started as a guard for Coach Dickinson's Panther squad. Beckman left ISTC as a junior to take a teaching position at East Waterloo. In order to stay active as a basketball player, the rule was that he would have to carry 12 academic credit hours, which proved impossible to do with his teaching responsibilities at East Waterloo. As a result, Beckman stepped away from ISTC and his membership on the basketball team.

Better known for track, Dickinson produced winning teams through his tenure as the basketball coach, but after the 1936-37 basketball season ended he took his leave from basketball to devote his full attention to track. O.M. "Hon" Nordly was hired to replace Dickinson as the basketball coach.

The O.M. "Hon" Nordly Era (1937-54)

Nordly coached the ISTC team, soon to be a member of the North Central Conference, from 1937-



38 until he retired from coaching in 1954. During the 1940-41 season, the TC program was picked to finish in the depths of the bottom half of the conference. Nordly said, "Give me a month to work with my boys and we will give any team in the conference a battle." His words were spoken true and his prophecy came to fruition. Building his game plan around two minor letter winners in Bill Close and Nate Jennings, he created a surprise team that boasted fast breaks and deft ball handling, and much to the chagrin of the opponents, the Panther players bowled over their foes on the way toward a solid bid for the conference championship. Unfortunately, the Panthers lost their final game to Morningside leaving them in second place.

With the December 5, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the lives of the young men at ISTC became

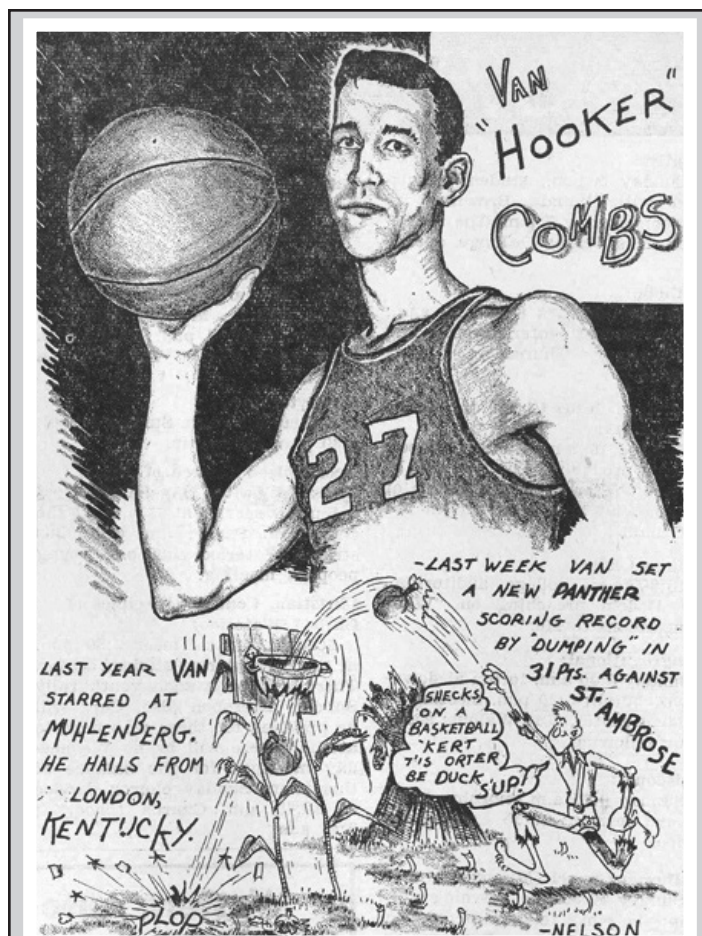
affected and it eventually caught up to Coach Nordly, other coaches and professors. Teacher's College found themselves without veteran players. Beginning with the 1943 fall semester until the end of the war in 1945, ISTC did not have a men's basketball team.

The Hon Nordly Post War Years (1945-54)

With all the hoopla surrounding the end of the Second World War, the young men, professors and coaches, once again, found their way back to the colleges and universities they had left. Such was the case of Hon Nordly. He picked up where he left off, coaching the ISTC basketball team. Two of his star players were Don Green and Bob Esau, high school classmates that played together in high school and came to Iowa State Teachers College together in order to continue playing basketball together. They were the leading scorers on the 1941 team with Green at the top of the roster with 174 points and Esau with 155 points. On his way to setting scoring records Green became the highest scoring Panther forward beating out Fred Lofquist (1935-39). Green also had the most points scored in a single game scoring 25 points against Morningside besting the old record by Bob Curtis (1937-38). Bob Esau scored the most field goals in loop play with 35, five better than the 30 set previously by Lyle Dodd during the 1939-40 season. Esau also had the dubious distinction of having committed more personal fouls than any other player on the team.

With Green and Esau gone, the 1946-47 basketball season was an up and down season. There were new faces on the team, and it was evident to many that post war ramifications were still being felt and needing more time to subside. Two bleacher strategists telling each other how to play the game summed up the season, "You could say it is much like the weather - very warm at times and very cold at others." The February 21, 1947 College Eye column named The Locker Room Logic by Jack reviewed the season. According to Jack, "The basketball team hasn't had a very successful season from the standpoint of games won, but it was due to inconsistency, not ability. When the team was 'hot,' they were as good as the best; when they were 'cold' they were as bad as the worst."

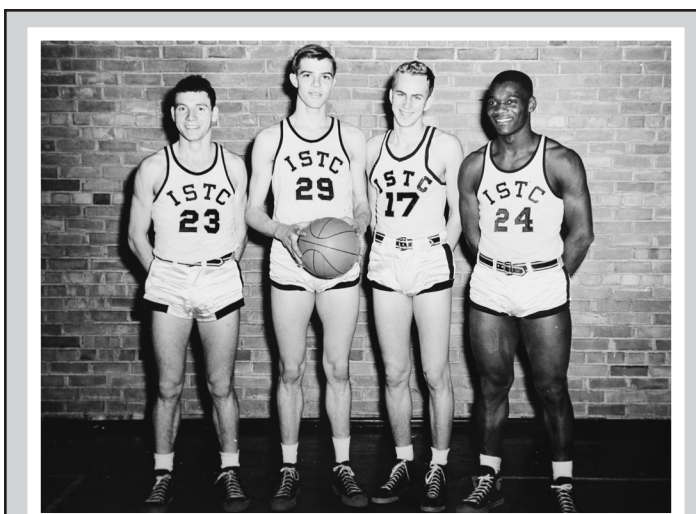
One game that did pack in the crowd was the opening game of the year against the Ottumwa Pre-



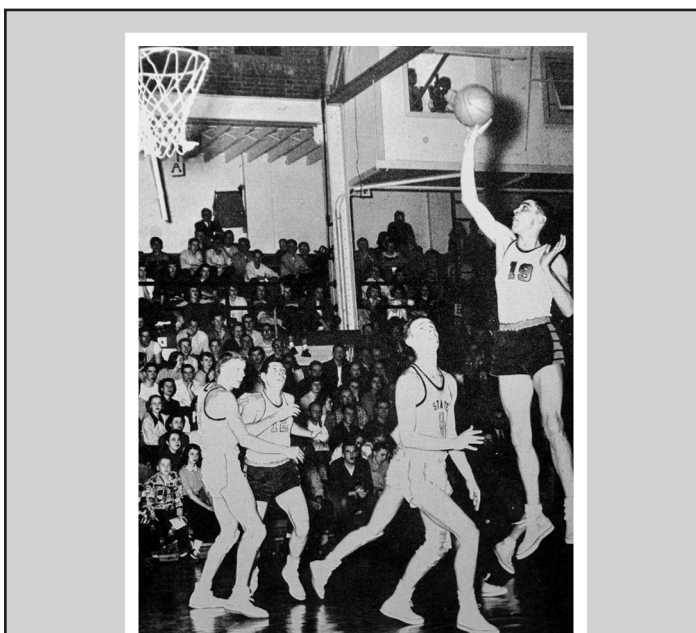
Scoring half of the 62 points in the victory over St. Ambrose, Van "Hooker" Combs gave the audience a show of what a basketball player really looks like. In that same game, Don Dutcher scored 11 first-half points.

Flight School Seahawks, a military school that was considered to have one of the best military teams in the country and boasting two All-Americans in Howie Dallman and Bart Fulger. To their chagrin, 2,500 Panther fans packed into the West Gym to watch Del Mully, whose eligibility was determined just one hour before tipoff, Don Dutcher and Dave Williams, along with the rest of the ISTC squad win the contest 53-40. A bitter loss for the Seahawks, the return engagement at Ottumwa saw a 71-31 revenge-laden victory for the Pre-Flight School five.

The next four seasons were special for the Nordly teams winning the conference championships due to a solid group of athletes with the likes of Zeke Hogeland, known for his defensive play and Walt Kochneff and Norm Jespersen for their offensive play. Along with the



From L – R: Zeke Hogeland, Norm Jespersen, Charlie Riek and David Williams. Dave Williams was the first African American to play basketball for the Panthers. He was dubbed the "ever present shadow" with his inexhaustible supply of energy.



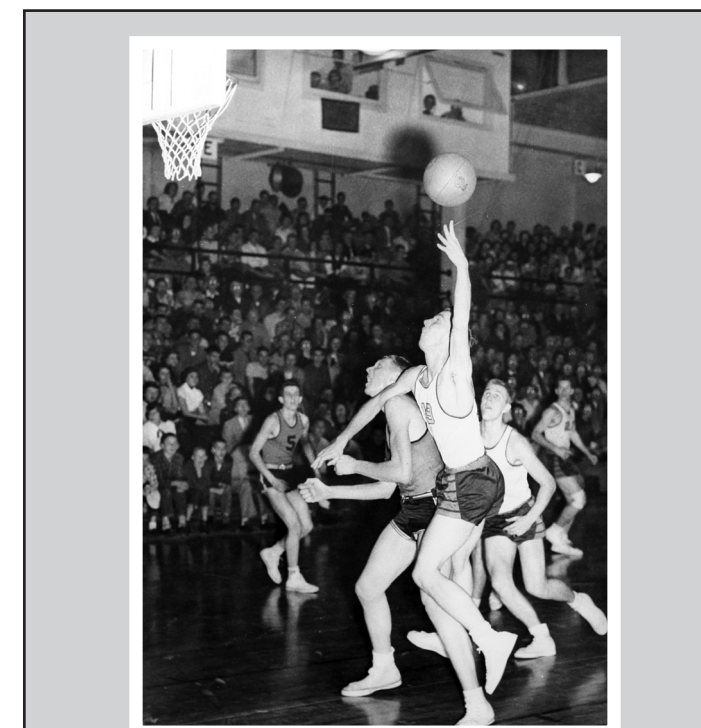
Leading scorer Norm Jespersen taking one of his many shots while teammate Walt Kochneff (12) readies for the rebound.

rest of the Panther squad, they ended their combined four-year run with a 35-9 NCC record and a 60-26 overall record. During this time Jespersen broke the scoring record three times and became the first TC player to score more than 1,000 career points. His departure and

the graduation of other key players would be felt in the win-loss column.

Thrown for too many losses to repeat as conference champions, Nordly began building his team once again with a new group of young men. The year was 1952. Howie Pigg and Dick Lofton were the only sophomores off the freshman team that made the starting five. The teams didn't have the luxury of having a lot of recruited players, but were mostly made up of those that tried out for the team. When Pigg started at ISTC he remembers, "We had 50 or 60 freshmen trying out for the basketball team. A few, maybe four or five had scholarships so they were playing at the other half of the gym while the rest of us were trying to impress the coaches with our shooting layups every two or three minutes. How they decided who made the team and who would be cut, I don't know." Pigg continues, "It was rumored that the athletic department had a limited recruiting budget. I heard that before the coach could make a long distance telephone call [to Hudson] they had to first get permission from the athletic director [L.L. Mendenhall at that time], and then it was usually a collect call."

So the majority of the Panther basketball squads were not recruited. They came and tried out for the team



Howie Pigg drives the ball to the basket against Wartburg as Tom Wilke gets ready to do his part should Pigg miss, which he often didn't do.

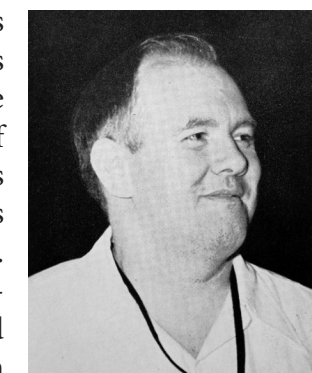
with many finding their place on the freshman team. Freshmen could not play varsity at this time because it was determined that freshmen needed time to acclimate to college life first. The freshman teams were formed in order for the members to gain some sense of how the college game was played and acquire play-time experience that would carry them into the varsity ranks.

Many of the players that came to ISTC represented small town Iowa with populations less than 2,000, such as, tiny Denmark, Iowa (population 235) where L.R. Smoot came from and Keswick (population 276) where Dick Corrick hailed. The only so called "city slicker" a.k.a. Chicagoan on the squad at this time was Dick Miller. Add Jack Rollinger, Harold Schuchman and others to the 1952-53 team and they would persevere with determined team-play to ultimately capture the fifth conference championship, in six years. This group of Panther's went on to finish the season taking first place in the Iowa District Playoffs sponsored by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Just one more year would see Nordly as the coach of the Panthers and at the end of the 1953-54 season and 15 years at the helm, Nordly stepped away from Panther basketball to seek other business interests. Nordly finished his basketball career with a 166-127 overall record. O.M. "Hon" Nordly was inducted into the NCC Hall of Fame in 1969 and the UNI Hall of Fame in 1985. Basketball at ISTC would now move to the Stanley Hall era.

The Stan Hall Years (1954-56)

Stanley Hall was the director of athletics and the head basketball coach at Bemidji State Teachers College when he got the call to come to Iowa State Teachers College. The two years that were to follow with Stan Hall as the coach were not as productive as probably fans would have liked. At the same time, losses weren't because of a lack of effort. Hall built his first-year team around centers Ray Nissen and Del Nicklaus. Dick Beetsch and Ron Brinkley returned to the squad from football and Beetsch



Coach Stan Hall

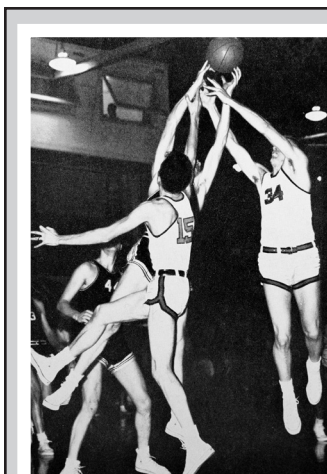
would find a starting role as a forward along with Howie Pigg and Pudge Weber. Sonny Horn and Ken Nichols would find positions as starting guards. But his traveling team included many others who had the ability to move into the game supporting the offensive and defensive structure designed by their coach.

Travel to some of these schools posed the greatest obstacle for the teams. The NCC was wide spread. Dick Beetsch (1952-56) commented, "When we traveled to the North Dakota schools, we always scheduled two games for the trip. One would be with a South Dakota school and the other would be with one of the North Dakota schools. We made the trips traveling by bus. We were lucky. We rode the buses the whole distance. The football teams had to ride the train to Minneapolis before transferring to a bus to get to the North Dakota games. Either way, it was a long ways to go." Howie Pigg (1950-55) noted, "Our basketball game at North Dakota was normally the preliminary game to the hockey game that followed." Beetsch further commented, "Talent is what talent is and Howie Pigg was probably the best basketball player that I had ever played with."

Howie Pigg, a 1989 inductee into the Hall of Fame, broke the long time single game scoring record hitting 37 points in the game against Augustana College and, in so doing he set the record of 455 points for a single season averaging 21.7 points per game, a record previously held by Norm Jespersen. At graduation, Pigg had established a new career total point record scoring 1,041 points, a Panther statistic that still leaves him in 26th place today.

Post player Ray Nissen, always a part of the offense, preferring not to be left out of the mix broke the season scoring record for a first year varsity player with 346 points. The previous mark had been set during the 1951-52 season by Jack Rollinger.

Hall's second and final year was more difficult than his first as Howie Pigg had graduated and his team seemed to be plagued with a lot of injuries. Winning on the road was not easy and the team finished the season with an 8-11 record. The team, however, was not without its stand-out players. Dick Beetsch, dubbed the "iron man" was a 12-letter winner playing four seasons of football, basketball and baseball. What gave him his moniker was the fact that during his playing years, he never missed a collegiate athletic event. Hall left the



Dick Strub (34) and Lee Mowrer (15) work for a rebound off the Panthers' board in a game with Augustana. Strub led the team that year with the best field goal shooting percentage.

team at the end of the 1955-56 season with a 19-22 overall record.

The Jim Witham Years (1956-61)

Jim Witham was the new coach for the Panthers. He began his first of a five year coaching career at ISTC with three losses, something he definitely did not care for. Being the forever consummate basketball coach, he bolstered his squad into believing they could win and win was what they did for the next six games, ultimately finishing his first year with a 12-10 overall record.

At the beginning of his second season he was left with only one senior, Clark McCleary. Coach Witham chose to reverse the first season's record and went about doing so by winning six of the first ten games. He claimed, "I think our bench will be stronger this season and when [Frank] Stotts and [Bob] Mohl become eligible. We'll have considerably more strength in the front line." (January 17, 1958 College Eye)

Both Stotts and Mohl had been declared ineligible because they had missed the previous quarter of school. Thus they had to sit out the opening quarter following conference and NCAA rules. However, Witham's claim of strength was not to come to fruition as the team went into a losing streak getting bested 11 of their final 14 games. As R. Emerson Voith put it in



Coach Dr. Jim Witham

The Tall Corn Basketball Invitational:

In the fall of 1956, Coach Witham and Coach Ax Bundgaard at Wartburg College were both searching for games over the holidays. Neither was having much success. They learned of each other's plight and joined as one to put an invitational together. The first Tall Corn Invitational was played January 1957. Luther College and Mankato State College were the first two teams to be invited. They played for the win, which would lead to a champion. ISTC won the first tournament. The collaboration provided a unique opportunity to host a respected tournament and work with another institution in the process. The jointly hosted tournament was discontinued in 1963.

Is it scrimmage or skirmish? Clark McCleary recalls looking up the definition.

"The University of South Dakota in Vermillion was the best team in the conference from 1956-58, mostly because they had two terrific guards they imported from Brooklyn (Cliff and Jimmy Daniels). Parenthetically, they were probably the only two black athletes in the state of South Dakota during that decade, and they could play! In fact, that team won the NCAA Small College National Championship in 1958. When they came to play us in Cedar Falls, Jimmy and I covered one another all night. We were both really competitive, so some of what went on wasn't pretty. At one point, Jimmy crowded me more than what I felt was reasonable, so I shoved him away with a forearm. From behind I heard, 'You can't do that to my brother!' at which point Cliff was on my back; both benches emptied, and game on! Five minutes later, the referees (I believe they were Wayne Lichty and Chick Henderson that night.) restored order and admonished both teams that they would tolerate no more fighting. No technical fouls were called and no one was tossed from the game, which was most surprising. I would like to say we went on to win, but they got us in a close one."

his January 17, 1958 College Eye column, "This weekend the boys are on the road for games with conference opponents South Dakota State and Augustana. If the ball they play on this trip resembles any of the play witnessed at Cornell (66-79), it may be a long weekend

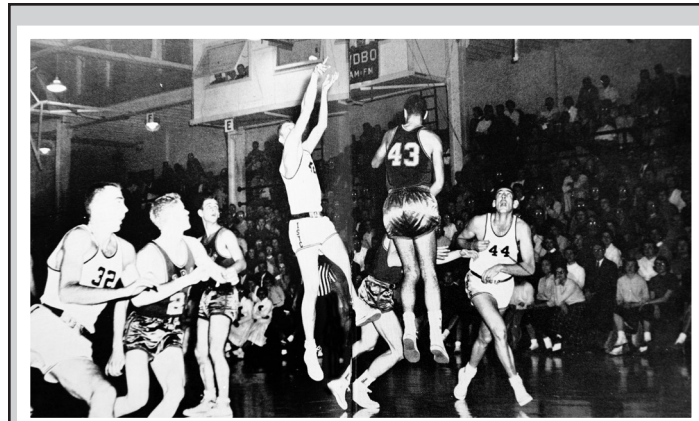
It happened at SDS: Clark McCleary talks about playing against South Dakota State.

"Looking back over 50 years later, the funniest thing that happened was in Brookings when we played South Dakota State my junior year, although it wasn't so funny that night. This was the place that the fans started ringing cowbells the minute we took the court, and it didn't stop until the game ended. (Note: Phil Johnson and John Martin, both players in later years, spoke about this.) We always left that place with a headache. Early in the second half I drove the lane and went up for what I thought was an easy two when the entire home team decided I shouldn't be that uncontested. All five put me into the third row and, since we were playing in their gym, no foul was called. What was worse was the fact that four different fans each grabbed one of my arms and legs and wouldn't let me get back onto the court. Of course, play went on and the Panthers were playing defense with only four players until I fought my way back onto the court. I was truly concerned that I had maybe hurt some of those girls, but a man has to do what a man has to do."

for the Tutors." Emerson continued, "I hope I'm wrong and I've seen the boys play the kind of ball, on occasion, that could prove me so, but to win either of these tilts we're going to have to play forty minutes of heads-up ball." As it was, the Panther squad lost both games.

Frank Stotts continued to pace Witham's second term team with a 15.8 point average. Senior Clark McCleary played his last game with the South Dakota road trip. Dick Paulsen's March 7, 1958 College Eye article was directed toward Clark "Mac" McCleary, "as a player that was a 'tiger' under the basket as he led the Panther rebounding attack." On closing out his career, Paulsen honored McCleary, "I am sure as are the rest of his friends, that if he shows the same attitude the rest of his life that he has displayed on the basketball court, he will without a doubt, make a success of his life to come."

With the start of the 1959-60 season, Cliff Svoboda, Ron LaFrentz, Dean Jensen and Jerry Holbrook became tabbed as members for the starting five. They began with an opening game against the Panther freshmen squad that was boasting two players that would soon become eligible to join the varsity team once the



Ron LaFrentz fires a jump shot as Frank Stotts (44) and Clark McCleary (32) press for the rebound.

first semester ended. These were players that Coach Witham felt would make an impact with the team right away and was looking for them to begin playing with the varsity. He was referring to Bob Waller, who had transferred in from the University of Iowa and Pete Spoden, a transfer student from Loras College in Dubuque. As one might suspect, the varsity team won the game over the freshman squad, but as Coach Witham expected, this team would show its talents and did so finishing the season with a 15-8 overall record and an 8-4 conference record.

Forward to the next academic year; the December 9, 1960 College Eye headlines read, "Witham Leaves Coaching with Mixed Emotions." Coach Witham will close out his coaching career as he had been tabbed to be the new athletic director of the mens physical education department, which oversaw inter-collegiate athletics at that time.

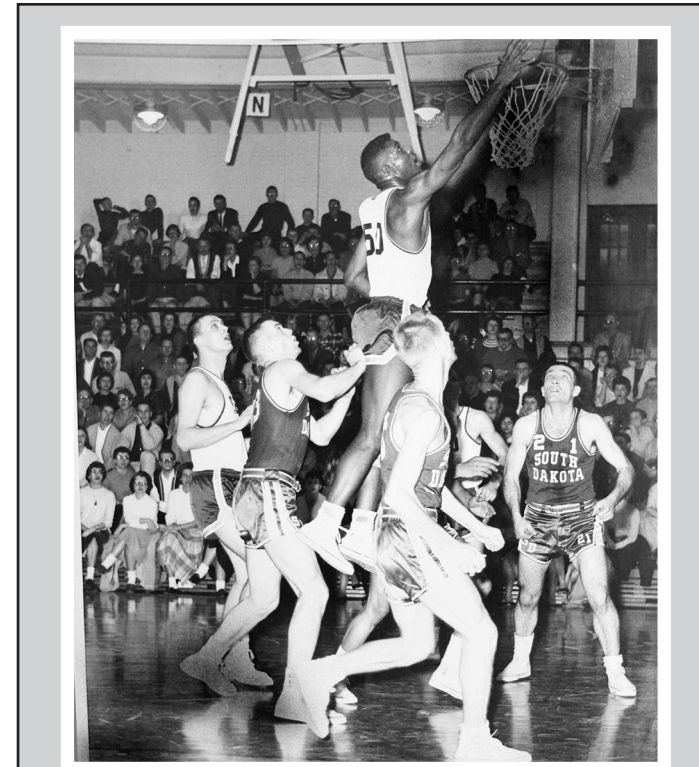
Like Coach Hall before him, Witham was a product of Bemidji State College. He ultimately attained his doctorate at the University of Indiana deciding that athletic administration would someday be his future. But before that would ever be the case, coaching the Panthers was his purpose for being at ISTC. His career at ISTC would eventually amass a 63-49 overall record and a 31-29 conference record, but it was during his last two years where he provided back to back winning seasons with a strong and exciting team.

With a team that sported the likes of James Jackson, Holbrook, Waller, Spoden, and Svoboda amongst others, the Panthers rose to the occasion showing off their winning talents. One of the key games in Coach Witham's final year was against league leading South

Dakota State. ISTC trailed by nine points at half time. The offense was having difficulty with an intense SDS zone defense. It was the hot jump shot of Waller that broke the intensity of the defense they were facing and drew the Panthers to within one point. However, foul trouble plagued the team and the free throw line proved charitable for the South Dakota State Jackrabbits. The Panthers would lay claim to a second place conference finish behind the South Dakota State NCC champions. At the end of the 1960-61 season, their offensive scoring prowess placed Holbrook and Spoden in the conference top 10. Eddie Watt and Waller placed in the top 10 for field goal percentages.

In her College Eye article, Sandy Phillips asked Coach Witham, as he was stepping away from a coaching career, to relate to the highlights of his career. He identified three. First he spoke about the time he was coaching basketball at Mankato State College in Mankato, Minn. He took his team on a road trip to Huron College in Huron, S.D. During that game 10 of his players fouled out leaving him with only two players left on the floor to finish the game, but at the end of the game his team was ahead and won the game. He also spoke about the 1958 six-overtime loss to North Dakota State losing 109-107. How about amassing 107 points and then losing the game? As strange as it may seem, this wasn't a Division II NCAA record. Close, but no cigar. The greatest overtime record was set February 18, 1956 when Black Hills State College beat Yankton College 80-79 after playing through seven overtime periods. The Panthers' game with NDS did, however, set a North Central Conference record for the most points scored by a losing team.

Dr. Witham recalled for Ms. Phillips the reason for leaving his coaching position was not only due to his new administrative role but, "I do feel this is a young man's game, and I'll be very happy to see a young person take over these pleasant duties." Most coaches and teachers alike will espouse that they like to work with young people. Coach Witham points out, "There's a lot of responsibility in being a head coach and having to make decisions for these individuals." A bit of advice that was given to the coach and something that he passes on to us all and probably something we have all felt at one time or another, "As long as you worry, everything will be alright. Don't take anything for granted – worry a little bit."

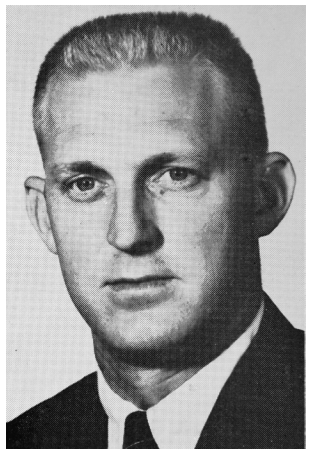


Jim Jackson up for two points with Cliff Svoboda ready to assist if needed. Jackson averaged 16.4 rebounds per game and continues to lead that statistical category.

When asked about the athletes he had coached, Coach Witham gave much praise to all of his athletes, but the third point he wanted to make was directed at Pete Spoden. Coach Witham made it very clear, "Pete Spoden was the all-around best player he had ever coached." Dick Strub, who played for the Panthers 1955-57, concurred with Coach Witham's sentiments regarding Pete Spoden. He said, "Pete Spoden may have been the best basketball player ever to put on a Panther uniform." Coach Witham moved on to athletic administration with a 63-49 record. He was inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame with the 1985 charter class.

The Norm Stewart Era (1961-67)

Norm Stewart was hired to replace Dr. Jim Witham, who had stepped aside to take an administrative role. Stewart, who played basketball at the University of Missouri, made all-America honors there. At the end of his collegiate career he signed professional contracts to play basketball with the St. Louis Hawks and pitch for the Baltimore baseball organization's Aberdeen, S.D. Ironbirds. He left the professional ranks stating that his time spent with each professional sport was nothing more than an "instant cup of coffee." Stewart returned to the University of Missouri to fill the role of assistant basketball and assistant baseball coach. Then the call came for him to come to Cedar Falls. The school had just changed its name to the State College of Iowa and Stewart was to be its new basketball coach.



Coach Norm Stewart

To suggest that Norm Stewart's 1961-62, first year at the helm was anything but successful may be a bit of an understatement. The Panthers finished the first year under Stewart compiling the best record ever scored by a Panther basketball team in one season. Standing 19-5, the Panthers had won the Tall Corn Tournament and had beaten Hamline 81-68 in the first round of NCAA regional post-season play. They lost the second round action to Nebraska Wesleyan ending their season, but with his solid playing, Spoden was named the MVP for the league and the regional post-season team. Holbrook and Spoden earned honorable mention on the AP Division II All-American team. And as the data was laid out for review, Holbrook had broken the record for most career points scored with 1,045 points and as a combination of players on one team, Holbrook, Spoden and Waller became the first three players on a Panther team ever to score over 300 points each in one season. At the end of Stewart's first season Holbrook and Waller would end their basketball careers.

As the Stewart era continued (1962-63), it was Duane Josephson leading the scoring attack for most of the season. Paul Balcom became ineligible leaving the team short on height, but a scoring race between South

Bob Waller shooting his infamous jump shot reflects on those miles of memories playing NCC basketball.

"My recollections of college basketball at ISTC are of gymnasium lights and crowd noise, the smell of popcorn, and snow blowing across Dakota highways as we headed to Fargo, Grand Forks, and Brookings. Jack was at the wheel and the sound of Norm Stewart's voice emanated from somewhere in the darkness, 'Waller, get out your banjo and sing us a song.' I would stand for hours in the stairwell of the bus, watching the small towns and countryside roll by, and those images later found their way into my stories and essays.



"It eventually occurred to me that I really didn't care much for basketball as a team sport (or perhaps I was simply outgrowing it) but rather it was my fascination with what I later called the art and physics of the long-range jump shot. Understanding that, I stopped playing with eligibility remaining, took a few extra courses, graduated and moved on. The jump shot was a boy's tool for a boy's game, for growing up and showing your stuff, nothing more, and I suffered no regrets at the end of my playing days. There were other things to do and a world to explore. But the aesthetics of the long-range jump shot—and I well remember the feelings—were for me as pristine as any of the art forms I later pursued, including mathematics, writing, music, and fine-art photography."

Dakota State's Tom Black and Josephson began. With each game played, the fans seemed to match one for the other as to who was in the lead and the excitement for this statistic grew. The Panthers finished out the season with wins over North Dakota and North Dakota State and Josephson continued to have the hot scoring hand, but in the end, it was Dave McCracken from Augustana that won the scoring race due to his 41 points scored in his final game just edging out Josephson for the number one spot.



Jerry McColley (10), Peter Spoden (44), Ron Jessen (20) and Craig Kneppe (54) shooting.

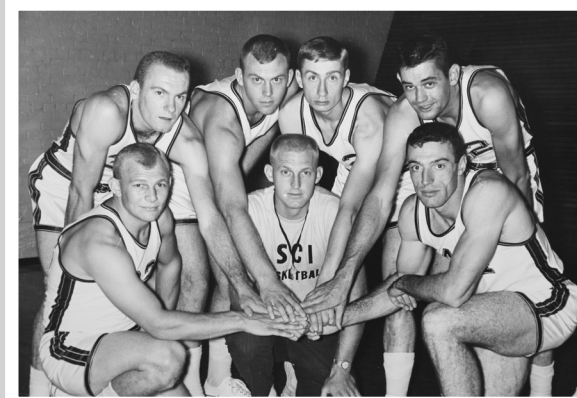
Norm Stewart's third year turned out to be his most successful and the Panthers' most successful season in the history of SCI with a 23-4 overall record and an 11-1 conference record, winning the conference outright. During this season, the Panthers piled up honor after honor on their way to a fourth place finish in the National College Division Regional Tournament at Evansville, Ind. One specific game of note was with the ever daunting South Dakota State Jackrabbits. The 6'10" Tom Black was their leading scorer and defensive player under the basket. Coach Jim Iverson commented after a decisive 96-74 loss, "We were better prepared for the SCI game than any other this season. It was just a case of it not being enough." He further added, "Spoden was the one we couldn't handle." Maybe it was also the hot shooting of Duane Josephson's 21 points or Ron Jessen's 19 points; whatever the reason, SCI was in the victory lane and Josephson's playing ability cannot be under rated.

Pete Spoden, who had set nine individual scoring records and had won a place on the second team all-American squad was lost to the team at the end of the first semester. Don Hein came off the bench to average 16 points per game during the second half of the year replacing Spoden, but was declared ineligible for tournament play. It was Josephson along with Jessen

and Chuck Nolting that took up the slack and for their play, Josephson and Jessen were named to the all-tournament team while earlier being named to the all-conference team. Duane Josephson was inducted into the Hall of Fame with the class of 1987.

It was the cohesive play of this team that enabled them to establish six new team records. Spoden finished his playing career with 1,239 points placing him in the 13th spot for total points scored through 2011. Spoden is still ranked second for average rebounds per game at 17.4. James Jackson (1958-60) continues to lead the rebounding statistic set in 1959 with 18.2 rebounds per game. James Jackson was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1988. Pete Spoden was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1989.

Maybe it was the loss of key players that hampered the 1964-65 team or maybe they felt less confident in their playing ability, but whatever the cause, they began the season losing four of their first six contests before finding their stride. Coming off an incredible 1963-64 season, the Panthers had to regroup. With Gene Fuelling, Craig Kneppe, Charles Nolting, Harry Daniels, James Videtich, Phil Johnson and a contingency of others, the Panthers found their stride and went on to win 11 of the next 12 outings and, along the way, new school records continued to be established. Craig Kneppe led the conference scoring race throughout the year and became the first SCI player to capture the league scoring crown. Besides his ability to make points in a game, John Martin spoke of Kneppe's shot-blocking ability as he ruled that part of the game.

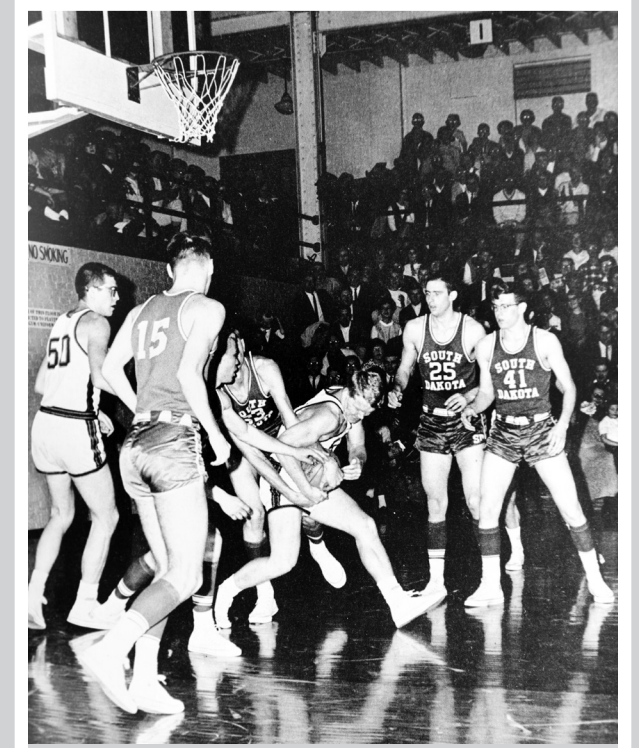


L-R: Duane Josephson, Herb Justman, Ron Jessen, Bruce Lein, Ray Lutz and Pete Spoden surround Coach Stewart.

Kneppe and Martin would play a pick-up game long after they had both graduated. During one of their mid-day games Kneppe told Martin the secret to his blocking shots was waiting for the player's shoulders to move suggesting he was going to attempt a shot and then reacting accordingly. While most players might block a shot knocking the ball to the floor, Kneppe would look at a spot on the wall and see if he could make the ball hit that spot. One can only imagine the force he used blocking the opponents' shot.

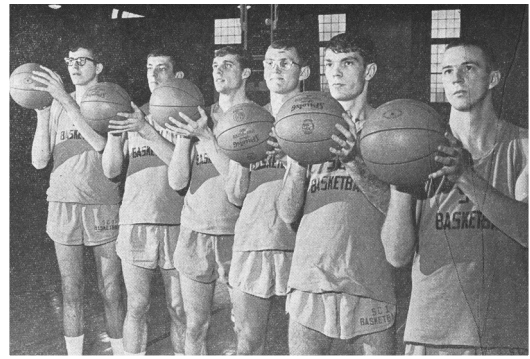
The 1965-66 season started the same as the previous year. The first half seemed to once again have a low ebb to it as the Panther squad was only able to muster three-of-nine contests. But then after winning the Tall Corn Tournament and the fact this was an experienced senior dominated group, the Panthers followed the previous year's route winning 11 of 12 remaining games including a 69-61 win over nationally ranked North Dakota University.

At year's end, Kneppe would finish his career with 1,200 points. He would be named to the third team Little All-American squad and the MVP for the confer-



During a game against South Dakota, football all-American Randy Schultz ties up with a Jackrabbit while Harry Daniels (50) looks on.

ence. The season's end would take a big chunk out of Stewart's team as his first six were all seniors. Gone would be Craig Knepe, a class of 2000 Hall of Fame inductee. Gone too were Phil Johnson, Gene Fuelling, Jim Videtich, Chuck Nolting



These six seniors bow out this year after an outstanding three-year record of 52-18. Left to right: 6-7 Harry Daniels, a top reserve; 6-5 captain Craig Knepe, 1,200 career points and 395 this year; 6-4 Chuck Nolting, 168 points; 6-4 Phil Johnson, 245 points; 6-3 Gene Fueling, 192 points; and 6-0 Jim Videtich, 186 points.

Norm Stewart's last year was a .500 year. A major portion of his team had graduated the year before. Visiting with Norm Azbell for a November 18, 1966 College Eye article regarding the upcoming year, Stewart commented, "We're searching - we certainly don't have experience and we're doing a lot of experimenting as far as a starting combination is concerned."

Stewart was expecting a lot out of young newer players like Ken Huelman, Jerry Waugh, Pat Gabriel and Lyle Schwarzenbach. Lacking experience, the younger squad had an up and down season and eventually left the race for the conference championship. Always taking the positive position however, Stewart felt, "There's still a possibility of a four-way tie between South Dakota University, Augustana, North Dakota State and us." It didn't happen.

The Panther varsity team played its final game beating South Dakota State giving them a tie for second place in the conference race. "It has been a good season," said Stewart. "We didn't finish in 7th place where they said we would. Don't forget, we started the season with five new ball players." (March 7, 1967 College Eye)

As one might consider the future, Stewart's young team now had one year of experience to bank

on and was now ready for a more promising next year. However, it was freshman coach J.D. Anderson's team that was making a statement about winning and losing. Undefeated, Anderson commented in a February 17, 1969 College Eye, "These are a promising group of young ball players," meaning Skip Anderson, Rod Larson, John Martin, Ron Peterson, Barry Beekman, Don Anderson, B.J. Lange and Eldon Brasch. Coach Anderson's team had just finished a 13-0 season beating Titus Manufacturing.

SCI's only head coach was Norm Stewart. For some, it is their feeling that Norm Stewart may well have been the greatest coach in the school's history. You might suspect such a commendation would come from those he coached. Talking with players that Stewart coached, they all spoke of the respect they had for him. John Martin: "He was a disciplined father; no nonsense." Phil Johnson: "He was a great coach, but a better person. He never used the whistle during practice. We all knew that he was in charge. As a coach he knew what buttons to push and expected us to play as a team." As Johnson patted his chest with his hand signifying the heartfelt passion the players all had for their coach he continued, "Norm hated turnovers with a passion. He built his teams on basketball fundamentals, defense and team work."

Stewart left the Panthers to take the University of Missouri coaching position. He would return from whence he came. Believing that his days in Cedar Falls were good, he said in parting, "I came to SCI with the basketball situation in good shape and I'm leaving it in good shape." (March 14, 1967 College Eye) Norm Stewart was inducted into the Hall of Fame with the 1995 class.

When asked to comment on his playing days at UNI, Jerry Waugh prefaced his remarks that it was hard to remember all the specifics that took place. He was recruited by Stewart and like Huelman, was the only other player that had been recruited at that time with a "full ride." Also like Huelman and others, Waugh played for two coaches (Stewart and Hogeland) that had distinctly different coaching styles. And also like Huelman, Jerry Waugh had that Thanksgiving Day practice fixated in his memory bank. "Coach Stewart kept us on campus and we started practice at 9:00 a.m. He let us leave the floor at 12:30 p.m. to get a sandwich and a coke that he'd had catered in, then we were back on the floor

On the Hardwood Floor:

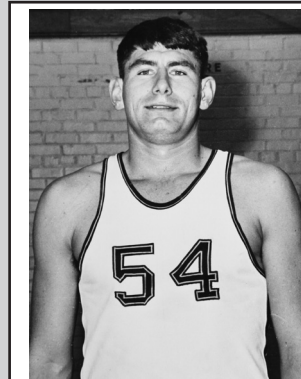
"I was recruited by Norm Stewart for basketball and Jack Jennett for track. I didn't know either of them coming from Schaller in western Iowa. We didn't hear much about ISTC or SCI athletics, although Coach Jennett's brother Russ ran the feed mill in Schaller. Who was Norm Stewart anyway? I was soon to find out as he probably was the most influential person (other than my parents) in my life. When I got to SCI as a freshman in the fall of 1965, we had a tryout with about 60 guys for three evenings in a row. There were 12 of us that were recruited, but we still had to attend the tryouts. I also found out that most of the other recruits were on all-state teams. I was only honorable mention so I wasn't sure I stood much of a chance of playing.

"As I saw it in those days, Coach Stewart had the ability to motivate you, finding what it took to make you work hard and what made you competitive without ever sitting down and having a heart to heart talk. He had that keen ability to figure a person out.

"When I was a sophomore, Coach Stewart used to play me one-on-one in games to 5 (each basket counted as 1) before practice started. He would wallop me 5-0 or 5-1 almost every day. Finally after about 3 weeks I got the scores to 5-3 & 5-4. I knew I was finally going to beat him. I got to practice that next day early and was all pumped up. The 'Old Man' was going down. He never showed up! Years later I asked him about it and he said he knew he was going to get beat and he didn't want to lose.

"Most of us came from smaller Iowa High Schools, so the floor at the Men's (West) Gym seemed to be at least 40' longer than my high school gym. I used to kid guards Darrell Jesse and Larry Clausen that they only had to run half of the floor, from top of the key to top of the key whereas the centers and forwards had to run from end to end. Coach Stewart told me when I was a senior we would be playing in a new arena. Low and behold that finally happened, 35 years after I graduated.

"Formal practices started in October. Length wise practices normally ran from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. I was always in awe of the wrestlers because as we would wrap up our workouts they were just starting their running conditioning. We did have a monster workout on Thanksgiving Day 1967. Coach Stewart



Ken "Tree" Huelman reminisces of days gone by on the Panther hardwood floor.

had us complete a four hour practice in the morning with a break for lunch and then we had another four hour practice in the afternoon. If I remember correctly, we had to crawl off the floor. That was an ordeal of epic proportion, or so we thought at the time. Coach Stewart's favorite drill was a three-on-three full-court fast break.

"Most of our distance trips were on one of the UNI buses. I didn't see a new one ever. Most were probably 20 years old or older and Jackson was the bus driver. When we traveled, we ate out. Coach Stewart was a stickler on pre-game meals. Thin sliced roast beef with juice, milk, baked potato with a little butter, toast with honey and no butter, and peaches. We always had the

worst 'cotton mouth' during games after these meals. We still talk about it at our basketball reunions. One of the restaurants that I vividly remember was 'Noby's' in downtown Sioux Falls, S.D. We would eat at this café, which was in the middle of the Sioux Falls stockyards. Workers would come in to eat right out of the cattle pens, so you know what was on their boots and on the floor. And the overall aroma, well, being an Iowa farm boy, to me this was a little like 7th heaven, almost.

"We played against some great basketball players in our day. Walt Frazier and Walt Garrett played for Southern Illinois, and Dolph Pulliam and Willie McCarter played at Drake during their great years. I held Phil Jackson from North Dakota University to 50 points when we played them at Grand Forks in 1967. They tell me, 'I done good'.

"I was labeled 'Tree' when I was a freshman by Harry Daniels who was a senior; not sure why. My wife still calls me 'Tree'. Most people don't remember Ken Huelman, but say 'Tree' and they know.

"As an afterthought, I played basketball at SCI in the late 60's. These were turbulent and unsettled times across college campuses. The baby boomers were abandoning the old traditional norms and morays. The Vietnam War was escalating and draft boards everywhere were taking young men right out of college and right after high school graduation. There was a lot of concern and unrest. Basketball and track were a way for me to focus on something positive and fun. I think the fans felt the same way as most of our basketball games were standing room only. People needed a diversion from all the worry."

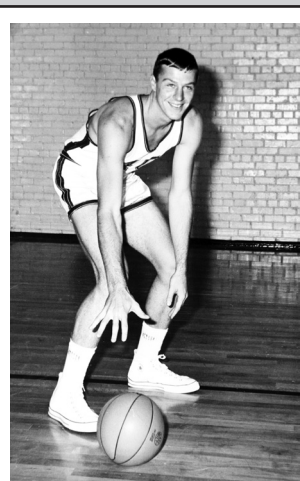
practicing at 1:00 and he ended the practice at 5:00 with the last hour and a half using a full-court press tied to a fast-break scrimmage. We had to run wind sprints if the man we were guarding ever caught a pass. Everyone was sick in the locker room afterward and then he had the nerve to take us out to a Thanksgiving buffet dinner; we were all too tired and sick to eat.

I asked him one time many years later about that practice and he said, 'You remember what happened the next day, don't you?' I confessed that I didn't. And he said, 'I got four hours out of you and you all thought I was being nice to you.'

Tough Competition:

"Perhaps as much as anything I remember the old Men's Gym and the tremendous home court advantage we had there with a full crowd on most nights. It was a great court for shooting and we always shot well there, but unfortunately so did our opponents. But with the crowd right on top of the floor, many good teams wilted when the crowd got involved. It was a great environment for basketball.

"Another funny incident which involved Coach Stewart; we went down to Carbondale, Illinois to play Southern Illinois. They featured Walt Frazier who became an NBA Hall of Fame player and several other really good athletes. We lost the game by 35 points and after the game we all went out to the bus. Coach Stewart came out, got on the bus and spoke not a word. He simply walked up and down the aisle and looked at each one of us. Then he went to the front of the bus and opened up the message box where you could adjust the name that was on the sign above the front window of the bus. He fiddled and turned it until he got what he wanted – which was 'Choir.' We rode all the way back to Cedar Falls as the 'Choir.' Message was delivered."



Jerry Waugh reflects on moments playing for UNI.

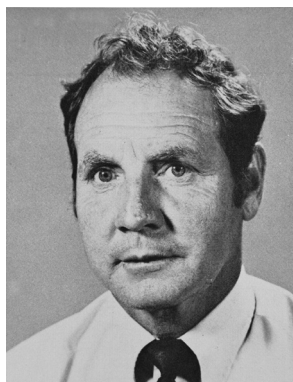
The Zeke Hogeland Era (1967-73)

The April 7, 1967 College Eye headlines read, "Maucker Names Hogeland SCI's New Cage Coach." Like coaches before him, Hogeland came from Bemidji State College in Minnesota. He played his college ball at ISTC under O.M. "Hon" Nordly, so like Dickinson before him, Hogeland now returns to his alma mater. In Hogeland's words, "I've always wanted this job ever since Hon left. It is like a dream I imagine every coach has, to go back to his alma mater. I'm sure Stewart is happy going back to his own school. I am just as elated to be returning to mine." After 17 years of coaching experience at Decorah High School, Mason City Junior College and Bemidji State College, Zeke Hogeland took the reins of a team that was returning 13 letter winners, including all-conference Jerry Waugh and Ken Huelman and a freshman squad that had just finished a perfect season.

The season begins for Hogeland under a new name. Born on July 1, 1967, the State College of Iowa is now the University of Northern Iowa. Becoming a university means changes. Dr. Daryl Pendergraft, Executive Dean and assistant to the president points out, "From the administrative angle, a university means a collection of colleges, and it also implies an institution has accepted the responsibility of having a greater percent of its time and resources directed toward research, service and instruction."

Athletic Director, Dr. Jim Witham, spoke of the impact on the school's athletic programs. "There won't be many changes for athletics. We will continue to play in the College Division of the NCAA. As we gain in size and stature, these things may change as a result of natural growth. Some day we may be playing a major schedule as we seek our own level of competition, but for right now, there won't be a big change."

From a conference standpoint, the new University of Northern Iowa basketball team was considered the team to beat. Doug Tegtmeier, sports director at KNOX-TV in Grand Forks, N.D. points out,



Coach Zeke Hogeland

"Zeke Hogeland has a pretty nice inheritance at UNI and probably should have the pre-season nod." And John Egan, sports editor of the Sioux Falls Argus-Leader, added: "Before North Dakota (with Phil Jackson starring) started a three-year domination of the NCC, Northern Iowa, then State College of Iowa was champ. Now it appears the Panthers may, once again, be starting a similar stretch of their own. They have size, experience and one of the leagues four new ambitious coaches." (December 1, 1967 Northern Iowan. Note the new name for the campus newspaper. As the university changed its name, so did the campus paper.)

At the end of Hogeland's first season, the prognosticators were a bit off as the team finished the season tied for second place in the conference with an 8-4 record. South Dakota State won the conference championship with a 9-3 record, but not all was lost. During UNI's 15-7 overall season, senior forward Jerry Waugh essentially rewrote the record book scoring 515 points for the season breaking Pete Spoden's 485 points. He scored 141 free throws edging out the previous record of 137 and his 20 points per game average also beat Spoden's 17.7 average. Waugh's career 1,009 points leaves him at the 30th position for career points scored in the current all-time record book. He was named to the NCAA College Division's Olympic tryout team and given honorable mention honors on the AP's Little All-American team.

With Waugh gone, Huelman was tabbed to fill in the vacancy. John Martin described Tree as "a gentle giant with ballerina feet." Like Waugh, Martin explained, "Huelman was a legitimate Division I player." But Huelman wasn't the only player that Hogeland was expecting to play a key role. Hogeland also felt he would get a lot from Martin, Rod Larson, Skip Anderson and Darrell Jesse. Hogeland was an inventive coach, but a lot of the players that he inherited felt they were better suited for the kind of game that Stewart had recruited them for. They were tall, physical players that took the ball to the basket from the inside game.

Basketball is a complex game with all sorts of patterns that end with a successful basket; a defensive move stopping the opposing team, or a successful rebound off the boards that leads to a fast break. Speed and shooting skills are germane to the sport. If one player gets injured or fouls out; someone else has to step up to fill the gap. Players often respond accord-

ingly when their opportunity to get in the game is made available to them. Playing against Gustavus Adolphus College, both Larson and Anderson were sidelined. Hogeland commented, "Without Rod and Skip, it was like playing with one hand tied behind your back." (December 10, 1968 College Eye) When the players see this happen, they mentally make the necessary mental adjustment. Such was the case for Huelman, Martin and Jesse as they did take over in order to fill the proverbial gap, but try as they may, in the end, the box score read in GA's favor.

By midseason, "Tree" Huelman had passed three former basketball greats to climb into fourth place on the all-time total points scored. Standing with 1,047 points by the end of year, he was ready for the next season and so was the rest of the squad. During his earlier days on the team, Huelman had played in the shadow of Jerry Waugh, but during the 1968-69 season, he was without peer. Ready to pass Craig Knepp's 1,201-point total to go into second place for career total points scored, Huelman also needed just 46 points to overcome Spoden's 1,239 mark and jump into the scoring record lead. In the third to last game, Huelman passed Knepp and in the next game with North Dakota, Huelman broke Spoden's scoring record while UNI won the game and took a share of the conference title with South Dakota State.

At the end of the 1968-69 season, UNI finished with eight straight wins and led the NCC in defense allowing only 74.6 points per game. With all of the success the team had achieved during the year, Hogeland was not pleased because the NCAA overlooked UNI for an at-large bid for post-season play choosing St. Thomas instead. The Panthers had been promised that if they were to win their last two games, they would make the tournament as an at-large team. Commented Hogeland, "Our athletic director [Dr. Jim Witham] is quite mad at the NCAA. Four of the five men voted for us and the chairman didn't accept the votes." Hogeland continued, "We live in a democracy and it didn't pay off; that's what it amounted to." (March 4, 1969 Northern Iowan) While UNI didn't get a post-season bid, Huelman continued to receive accolades after the season ended. He was named as a nominee for the prestigious George Clarkson Award, which is given annually to the outstanding senior amateur basketball player in the state. His nomination was lined up with four candidates

from Drake's NCAA Regional Championship team that boasted Willie McCarter, Dolph Pulliam, Willie Wise and Dan Draper. Other nominees for this award included Chris Phillips from Iowa and Roger Moller from Westmar College. This award is no longer given.

During the 1969-70 season, the Panther five was up to the task, but the front half of the season wasn't so kind winning only three-of-12 games played. Like seasons before, the Panthers seemed to get their game together during the last half of the season, and like seasons before the tide did change as they went on a winning streak capturing 12 of their final 13 games, and they were on track to claim the conference title. It was John Martin that Hogeland was lauding. Against North Dakota U. and North Dakota State, Hogeland told Terry Hersom for his February 11, 1969 College Eye column, "We played excellent ball in both games. (85-60 NDU and 90-85 NDS) In our last nine games, we have won eight and I attribute this to the revival of our players, from illness and injuries. John Martin has played the best games of his college career I'm sure. He's been grabbing rebounds and sticking them right back through constantly. He's been fantastic." In the end, Martin was the only Panther to be named to the 10-man All-North Central Conference basketball team. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame with the class of 1989.

While Hogeland was praising the play of Martin, Bill Smith was just beginning his career with the Panther basketball team. He loved his first year as a Panther. He talks about his beginning in an email. "My freshman year was the first year freshmen were eligible to play varsity ball. (Note: Freshmen teams continued to exist for several more years.) As a result, four or five of us would play in both games. We would play the preliminary game and then change uniforms and play in the varsity game, which was usually in the second half, but sometimes in the first half. It was a fun year as we got to play in so many games. Ken Green was our freshman coach."

Did the freshman team show signs of promising play? Smith, once again, "The highlight of our freshman year was beating the Iowa freshmen before a sold

out Iowa field house. Ralph Miller was the Iowa coach that year and they were ranked fourth in the country. To say the least, there was a lot of enthusiasm for basketball that night. We played the preliminary game to the Iowa-Duquesne varsity game in which we defeated the Iowa freshman 82-69, their only defeat that season. Our freshman team went 18-3. We had several very good players, but more importantly they were really good guys. The friendships made during those four years were both memorable and valuable."

When being interviewed, most of the players always talked about the bonding that went on during their playing years. Yet as one player leaves, the game must still be played, which means someone must step up to the plate and help the team with solid play. With Martin and Anderson now departed, the 1970-71 team struggled to find their leaders and a winning attitude. Randy Bielke, Brian Bestul, high scoring McCoy, and Smith, considered being the quickest member of the team and one of the best defense players would eventually give the coach comments like, "you will see an improved defense," and "the toughest ever," when referring to the Panther schedule and the North Central Conference. The team ended with one of Hogeland's worst seasons and one of the Panthers' worst in 12 years with a 6-20 overall record.

The 1971-72 season was definitely going to be better. Smith, the 6'3" senior guard from Eagle Grove was elected captain of the team. McCoy, the leading senior playmaker, was just 17 points shy of Huelman's scoring record. Timion, Bielke, Hackenmiller were all back with play-time experience. It would be a young team for sure, but one that Coach Hogeland was anxious to see what would come from his talented group. Possibly disappointed, at the end of the season, the Panthers were owners of a 10-13 overall record. In the March 3, 1972 Northern Iowan, Hogeland commented, "We played well enough to win, but we didn't have the confidence to carry us through." The young team didn't have a lot of experience. Hogeland went on record saying, "Next year we're not going to wait until the last part of the season

to get going. We're going to start our late season spurt in December."

The 1972-73 season would be Hogeland's sixth and last season. Returning starters included McCoy, who Hogeland states, "You don't need to use many superlatives when talking about him, just look at the record book and that will tell the story." In addition, there was Smith, who Hogeland continued to point to as the quickest man on the squad. There was Brian Bestul who Hogeland believed was capable of moving the ball better than any center in the league.

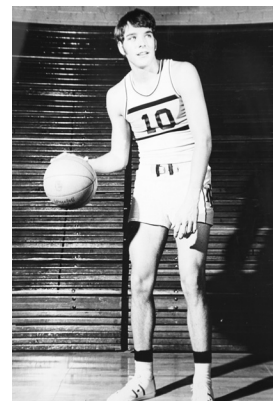
Hogeland looked to the incoming freshmen to add some depth to his team. Included with the incoming scholarship freshmen was Bill Runchey who led the state his senior year of high school averaging 32 points per game and Ray Schwarzenbach who trailed Runchey by a point averaging 31 points per game. Along with the others who would make up his team Hogeland believed that "next year" was here and as he would put it, "We believe we are the team to beat in the North Central this year." While the season progressed to an ultimate 11-13 record and probably not what had been expected, it was still a stellar year as McCoy continued to be highlighted game after game. Throughout his playing days with UNI, McCoy, the 6'3" guard from Iowa Falls was making shot after shot helping him establish his own records.



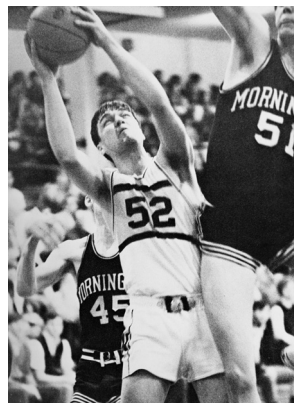
According to Hogeland, Brian Bestul is one of the best-moving big men in the league.



Bill McCoy, #12 taking the ball to the hoop. McCoy finished his playing career with 1,713 total points, number five in the record books.



Bill Smith, one of the defense leaders for the team.



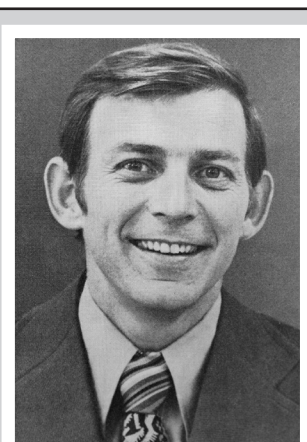
John Martin knew how to play the game in the paint.

on a university campus?" Maybe it's all about who you are and where you are. Podhaski continues, "We played in the Men's Gym, an older building but a great atmosphere for games. The fans were close to the action; they seemed to be right down on the floor. I recall the actual floor was the best floor for jumping, one of the springiest floors we ever played on."

But would the team and the coach jibe? The first season's record of 4-22 overall and 1-13 in the NCC would suggest a lot of his philosophy was not found in the team or the game yet. This record proved to be the worst record since the 2-6 record posted by the 1918-19 Tutors. A new coach and a lot of young ball players that didn't have the senior leadership to turn to, Berry pointed out in the May 14, 1974 Northern Iowan, "Our kids are young; no one feels he can take over in situations when we need floor leadership."

The next three years didn't get much better as the team posted a 6-20 followed by two years of 9-18. It would take the coach four years to find the plus side of a .500 season. But even with the losses, Berry found ways to stay positive and address good play but often times it was the "W's and L's" that remained on the players' minds. When Bill Runchey was asked to comment, he seemed to reflect on the fact that the first year was "four and 22."

But let's put things into perspective because during the 1975-76 season, the Panthers moved to the UNI-Dome to play basketball. Gone were the friendly confines of the West Gym and the spring found in the gym floor. Podhaski: "Late in the 1975-76 season the UNI-Dome opened and we played several games in the Dome. At that time there were no spectator seats on the floor and the ball could roll off the floor into the dark open space of the Dome. There was no background and that affected shooting percentages by both teams. We played on



Coach Jim Berry strove for floor leadership amongst his players. He always felt that experience was the key to success and that leadership came from those experiences.

the rubber surface of the Dome. It was very hard and a sharp contrast to the Men's Gym floor. That year a storm brought down the Dome roof and we finished the year in the Men's Gym. We moved into the Dome fulltime with the 1976-77 season. A few rows of bleachers were now on the floor but the Dome still lacked the intimacy of a real basketball venue." Once played in the tighter confines of the West Gym, the Dome opened up as a cavern that players had to adjust to and that would be the case for every new recruit that came to play for the coach. The facilities were new, but they were football facilities and they were track facilities; they didn't necessarily fit well as accommodations suited for basketball.

There were other pressure points that were being bestowed upon the teams during these early Berry years. The UNI Panther basketball team was changing from Division II to Division I. The players had to be ready to play at a different collegiate level. Podhaski: "The transition from Division II (North Central Conference) with games in Mankato, Fargo, Vermillion, and the annual Holiday Tournament in Sioux Falls gave way to trips to the mid-major teams like Western Michigan, Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Illinois State and Youngstown State." To switch to a different level of play is always an arduous journey.

The 1977-78 season would be the last year the Panthers would be a member of the NCC. In a Northern Iowa interview Mark Enright said, "Last season we got a lot of experience at losing, this season we'd like to try and get some experience at winning." (November 22, 1977) While there was improvement seen in the win-loss column it was Ron Lemons and center Bill Jones who became the scoring duo at the beginning of the season. An injury to Enright kept him off the playing floor and it was Jones who took the center post until Enright could return to his starting position.

Midway through the season a new scoring threat emerged in freshman Rod Underwood. Underwood and Lemons provided a lot of the offense for the Panthers. Before losing to Illinois State in the last game of the season, the Panther squad had beaten Morningside and South Dakota for a second place finish in the NCC, Berry's best finish to date. Berry reported in the February 28, 1978 Northern Iowan, "I'm really happy for the kids, they've all worked hard to achieve this. It would have been nice to win the conference [NCC]

in our last year as a member, but we're pleased that we were able to take second place."

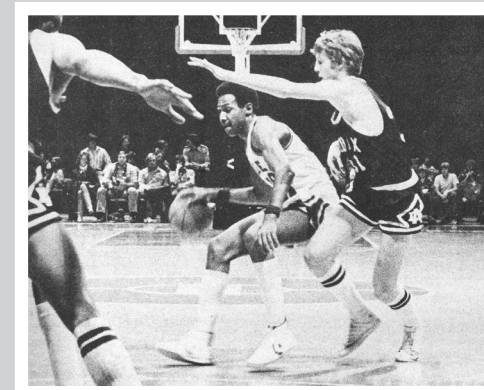
What was to follow, however, was difficult for the Panthers to contend with as Augustana, the NCC champions and South Dakota State, not UNI, were selected to represent the NCC in the NCAA Division II playoffs. South Dakota State had finished the season in third place with a 7-7 record, but one must assume with UNI leaving the conference they were not chosen for that reason, and only that reason, since the Panthers had a better record at 9-5 and they had beaten the conference champion 65-61. Granted they lost their last game to Illinois State 82-76, but Illinois State was a Division I team and, at that time, was ranked 13th in the NCAA polls. How did such a travesty happen?

Senior Mark Enright would leave the team, but all-conference forward Ron Lemons would be returning along with Jones, Tony Hauptert and freshman scoring phenom Underwood. With the opening of the 1978-79 season, UNI was now a member of the Mid-Continent Conference.

The Mid-Continent Conference:

The teams that made up the Mid-Continent Conference along with UNI were: Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Akron, Youngstown State, Northern Michigan, Valparaiso, Wisconsin-Green Bay, Illinois at Chicago, and Cleveland State. The conference later became known as the Summit League. This conference ceased to exist following the 2008 season, long after UNI had moved to the Missouri Valley.

Throughout his coaching years, it seemed that Berry was frequently upset with the size of crowds, but in the UNI-Dome at that time, crowd size can never look to be an effective part of a basketball setting. In a December 1, 1978 Northern Iowan article, Berry confides with the readers, "We get such bad crowds, I feel like playing all our games on the road. Most students have athletic tickets, but don't seem to want to use them on us." Maybe that message brought some out of their comatose state and pushed them toward the Dome, because the crowd was there in force as the Panthers literally clobbered Elmhurst College 110-71 and beat last year's conference champion Augustana 79-76. In that same week the coach's comments about crowd size were published in the NI. The December 12,



Freshman guard Rod Underwood was effective on the offense scoring side averaging 14.0 points per game during the 1979-80 and 1980-81 seasons. (His coach would comment about Underwood, "With quickness comes good defense.")

1978 NI, sports brief found Berry noting his pleasure with the crowd. "We were really happy with the crowd, it was great. This is what it should be, given everything at UNI, whether it is a football or basketball game, or an art exhibit or a play."

Maybe a winning team is the key to crowd size. Berry's team had a great 1978-79 season securing a second place conference tie with Northern Michigan and became eligible for a post-season berth, the first play-off game since Norm Stewart's 1963 team played in the Division II regional playoffs. Berry's first play-off team posted an 84-72 win over Nebraska-Omaha followed by a 56-50 loss to the Wisconsin-Green Bay Phoenix, but with an 18-11 record, the Panthers had to look back to Stewart's 1963-64 team (23-4) to find a better one.

At the end of the 1978-79 season, Ron Lemons concluded his basketball career with 1,478 points and a 14.5 point average. At that time he owned second place for total points behind the 1,713 points of leader, Bill McCoy. His shooting prowess would ultimately put him seventh on today's total points-scored Panther roster. Along with Lemons and Kemp, Mark Long graduated with the close of the 1978-79 season.

Success has a way of breeding success or so the saying goes and players like to go where there is success. When Berry opened his 1979-80 season, 10 walk-ons were waiting for their chance to make the Panther team. Peters, Underwood, Hauptert, Jones and Imhoff



During his career, Ron Lemons averaged 16 points a game with a .549 field goal percentage record. He averaged 8.2 rebounds per game. He hit 80% of his free throws in 1979.

were returning, but it was the likes of "Chicken" Jackson, Kevin Bradford and Ray Storck who came to the team and became a part of the offensive force. Everything seemed to be falling into place, but an issue was brewing. Where do the Panthers practice? Facilities were once again a concern for the basketball teams and specifically adding to the woes of Coach Berry. So what were the issues?

You have the football turf in place of the basketball floor at the beginning of the season because the football team is still playing. You have a volleyball team in the middle of its season so the West Gym has nets in place that have to be set up and taken down. You have gymnastics, with all of its equipment in the East Gym and that equipment isn't something that can be easily taken down and put up. Then you have two basketball teams (men's and women's) that need a place to practice. So where do they go, the PEC? Not according to Dr. Bill Thrall, Head of the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER). He points out in an interview with Teresa Langguth as reported in her October 31, 1980 NI article, "The PEC was built with Title I money and therefore is for academic and recreational use. It has no accommodations for spectators and doesn't provide intercollegiate sized courts."

Women's coach Carol Gruber, along with Berry, sought a solution as the present facilities format

hampered the ability of their respective teams to properly prepare for the basketball season. To have the teams work around a revolving schedule as to when they can have a turn in the West Gym simply caused problems. In the Langguth article, Berry comments, "It is ridiculous to have the athletes miss supper or a night class to attend practices [the revolving schedule to accommodate women's basketball and volleyball]. The athletes are students too and it should not be that much of a burden to provide them with adequate practice space and times." Adding to the points that Berry makes, Gruber interjects, "All we want is an adequate facility and a time to prepare our teams for competition." The situation was not resolved, but it was another hurdle that the Berry era had to deal with.

With the 1979-80 season, Berry continued to press into Division I level games playing the likes of Kansas State, Iowa, New Orleans and Arkansas State. Underwood, Jones, Hauptert, Storck and Jackson and the rest of the team continued to play hard against talented teams and in the end came away with a very respectable 12-13 season. Berry always said that experience was a great teacher and with the success of this season, he felt he was ready to take on an even tougher 1980-81 season.

Five seniors would be returning to play "the game." Underwood returns as last year's leading scorer. Jones was the leading rebounder, Hauptert, Storck, Jackson and Peters all return and all had seen plenty of action the year before. But the schedule boasted a tough Mid-Continent Conference and an even tougher non-conference schedule with Alabama, Kansas State, Iowa State, Eastern Kentucky and Iowa on the slate. Berry commented on this schedule in the November 14, 1980 Northern Iowan, "I know it will be very difficult, but we are very enthusiastic and know we can compete with big schools because we have in the past. My personal goal is for us to make steady improvements and be competitive against the larger schools." Knowing that Storck had added an additional 25 pounds, Berry was hopeful the extra weight would assist him at the post. John Martin (1967-70) was called upon to work with Storck to develop an effective fall-back jump shot. According to Martin, "Storck was good at it. He could score from anywhere around the inner circle to the key." Playing at the Division I level is tough and the transition is a

process that can take a long time to evolve. The 1980-81 season ended with an 8-19 record

If a team is going to play at the Division I level, then a team must play Division I teams and do so with Division I players or develop athletes to compete at that level. 6'11" Storck was developing well and became a Mid-Continent player of the week after a 26 point, 13 rebounds and a five blocked shot game against Valparaiso. The week before it was Brent Carmichael earning the honor and before that it was Evansville transfer Mike Pijanowski. Berry had talented players that were making headway to becoming a legitimate Division I contender. It takes time.

The next two years Berry's teams established a 25-33 record going against Kansas State, Iowa, Wisconsin, UNC-Wilmington, Notre Dame, Missouri and Hawaii, and a host of tough Mid-Continent teams. But it wasn't until the 1983-84 season when his team gave serious notice as to who they were becoming. During this season the Panthers had a perfect home game record and boasted wins over Wisconsin, Kansas State and Drake, and the fans came to the games to support the Panthers. Were they fair weather fans before all these years? Such a comment would be hard to speculate, but fans like to associate with winners and players that show off their skills and Berry had both. He was hoping that their record would allow them a chance for an NIT bid. But losses during the final three games of the regular season erased any hope of getting that nod. Coach Berry: "This season may have ended on a down note considering how far we had progressed during the year, but given a few days to put everything in perspective, we can't be anything but pleased overall."

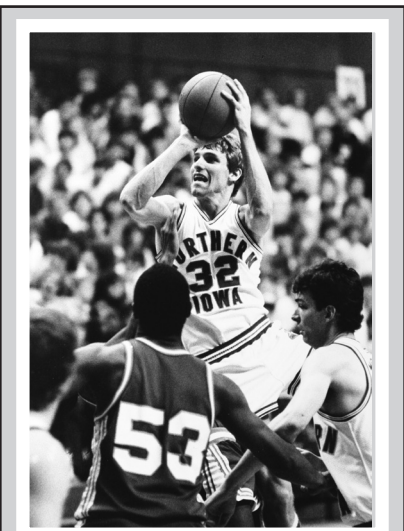
At the end of the 1983-84 season, three Panthers had been named to all-conference teams, but it was Randy Kraayenbrink who was elected to the Basketball Times 1983-84 Overlooked All-American team and selected to the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) National All-Academic 2nd Team.

The 1984-85 team would post a 12-14 season. It wasn't the season that Coach Berry expected. "We had some high expectations for this team," said Berry in the 1984 Old Gold. "Maybe that was unfair to them. We didn't arrive at our top seven players until game 22. It was probably hard on them not knowing if they were going to start one game or the next." Gone was Herb King. "Nobody can replace Herb King," said Berry.

Then when Juco transfer Jim McGrath got injured, the post position was vacant and Berry had to go to a young freshman to take on the role once occupied by King. His name was Greg McDermott, a 6'8" forward from Cascade, Iowa. "We had hoped Jim McGrath could step right in when he was eligible at semester and really do a job for us, but that was something we shouldn't have counted on. McDermott made great improvements as the year went on, but was too inexperienced." Senior forward Scott Stafford proved to be one of the leaders on the team. Berry: "If we had anybody who deserved to be on an all-conference team, it was Stafford. Scott rebounds, scores, plays good defense - he does all the things you want a player to do." (1984-85 Press Release) However, the accolades went to Kraayenbrink who was the only Panther chosen to the all-conference team, selected to the AP All-American Midwest Honorable Mention Team, named to the Sporting News Midwest Honorable Mention All-American team and named to the CoSIDA Honorable Mention All-Academic Team.

When comparing his 1983-84 team with the 1984-85 team, Berry said, "Last year we were bringing 5th year men off the bench and this year we started freshmen. Last year's squad had the experience and knew what it took to win. I can't say this team was not as good as last year; talent-wise it may have been better, but there is no substitute for experience

Berry would coach the Panthers for one more year. The key for his last season with his players was for them to have the mental attitude that would formulate into a success story. "Their mental improvement is the most important thing. They have to realize they have to work at it. It doesn't come by osmosis," said Berry in the October 25, 1985 Northern Iowan. Whatever works may lead to success, but



Randy Kraayenbrink (#32) ended his career with 2,004 points and a 17.8 point average. He still sits at the second spot for total points scored.

the final season for the Berry led Panthers ended with an 8-19 season, and with that Jim Berry resigned after 13 years at the helm. Athletic Director Bob Bolsby: "We accept Jim Berry's resignation with great hesitation. Coach Berry has been an exceptional member of our staff... Jim exemplifies everything that is good in athletics."

Kraayenbrink ends his playing career at the same time as Berry and does so with 2,004 points. He became the first player to break the 2,000-point mark. Jerry Byers wrote in his 1986 Old Gold narrative, "Randy Kraayenbrink has done as much for the sport of basketball at UNI as any player in recent history." Randy Kraayenbrink was selected to the Hall of Fame with the 1995 class.

A post script needs to be added to the Berry era. His teams played hard and often times lost in the process. But they were paving the road into the Division I level of basketball, something that takes time to develop. Berry's teams made the transition into a new conference and into a new playing environment that didn't start out as any kind of basketball environment at all. They went from a gym that some felt had the springiest floors and an awesome environment in which to play, to trying to play on a hard rubber surface located in a cavern. It was all part of the process. As Dave Else, Associate Professor of Education Administration put it, "Somebody had to plow the ground and Jim Berry was that somebody." Randy Podhaski reflected on the past when he was one of Berry's players, "There's a part of me that likes to think that we started paving the way in those early years, for all the success that UNI has experienced in the last decade."

Many of Coach Berry's players have remarked as having great memories of their collegiate playing days regardless of the records. They came to play the game and did so for their coach and their University.

Coach Berry finished his career at UNI with a 144-210 record, but he didn't remove himself completely from basketball; once a coach, always a coach. Upon leaving UNI, Berry continued to coach boy's basketball and take on administrative roles at the high school level for another fifteen years until his retirement. Coach Jim Berry was inducted into the Panther Hall of Fame with the 2006 class.

With Berry's departure, the athletic department announced that a Big 10 coach was interested in

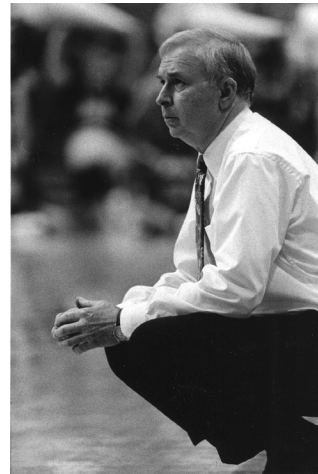
the position. Eldon Miller, who had just led the Ohio State Buckeyes to the 1986 NIT championship, was to become the new head basketball coach of the Panthers.

The Eldon Miller Era (1986-1998)

One of Coach Miller's first decisions was to hire former University of Iowa basketball star player Kevin Boyle as an assistant coach. As Boyle puts it in the Elwin Huffman June 13, 1986 NI article, "I was kind of apprehensive whether or not I wanted to start coaching right now. Coach Miller is an exceptional coach – a very knowledgeable coach – and I didn't want to pass it up. I think I can really grow as a coach and a person under Coach Miller." Miller's first team would not boast a lot of returning letter winners. He had two seniors in Kirk Francis and Jim McGrath, three juniors in Greg McDermott, Pat Quinn and Mike Bailey, sophomore Nick Nurse and nine freshmen that he quickly picked up late after the other institutions had made their player selections. Three of those freshmen that Coach Miller got to come to UNI were: Jonathan Cox, Maurice Newby and Jason Reese.

Assessing the strength of his team, Miller felt the seniors had little experience, but would be sound playmakers; in fact, Miller was amazed with everything Francis could do with a basketball. As for McDermott, Miller made it clear, "Greg McDermott does two things very well in practice: score and foul." Miller was impressed with Reese as a player that had speed and size. Newby would probably start at the point guard position due to his athleticism and Cox was an integral part of the team. Miller: "He [Cox] is exciting. As soon as Jonathan got back on the practice court [injury], things picked up. He is a very important player for us."

Discussing the Miller era with Cox, he was quick to point out that UNI has had a lot of good coaches, but he said, "Miller was a signature coach. He brought instant integrity to the Panther program. I mean, here is a Big Ten coach coming to the University of North-



Coach Eldon Miller

Same Town, Same School:

Like Don Greene and Bob Esau in the early 1940's, Maurice Newby and Jason Reese were friends and playmakers long before coming to UNI, but being together at UNI helped them both as Reese quickly became the leading scorer averaging 12.7 points per game and Newby in the third spot with 12.2 points per game.

ern Iowa. This was a legitimate collegiate coach at the University of Northern Iowa." Steve Phyfe on that same theme: "The presence he brought to the floor is hard to explain, but you knew he was the coach. He had been through it all as a player and with his many years of coaching."

Having played together in community basketball and at Des Moines East High School Reese and Newby talked about going to the same college and continuing playing together. During their last two years of high school, they helped the Des Moines East Raiders to a 44-4 record. Reese was selected to the first team All-State and Newby made the third team. Until Eldon Miller was hired at UNI, neither of them ever considered attending school at UNI much less playing basketball there. But with Miller identified as the basketball coach, they both found a home, and as the season wore on, this duo became a positive force for the Panthers. Knowing each other certainly helped in their opinion. Reese commented in the January 27, 1987 Northern Iowan, "It helps us as a team because nobody knew each other at the start of the season. At the start of the season it seemed like sort of an all-star team. Now, though, we're all getting to know each other better and starting to become more of a team."

From a Cedar Valley point of view, Miller's presence brought a new attitude to town. The campus was ready for the change to come. As Coach Miller explained the rudiments of his coaching philosophy, "We're not concerned with what they're [opposing team] going to do and we won't change our philosophy that much for any team we face. We don't have any big games. All games are the same to me. I'm more concerned with today and how we can get better." (February 6, 1987 Northern Iowan) And better did happen. Miller concluded his first season with a 13-15 overall record and a .500 mark in the conference. The team didn't end up in the cellar as

they were predicted to do. Reflecting on his first season at the helm, Miller commented, "We have some young, talented people in the program; what we need is to play better." But as a team, Miller's first group led the conference statistics in free throw percentage (76.9) and three-point shot percentage (42.2). Greg McDermott became the leading point maker in the AMCU averaging 13.8 points per game and as for McDermott, the March 3, 1987 Northern Iowan headlines paralleled McDermott as UNI's answer to Rambo and one of the reasons the Panthers had started turning their attitude toward the plus side of the win-loss record. McDermott responded, "The atmosphere is a lot better. I think this program is really on its way up."

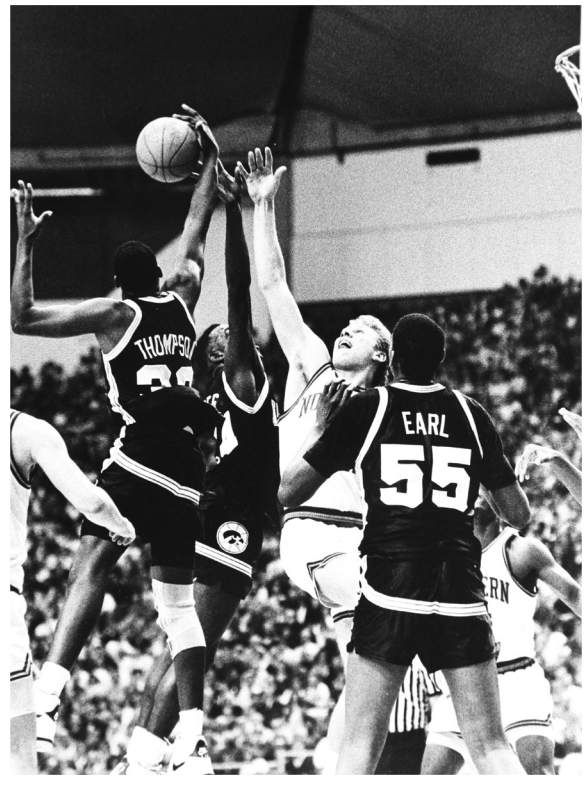
In the fall of 1987, the AMCU was notified that it would be granted an automatic NCAA post-season berth. Mid-Continent Commissioner F.I. Ferzacca reacted in a Sports Info release, "We are extremely pleased to receive notification from the NCAA on our automatic qualification for next spring's NCAA Tournament."

The 1987-88 season may not have been the season that Miller wanted, but it was during this season that the Panthers won a four-overtime 126-121 victory over Eastern Illinois setting four school records for most points in a game, most points in a game by both teams, most field goals made in one game, and most 3-point shots made in a game. It was the Maurice Newby's 3-pointer with 14 seconds and Steve Phyfe's slam-dunk at the buzzer that sealed the game for the Panthers.

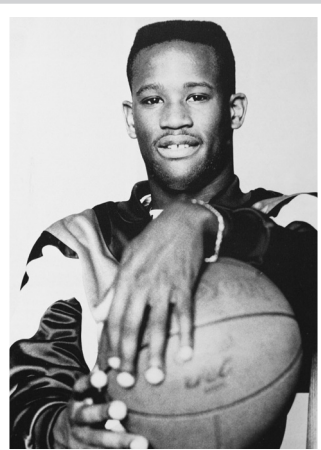
While players are honored with conference team selections and accolades of one kind or another, guard Nick Nurse garnered one of the rarer awards for the season. He was selected the 1988 American Cancer Society's "Favorite Panther" having led the team in assists, steals and 3-point goals.

The 1988-89 season showed what the Panthers could do with nine returning letter winners. They finished the season with only one loss in the Dome and posted an overall 19-9 record. Reese and Phyfe were AMCU All-Conference and Nick Pace was listed with the All-Academic team. What cornered Miller's take on their success was the leadership the team received from Nurse and Cox.

It's the 1989-90 season and until this time, there may not have been a bigger event in the history of basketball regardless of what the name of the insti-



It always took more than one to try to stop Jason Reese, named the Panthers' second version of Rambo by the Northern Iowan. By the end of his playing career, Reese held the number one spot for most points scored at 2,033 and is still the total point leader.



Maurice Newby made a major contribution averaging 7.1 points per game and posting an 89% free throw average. He's probably best remembered for that certain last second 3-point shot versus Missouri.

tution was. UNI is loaded with veteran players and the date is January 3, 1990. The Iowa Hawkeyes were coming to town as Dr. Tom Davis said that he would play the Panthers in Eldon's Dome of Doom. This was to be the first home meeting of the two teams in 76 years. As it turned out, 22,797 were on hand to witness this

game. As Reo Price stated in his Old Gold narration, "On this night, Cedar Falls became the 19th largest city in Iowa." In the end in what was a hard fought game by both teams, the Panthers heard the final buzzer with their score being three points more than the one showing on the Hawkeyes' side of the scoreboard.

The win over the Iowa Hawkeyes set the mood for what the Panther fans wanted; they wanted more and more of what was to come. With a 19-8 record, the Panthers went to the AMCU tournament and raised the record by one with a triple overtime win over Illinois at Chicago. Showing up on ESPN, the Panthers defeated Wisconsin-Green Bay to win the AMCU tournament and the first trip ever to the NCAA Division I tournament in Richmond, Va. where they were assigned to meet Norm Stewart's third seeded Missouri Tigers who were touting an 11th place national ranking. As for the team hearing about who they were slated against, Steve Phyfe said, "It was like, 'Wow, we've got some work to do. We were probably overmatched -over-everythinged.'" Coach Miller and his staff would probably not feel the same. They would take the attitude, "let's get the team ready for the biggest game since the Iowa Hawkeyes came to town". Once the team arrived in Richmond, Va. and once they were there, they knew they were ready to play. There were signs of future success at every corner. Nick Pace noted, "We were having a great time. In fact, we were at a stop light and the light changed. Our bus driver beat their bus [Missouri] off the line. We were hooting and hollering on the bus, hoping that was a sign of things to come. And it was." (Kelly Beaton, Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier, posted March 14, 2010.) If fans can remember, the game was a see-saw battle and as the clock wound down, it was in this game that Maurice Newby, who has done it before, hit a 3-point jumper with two seconds on the clock, and when the buzzer sounded, the Panthers had their first ever NCAA Tournament victory having defeated the Tigers 74-71.

The Panthers were up next against Minnesota. They didn't win the game, but they pushed every button in their arsenal and only fell short by three points 81-78. To ever think about Panther basketball history, this NCAA Tournament carried the Panther fans and players who followed, for a very long time. The upset of Missouri made a lot of lists as one of the greatest upsets until more recent years.

The 1991-92 season began with the Panthers now a part of the Missouri Valley Conference. Dale Turner, Cedrick McCullough, Troy Muilenberg, Cam Johnson, Brian Carpenter, Jon Ellis, Brian Jones, Greg Hammar, Randy Blocker, and a host of other talented players put on the Panther uniform in order to make

their mark on Panther basketball. This first year in the Valley was tough though. The MVC has always boasted explosive potential for any basketball game that was to be played and that is what the Panthers found. Always speaking positively of his team and players, Coach Miller would be reminded of a comment made years

The 1989-90 Hall of Fame Team:

The 1989-90 team was inducted into the 2011 Hall of Fame. The team roster included: Jason Reese, Steve Phyfe, Maurice Newby, Dale Turner, Jonathan Cox, Brad Hill, Cedrick McCullough, Cam Johnson, Troy Muilenberg, Nick Pace, Kent Pollpeter, Scott Socha, Brian Jones, Steve Deering, Chris Nuss, Ed Madlock and Terry Merfeld. Coach Miller's staff included: Assistant Coaches Kevin Boyle, Kevin Lehman and Sam Skarich. Mark Ackerman was a graduate assistant coach and Nick Nurse was a student assistant coach. Terry Noonan was the athletic trainer and Chris Rowles, John McGovern, Henry Huddleson, Brenda Lewis and Steve Nixon were team managers.



Jason Daisy finished his career with 1,721 points that leaves him fourth place on the UNI all-time scorer's chart.

Those Tournament Tracks:

"It was such a joy to put on that Panther uniform and run onto that court in the UNI-Dome! One of the things I truly miss is the battle and competition among my teammates every day in practice. It was such a pleasure to go to war with those guys on the court and try to put UNI on the map in the college basketball world. Those guys are still like brothers to me and so many of them I still keep in contact with on a regular basis."



Dale Turner responded to a request about his playing years at UNI. He wrote, "The time I spent at UNI shaped my life in the most positive way imaginable. The teammates, coaches and friends that I gained through those years will never be replaced and are very important to me now. Coach Miller was like a father to me in those years and I will always be grateful to him for helping me become the man and person that I am

today. We are still in contact and he has been a person that I can talk with about my career decisions and I am very appreciative of that. (Note: A similar comment was heard many times by those who continue to have contact with Coach Miller.)

"There are still a number of games that stand out in my mind, but a few of the most important ones are beating UIC in the first round of the AMCU tournament in the Dome. It was a triple overtime thriller and was a great game to play in, yet on the other hand it was exhausting knowing that we had to turn around and play the very next night. Beating the Hawkeyes in front of 22,000 fans in the Dome could not be topped. Obviously beating the Missouri Tigers in the first round of the NCAA Tournament still stands out as one of my most memorable accomplishments in my entire basketball career. Basically because nobody gave us a chance and not only did we win, but we dominated the game and fought hard to pull off a major upset.

"I'm always talking to my son and players about my time at UNI in hopes of helping them achieve some of the things that this university and basketball afforded me. I indeed do bleed Purple and will always be a Panther."

earlier that making a winning team does not happen overnight, it takes time to put together just the right ingredients, but try as they might, the next years left the Panthers without a repeat of the then recognized golden one.

While the team finished the next few years with a 40-42 record, just shy of the .500 mark, individual players were creating their own traditions of excellence. During the 1995-96 season, Jason Daisy was an offensive threat for any team to have to deal with. During the week of December 30, 1996, Jason became the nation's leading scorer and the hot Darian DeVries was right behind him. Then there was Tony Brus. Daisy finished his basketball career with 1,721 points, Brus had 1,179 and DeVries had 1,084 leaving them today in fourth, 16th, and 23rd place respectively in the Panther record book.

What the Panthers proved under the leadership of their coach was that no one should ever take them lightly. As the players loved their coach for his coaching ability, as well as his humanitarian modeling, their coach stepped away from his coaching position following the 1997-98 season. He retired with a 164-178 record. Coach Miller remained at UNI serving in academic and athletic positions with the University of Northern Iowa Foundation. It was his leadership that led to building the McLeod Center.

Coach Eldon Miller was inducted into the Panther Hall of Fame with the 2012 class.

The Sam Weaver Era (1998-2001)

Thurlon "Sam" Weaver was hired to replace Eldon Miller as the Panthers' head basketball coach. Leaving an associate coaching position at Iowa State University, Weaver came with high marks from ISU men's basketball Coach Tim Floyd.

Weaver's first year found his Panther team in the Missouri Valley Conference cellar at the half-way mark.

"We've just got to find a way to get focused. These kids really deserve some wins. They are doing a lot of things

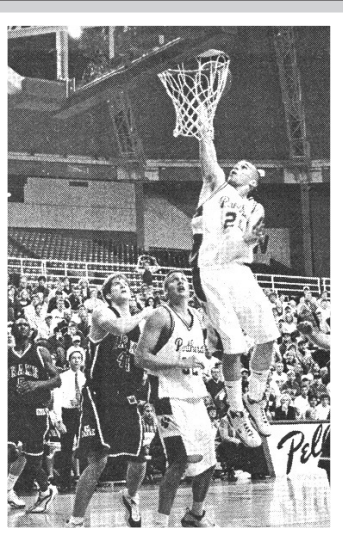


Coach Thurlon "Sam" Weaver.

right but a couple of mistakes are costing us games." (January 26, 1999 Northern Iowan) The losses came but not because the players weren't trying to come out on the winning side. Joe Breakenridge was leading the MVC in rebounding (8 boards per game) and Robbie Sieverding was ranked in second place with a .471 3-point shooting percentage. The offensive ability of Brus and Sean Stackhouse gave the Panthers offensive power but they finished the first season with a 9-18 record.

Weaver's second year featured a solid recruiting class that was slated as the best class within the conference. Boasting six transfer players to replace the loss of Brus and Stackhouse, Weaver said "We've given ourselves a lot more options than what we've had in the past. I don't think we'll lose anything when we sub." (October, 1999 Northern Iowan) The prospect was possibly true as the Panther program was 10-6 at the halfway point through the second season and boasting upsets over Alabama and the Air Force. Sieverding gave credit to the team's better defensive play. The second season came to an end with a 14-15 record.

The third year for Weaver had leading players like Breakenridge, Andy Woodley, and Aaron Middendorf having floor experience. His large transfer team became evermore expanded with three additional players. "I think we've got some really fine athletes. We feel like we won't miss a beat when we bring some of the new guys off the bench." (Adam Small November 7, 2000 Northern Iowan) Erik Smith, who transferred to UNI from Colorado State, proved to be an offensive player leaving him with the most 3-point shots attempted and made through the 2010 season with 79 shots made out of 208 attempts.



Robbie Sieverding takes the ball to the hoop as Joe Breakenridge readies for board action. Sieverding would eventually finish his playing career with 1,402 total points. Breakenridge led the rebounding stats from 1999 through 2001.

Weaver's Panther Transfer Roster

The greatest number of college transfers in UNI history under one coach.

Name	Position	Transfer From
Trey Austin	G/F	University of Houston
Erik Smith	G	Colorado State University
Damond Gregory	C	University of Texas-El Paso
Andre Clarke	G	Sullivan County Community College
Booker Warren	G/F	Bacone Junior College
Octay Morariu	C	Trinity Valley Community College
Corey Hill	G	Highland Community College
Blake Anderson	F/C	Marshalltown Community College
William Hagans	G	University of Texas-Dallas

In the end, Weaver's third season became his undoing. Finishing the season with a 7-24 record he stepped down as the head coach. Coming under a lot of public fire, athletic director Rick Hartzell commented for Adam Small in his March 9, 2001 Northern Iowan article, "Sam and I determined that a change was in the best interest for the program and for himself. I have the utmost respect for Sam Weaver, what he's about as a person, his loyalty to the program and the way he and I were able to work through this difficult process together." Sam Weaver left the Panther head coaching position with a 30-57 record.

The Greg McDermott Era (2001-2007)

Panther athletics already had an alumnus in Bobbi Petersen who was now coaching the volleyball team, the sport she had excelled in while attending UNI. The spring of 2001 was sort of special for Panther athletics as Athletic Director Rick Hartzel, a former student-athlete himself, unveiled, after a fashion, his two new head



Coach Greg McDermott

coaches. Mark Farley had been hired to take the lead for UNI football and Greg McDermott came home to not only win basketball games, but as Hartzel put it, "set an 'all-around' good example for his student-athletes."

Coming from a six year position at Wayne State College (Nebraska) and most recently a one year head position at North Dakota State, McDermott was excited to return to his alma mater, something similarly heard from Norm Stewart and Zeke Hogeland before him. "It's great to be back", said McDermott. "If you're wondering if it's possible for dreams to come true, I think I'm proof of that. In my mind, I'm the luckiest man alive. The timing of it really blindsided me because I just took the North Dakota State job only a year ago. Really, every move I've made is to prepare me for this situation. This is my dream job." (April 6, 2001 Northern Iowan)

As the year got underway, the Panthers had to depend on the experience of players left over from the Weaver era. The new recruits would step in when able, but it would be Robbie Sieverding to lead five other seniors into the upcoming season. McDermott: "We have six seniors who are hungry to end their careers with some success. They have been very willing to put forth the effort to improve in areas where they were deficient last season." (November 7, 2001 Northern Iowan)

The improvement was very noticeable to the fans as UNI ends McDermott's first season 14-15 with a key win over interstate Iowa. Iowa coach Steve Alford responded about the game, "Woodley (Andy) was tougher than any of the guards that we have. I think we can watch tape on Gruber (David) and find out what tough post play looks like." (Northern Iowan, December 7, 2001) The Panthers hadn't posted a winning season since the 1996-97 campaign, but this season proved they were on the right track with Coach McDermott as the general in charge. McDermott: "It was a fun season and I was proud of them [the players]. We're certainly excited about the future." (March 8, 2002 Northern Iowan)

Building a program is all about growth and the Panther men were doing just that. The second season ('02-03) left them with an 11-17 overall record and seventh in the MVC, not the level of play they wanted to show. It was the first year for the Bracket Buster games and UNI was slated to play at Louisiana Tech, which turned out to be a 76-71 "W" for the Panthers. This was a plus and maybe a sign for what was to come. Ben

Bracket Buster Games:

ESPN made the decision to create a means for mid-major basketball conferences to gain greater national exposure and enhance their chance to be selected for the NCAA Tournament. Working with the Mid-America, Missouri Valley, Colonial Athletic and Western Athletic Conferences, non-conference games were scheduled and for some, television exposure.

Jacobson, a freshman recruit from Sioux City, Iowa was beginning to make heads turn.

Signs of improvement were showing a different team was emerging, and going into the 2003-04 season, it was David Gruber who was turning heads. Mac's presence and the visual and mental image the "new Panthers" allowed UNI to have the best recruiting class in Iowa and the MVC. Brooks McKowen, Grant Stout, Adam Viet and Atila Santos joined on with Gruber and Matt Schneiderman to bolster the shooting and rebounding percentages. Eric Crawford had transferred in from Bowling Green and was waiting for his turn to play. During the 2003-04 season, the Panthers won their third of four meetings with the Hawkeyes. Said the Hawkeye coach of this most recent loss, "Brooks ran this show tonight. He and Eric Crawford made the difference." (Northern Iowan, December 12, 2003)

The 2003-04 seasons found the Panther team posting its highest MVC finish ever. It was on a Thursday, March 4 to be exact, the high flying Panthers were playing host to unbeaten Southern Illinois. Seniors Gruber and Schneiderman set the tone for inside play before a packed Dome, which when the final tally was made proved to be the largest Dome attendance excluding interstate rivals Iowa and Iowa State. Beating the Salukis gave UNI a school record 12th conference win and spoiled Southern Illinois' shot at being the second MVC team to post an unbeaten conference season.

The season was to have further jubilation when the team won the MVC tournament sending the Panthers to their second NCAA tournament; the first time since the 1990 Eldon Miller team dropped Missouri in the first game and came very close to taking out the Minnesota Golden Gophers. UNI was set as the 14th seed and placed on the tournament schedule to meet the number three seeded Georgia Tech. The regional game was played in Milwaukee and the fans expected



Panther athlete of the year. Said Coach McDermott of his in the paint, "David Gruber was everything you could ask for in a student-athlete. When he made the decision to play with a broken bone, it was a testimony to just how tough he was."

Panther Posse for \$10. . .

Join the Panther Posse and get one purple and one yellow T-shirt. In addition, you will get a membership card that allows for discounts at local places. This group brought the students back to the Dome in force, building Panther pride across the campus. Chris Bowser commented in the November 9, 2004 N.I. "College kids are supposed to study hard and play even harder." The Panther Posse helped fulfill these words.

to see Gruber, Jacobson, Crawford and the rest of the team pump in the extra offense for a win. In this game, the offense showed the Yellow Jackets of Georgia Tech what Panther spirit was all about, but as the game clock ticked away the final seconds, the score board told the tale; Georgia Tech 65 and UNI 60. The season was over, but the fans were ready for the next season to begin.

The 2004-05 team got underway to the best start in a decade. By mid-season the Panthers had a 12-3 overall record with Jacobson, Stout and the two Eric's (Crawford and Coleman) providing a huge portion of the offense. All coaches look for player leadership. The Panthers began having a conference slump and it was having a negative impact on the "Win-Loss column." McKowen and Stout called for a "players' only" meeting. What transpired in that meeting may never really surface, but the Panthers got back on the winning track after that meeting and got off the .500 standing.

The year before, the team had posted a 20 game winning streak and this new resurgence was heading them toward a second 20-win season. The Panthers were becoming a formidable mid-major power for anyone to face. Pete Schmitt may have summed up the processes facing a growing program when he addressed his feelings for being a part of the rebuilding process. He felt it was great to see all the work the guys were doing to get to the top of their game and then to have it pay off.

Once again in the NCAA post-season tournament, the team fell in the first round to Wisconsin. While the Wisconsin fans were rooting for the Panthers as they played a close game with Georgia Tech the year before, they weren't the Panther allies during this game. The Panthers finished the 2004-05 season with its second 21 win season.

Knowing all of the five starters [Ben Jacobson, first team All-MVC; honorable mention All-MVC Eric Crawford; MVC defensive team member Grant Stout, Brooks McKowen and MVC Freshman of the Year Eric Coleman] would return for the 2005-06 season, the Panthers were tabbed to win the MVC. At the start of the 2005-06 season, Jacobson became a member of the Wooden All-America watch list and voted the MVC preseason Player of the Year.

The Valley is a tough place to play ball, but it was the UNI Panthers who were picked to win the conference. You might say the other teams had worked hard to bolster their respective rosters in order to counter the talent-laden Panthers, but a final loss to Bradley in the Dome meant the Panthers would not clinch the Valley title.

The Panthers were a nationally rated team off and on throughout the season, often times sharing the no. 25 spot with the University of Nevada. Senior guard Jacobson was named to the First Team All-District 12

Jacobson helps the Panthers beat the #12 ranked Iowa Hawkeyes in the Dome. He led all scoring for three years and holds the third all-time scoring position.



Crawford, who could only tab two points during the regular game against Iowa, hit seven more in overtime to assist with the Panther win. Crawford is now an assistant coach with the Panthers.

by the National Association of Basketball Coaches, the only MVC player selected to such an honor.

The 2005-06 season was one for continued television coverage. Even though they were not conference champions, the loss did not keep the Panthers from being a mid-major power that found post-season play almost a given. "As far as we're concerned, we're in," said Jacobson in the March 10, 2006 Northern Iowan. Tough scheduling by the Valley topped with victories by respective teams put the Valley's RPI at the no. 6 spot, ahead of a lot of conferences like the PAC 10 and in so doing, the Valley and its teams were to be given more respectful considerations to at-large selections by the NCAA Tournament selection committee.

The Panthers received the expected bid proving Jacobson right. Claiming the no. 10 seed, the Panthers faced no. 4-seeded Georgetown. As was the case with Georgia Tech, the Panthers were not to be taken lightly. Holding a four point lead at half-time, the fans looked for a second half push and a victory, but 25 percent shooting was their downfall and Georgetown claimed a five point lead into the last seconds of the game. This game was to be the last game for Jacobson, Little and Crawford. Said Jacobson in a Neal Heston March 24,

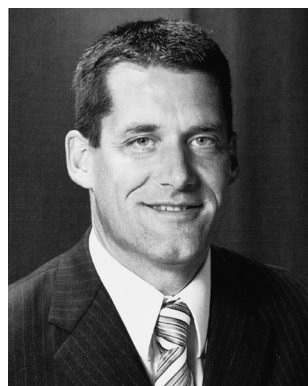
2006 Northern Iowan interview, "I didn't want to play my last game. Sometimes you have to face reality, and this is reality. We've been really close three times."

During the play time of Jacobson, Crawford, Little, Gruber, Schneiderman and a host of others, the Panther basketball program excelled. Placing high in the Valley, winning the MVC Tournament, having three consecutive 20-win seasons and three appearances in the NCAA post-season tournament, the UNI Panthers were well onto becoming one of the major players in the mid-major designation.

Greg McDermott came to his alma mater to coach basketball, but at the end of his fifth year he stepped away to accept the head coaching position at Iowa State University. The UNI basketball program got a real boost with "Mac" at the helm, but now he has moved on. It was associate coach Ben Jacobson for the past five years that was promoted to take the reins. "I see the program moving in nothing but the same direction," said John Little. "The only thing different on the sideline is a shorter guy. They're not going to lose a beat at all." Eric Crawford felt the same way. He recognized that there were some great recruits coming to UNI and there were some very good players returning. "Anyone involved with our program knows he [Jacobson] had a lot to do with our success." (Heston, *ibid*) Greg McDermott left UNI with a 90-63 overall record.

The Ben Jacobson Era (2006–Present)

With Greg McDermott departed for Iowa State University, Athletic Director Rick Hartzell quickly identified Associate Head Coach Ben Jacobson as the new leader for Panther basketball. Commented Hartzell in a Neal Heston March 24, 2006 NI article, "We wish Greg McDermott, a dear friend, all the luck at Iowa State. We're going to turn the page and move this program forward. I'm 100 percent confident we have the right guy." Jacobson reacts, "I'm humbled and honored to be the head coach at the University of Northern Iowa. The excitement level for Panther



Coach Ben Jacobson

basketball is at an all-time high and I look forward to continuing the growth of our program."

And why not note the excitement surrounding Panther basketball? The program was coming off three 20-win seasons and three consecutive appearances in the NCAA Tournament. The recruits that are coming to UNI are going to add to the existing force that has put the Panther program into the national spotlight. And then to top it all off, the new home of Panther basketball is about to open.

Seven years in the making, the McLeod Center was finally going to open its doors to volleyball, and men's and women's basketball. It had been deemed a world class facility. Gone are the packed days of the West Gym and gone too are the days of the cavernous Dome. The Panther teams finally had a place designed especially for them. They now had their own space they could call home.

As for the conference, the MVC continued to throw up impressive numbers as it grew to be considered a major player amongst mid-major programs. The 2006-07 season demonstrated this with wins over Iowa State, Wisconsin, Purdue, Minnesota, Xavier, Louisiana State, Butler, Virginia Tech to name a few. With victories over such power-laden teams, this put inter-conference games at a premium and victories within the Valley should not be taken lightly. Oh, and by the way, it was the UNI Panthers that put that win over the Iowa Hawkeyes this year and the first time ever that they had done so at Carver Hawkeye Arena.

The first year for Coach Jake found it a bit difficult getting that winning edge in the tough Valley conference. Towards the end of February, the Panthers had seen an up and down, bumpy road first hand. The win over Iowa State and Coach McDermott was high pitched and received with raucous roars from the fans, but that victory didn't smooth out the bumps seen with Valley play. The Valley was definitely tough. The Panthers were in sixth place in conference standing and a 16-12 season led the team into March Madness where the team would end the season. An 18-14, 9-9 record was a good beginning, but Panther notoriety came in April, 2007 when the basketball team was selected to represent the USA in the World University Games in Bangkok, Thailand. Said AD Hartzell, "This is a tremendous honor for our men's basketball team and our university. I know the organizers wanted a team of young men and

coaches who would represent the USA with the greatest integrity and class." In the end, the Panther men were just about to win it all posting wins over Angola, Turkey, China, Finland and Israel, but then fell short with a loss to ultimate gold medalist Lithuania.

With the international travel behind them, the Panthers return to face the 2007-08 season. Player shuffling and starting line-up variations indicated that there was plenty of talent to take to the floor. The game the team and fans were looking forward to was the game with interstate rival Iowa State at Hilton Coliseum and former UNI coach Greg McDermott. At the end of the evening, the Panthers had posted their third win in 27 tries against ISU and their second win against their former coach. "Last year [in the Dome] it seemed like that was really at the forefront of everything," said Jacobson. "This year has been different and hopefully each year it will get a little bit easier. I don't think it'll ever be fun to play each other." (November 30, 2007 Northern Iowan)

The Panthers finished the 2007-08 season with an identical record as the previous season and as with the case with all teams, seniors leave and the team looks to put new lineups together. The 2007-08 team saw the departure of Jared Josten, Adam Viet, Joe Green and emotional leader Eric Coleman, who with his long arm span, fashioned the "slam dunk" for the fans.



Coleman was the scoring threat for the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons averaging 12.7 points per game and 1.3 blocked shots per game.

Stout was a defensive player leading in blocked shots per game (a 2.1 average) and 7.3 rebounds per game.

The recruiting of key players helps a team play at the Division I level. Coach Miller knew this. Coach Weaver knew this and Coach McDermott knew this. This was the means by which the UNI Panthers found their success during the earlier years and it was the formula for the 2008-09 season. While some very good players had left the team, the team was boasting some quality Division I individuals. Playing in a tough conference and scheduling tougher non-conference opponents, the Valley and the Panthers congruously continued to show their mid-major strengths.

The 2008-09 Panthers were picked to finish sixth in the conference. With the departure of key players, the coach's poll apparently felt the team had some rebuilding to do. Maybe the sixth place position was the correct placement for the team or do these polls somehow impact the thinking of the players. Somewhere in the middle of a practice or driving home from a game, the notion that "we are a very good team" struck home and stuck as the Panthers went on a 13 of 15 middle-of-the-season binge. The momentum carried them to a conference championship and the ultimate win that put the team back into the NCAA Tournament after a two-year absence.

The Panthers were given a ninth seed putting them against Purdue. Losing by five, a close score in anyone's book, the score seemed to be symbolic of those NCAA losses dating back to the Miller era and its second game loss against Minnesota. The Panthers have shown time and time again that they are very capable of playing against power conference teams. Unfortunately, they just came up a little bit short.

Only Travis Brown and Charlton Reed would leave the 2008-09 team. Reed, who didn't have a chance to develop due to injuries and Brown, who had plenty of good playing minutes would both be missed, but the entire team was basically returning and the team fielded a lot of accolades and honors. Adam Koch was named to the first-team All-Missouri Valley Conference; Kwadzo Ahelegbe was named to the second-team all-conference; Lucas O'Rear was given the Sixth Man of the Year award; Ali Farokhmanesh was placed on the All-Newcomer Team and Johnny Moran made the All-Freshmen Team.

It's the 2009-10 season. It has arrived and there is plenty of hype as the Panthers are picked to win the MVC. They had a very good schedule slated. The start-

ing team was all together and UNI was about to prove its mid-major power at the Division I level. What Coach Jim Berry began so many years ago had now evolved to a team that others would come to know as a powerhouse.

Several years prior to this season, Coach Jake had asked Coach Berry to join his coaching staff and he once again found his place on the bench. Coach Jake wanted Coach Berry's input into the developing structure of the team. His presence there was something players and fans alike found most appropriate. So as one would view the sidelines, they were in essence looking at the alpha and the incipient existing Omega of UNI's Division I development. Coach Berry was once again part of the team and his input was valued. Guard Kwadzo Ahelegbe was reflecting about his jump shot, a shot that made him a dangerous player to guard. As he would execute this particular shot, he connected with Coach Berry. Kwadzo said, "Every time I shoot [the jump shot], I would always hear Coach Berry's voice in the back of my head talking about 'arch and freeze,' and that stuff goes a long way." (Kelly Beaton @wfcourier.com, posted December 27, 2009)

The 2009-10 season was a season that put the punctuation mark on the Panther Division I evolution. While Coach Jake was the director of the season, one needs to reflect how long it took to get here. A season that would boast a 30-5 record, win the Missouri Valley Champi-



We can all hear Coach Jake telling Ali, "If you have the shot, take it. Practice under pressure now will only mean a game winning shot later on."

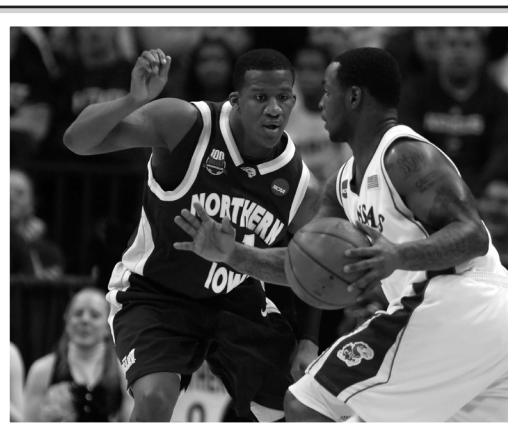


Moran's basket with five seconds left helped the Panthers reach a new school record of 11 straight wins.

onship for the second consecutive time, and become the first Panther team to ever reach "The Sweet 16," the road was not without its ups and downs, but that is what it takes for such growth to ever come to fruition. The rise from one level of play to another doesn't happen over night, it takes time. Coach Miller said this as have coaches everywhere who work to make changes amongst an ever changing game.

Coach Berry began it all during his era as the Panther coach. Coach Miller brought the team to a new level as they won their first ever NCAA post-season game. Coach McDermott had back to back-to-back runs at post-season play and now Coach Jacobson breaks all win-loss records and moves the team to NCAA post-season levels never before achieved by a Panther team.

While each year, since the game began to be played at Iowa State Normal School, there have been key players and each year has had its grand moments. Each year players would set new standards and they held a level of prestige, even if it was only for a short time, but it was important to them because they were the one who held that standard. Records are meant to be broken and the new players become someone very special during their time with the team as they work to break those records. Coaches have always expressed that a particular player was the best they had ever coached and that is most likely a true statement. Yet the next player to put on the Panther uniform may become the "best player" yet. Who

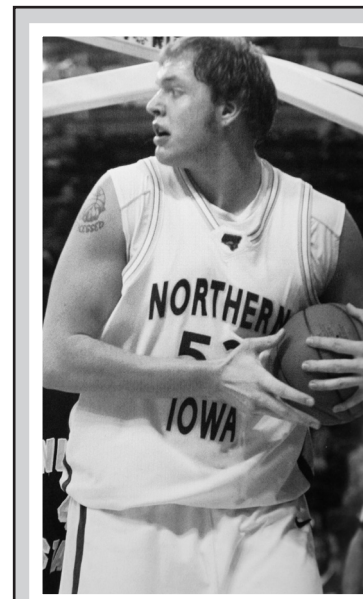


He could shoot and he could drive the ball to the basket as quick as any ball player in the Valley. Just ask the teams that had to face Kwadzo Ahelegbe.

knows what a player can achieve and a team can accomplish? For the team, the university, the fans and those not familiar with UNI, the 2009-10 team was special and had some very special players.

To begin with, there was Jordan Eglseder, the only 7-footer to play for the Panthers who posed a defensive and offensive threat to those who had to face him, and after his time spent at the Pete Newell Big Man Camp in Hawaii, he was ready to play the post.

There was Adam Koch, who attained many accolades for his play under the basket and from the 3-point arch. One award of note was being named to the 2010 Lowe's Senior All-American First Team. Johnny Moran was the defense specialist who would also show off his quick playman-



At 7' Eglseder posed an obstacle that opponents had to find a way to get past, and that wasn't an easy chore.

ship at the other end of the court. Kwadzo Ahelegbe, the guard who garnered MVP awards for his ability to make things happen when something had to happen, and Lucas O'Rear, twice voted the MVC Sixth-Man recognition for the tenacity with which he played the game night after night. "Luuuuuke", as the fans called him, lived by his motto, "Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard." Coach Jacobson credits O'Rear with having a work ethic that the others noticed during the game and in practice. "He sends a message to everyone that is simply invaluable", says the Coach. And then there was Ali Farokhmanesh whose photograph would eventually grace the cover of Sports Illustrated as the 6'0" guard/3-point shot specialist, who knew how to get the job done and done right. With top reserves like Jake Koch and Kerwin Dunham, and the remaining Panther team, the Panthers probably boasted the most talent-laden team ever, not to take away from all those who had worn the uniform before them.

A team is nothing but a team unless they have the leadership of a coach who can put everything into perspective for his players, and that is what 'Coach Jake' did game after game. He designed the manner in which his team would attack the game. As David Kaplin, an ESPN commentator said at the January 30, 2011 game with Missouri State when Jacobson was talking to his team during a time-out, "Diagram us a basket coach." Then he followed up that comment with, "Coaches don't diagram baskets. Coaches' diagram plays. Players make baskets." Coach Jacobson has proven his ability to lead a team and has been named the MVC Coach of the Year in back to back years and he was a candidate for the Clair Bee Coach of the Year Award that honors a Division I basketball coach who through his actions on and off the court makes an outstanding contribution to the sport of college basketball. The criteria for this award includes a coach's ability to inspire, motivate, coach, and educate his team to achieve its fullest potential while insisting upon and demonstrating outstanding character and academic success. (March 29, 2010 Northern Iowan)

The Panthers had ended their 2009-10 regular season with a 27-4 and 15-3 Valley record and the outright berth to the NCAA Tournament with a 14-seed ranking. They would face the University of Nevada Las Vegas, a very dominating team in the first round of the tournament. Only the 1989-90 Eldon Miller team had ever won its first game, but this team was focused to repeat that option and the talent-laden group of Panthers did just that with a 69-66 win. They wanted to extend their season. As player Ben Jacobson had said before, "I don't want to end my playing the game tonight."

Up next was the number one seeded and overall number one ranked team in the tournament, the Kansas Jayhawks. "There will be a point this spring where I'll either put the game in and watch it. . . or look back on our season like I do each year and think about some of the things that happened, but not yet," said Jacobson after a game thrilling, heart pounding if not a heart attack waiting to happen atmosphere, but the Panthers were on a mission and a date with infamy as they closed out Kansas' march to its heralded expectation place with a 69-67 score, an almost identical 69-66 score over UNLV. The Panthers were headed to the Sweet 16 and a game with Michigan State.

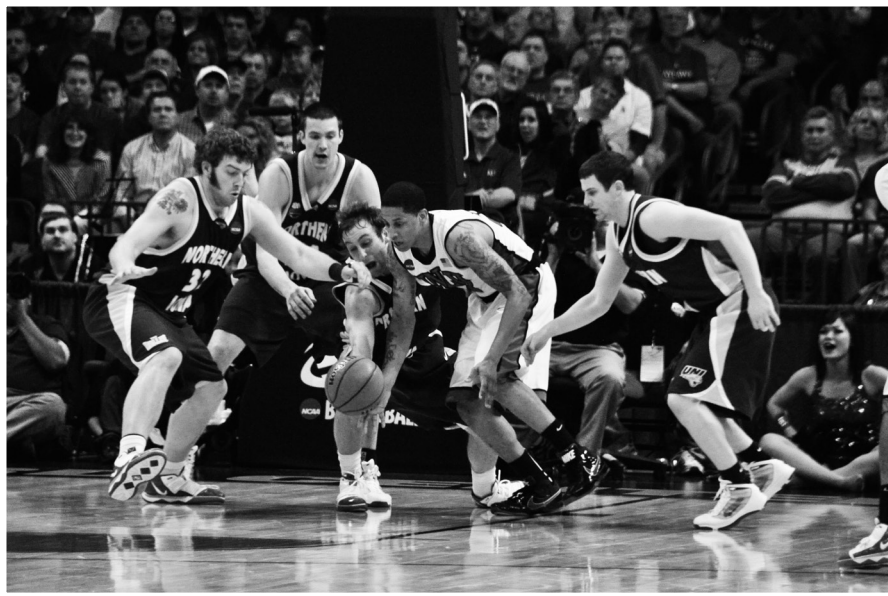
Like the two games before this one, the team played hard and had its share of the lead but Michigan State wasn't willing to relinquish their score and in the end, they knew they had played a very good team. The 59-52 loss however, brought the Panthers' Cinderella season to an end. Said Tom Izzo, Michigan State's head coach, "Northern Iowa is just as good as a lot of teams that we've played this year... Those kids can play. They run such good stuff, and they play such good defense." (March 27, 2010 Northern Iowan) Somewhere in the comments that were given between the coaches at the end, some believe that Coach Izzo may have said that UNI really deserved to win the game. The Tennessee fans would certainly have liked that outcome as they cheered for the Panthers wanting their next game to be played with them.

As it turns out, the season wasn't really over as the throng of supporters kept alive in their memories the year that had just ended. And for the team itself, the awards kept on coming for individuals as well as the team. The University of Northern Iowa Panthers in defeating the Kansas Jayhawks won the 2010 ESPY Award for Best Upset of the Year beating out Y.E. Yang's upset over Tiger Woods at the 2009 PGA Championship; Hawaii's softball upset over no. 1 ranked Alabama in the NCAA regional; and Frankie Edgar defeating B.J. Penn in mixed martial arts. Coach Ben Jacobson, Adam Koch and Ali Farokhmanesh were at the award ceremony in Los Angeles, Calif. to accept the award. "Winning an ESPY is an absolute thrill," Jacobson said. "To have this happen to a great group of guys, our university and fans makes it very special.

"On behalf of these two guys, their teammates watching at home, ESPN, the fans that voted for

us, Cedar Falls and Waterloo, and all the proud alums of Northern Iowa this caps off a great run for us this year. Cedar Falls and Waterloo, we're bringing home an ESPY," said Jacobson addressing the crowd at the Nokia Center. Adam Koch commented, "What a crazy experience. It was awesome to be able to win this award and be a part of this."

The 2010-11 year was missing several of the starters that had put UNI before the nation with its



Lucas O'Rear, Adam Koch, Ali Farokhmanesh and Johnny Moran challenge for the ball. Their tenacious defense was the scourge of their opponents.



The win over number one overall seeded Kansas may have been the greatest story of the decade. It certainly meant a lot to this incredible team.

playmanship. Hoping for a three-peat as MVC champions, something that no one has ever been able to do, and return to the NCAA trail were goals that lay ahead of them. However the loss of Lucas O'Rear in the early part of the season took its toll on the team. The twice awarded sixth-man was now a starter, but a broken foot ended his basketball playing career. He would work on his recovery and look to the future that would take him to the Cincinnati Reds as a pitcher. He would give the team his leadership and support, which was important even though he could no longer play the game.

Dunham and Ahelegbe would play the game along with Moran, Sonnen, James, Koch and the remaining squad. The season would not end with a conference championship nor would it enable the Panthers a trip to the NCAA. They did get accepted to the College Insider.com Tournament and the first game to be played was against the Rider Broncos. Big point games from Ahelegbe, Moran and James allowed for a one sided win. In Kelly Beaton's March 16, 2011 column, Anthony James commented, "We're trying to make a run in this tournament." With an impressive 84-50 win over Rider, Coach Jacobson commented in the same article, "I guess what I liked the most was our energy level. That really helped us defensively." Up next would be the SMU Mustangs.

SMU ended the Panther year and Dunham and Ahelegbe would say good-bye to four years of donning the Panther uniform and giving the fans a great ride. Accolades would bestow each, but the team would look to the future as the next group of young men wait for their turn to play the game and there is plenty to look forward to as UNI will host home games with Iowa, Wisconsin, Milwaukee and Colorado State. They will visit the South Padre Islands for a tournament enabling them to meet teams they normally don't face during the year. And then there is the always venerable Missouri Valley Conference, which is one of the toughest conferences in the country. At the end of the 2010-11 basket-

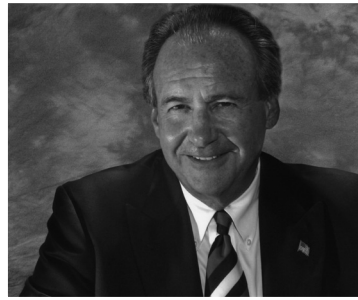


The number of athletic programs who have attained this award is limited to the very best and right now, UNI is one of those very best.

ball season, Coach Jacobson would have a .782 winning percentage.

So there you have it for this brief look at the history of UNI basketball. It would have been great to have been able to include all the names and all the statistics, but it can't happen at this time. Of course, history continues to be made and as soon as any author stops writing, it goes on. There is certainly more history to be written related to men's basketball. There are so many names to yet be mentioned and respective stories to be told. This limited history hasn't allowed for that to happen, but it does set the stage for a book yet to be written.

Bob Justis has been the public address announcer for Panther men's basketball and football since 1975. He shares a few of his thoughts about basketball.



"Over the past 37 years I've been quite close to men's basketball at UNI and I've had a pretty good seat for every one of those games. When asked to sum up my thoughts for this book – I jumped at the chance.

"I've been courtside with Jim Berry, Eldon Miller, Sam Weaver, Greg McDermott and Ben Jacobson. I've experienced the highs and lows, the wins and losses, the laughter and the tears. I've been thrilled by the play of countless student-athletes who wore the Purple and Gold.

"When asked what my favorite moment or memory is of UNI basketball – I can't name one, because there are so many. It's dangerous to name names, but there are a few that immediately come to mind. Jason Reese, one of the hardest working guys I have ever seen run the floor. He never let up – no matter the score. Steve Phyfe, quietly doing his job with skill and precision. Randy Blocker, who could spin a defender's head with his ability to leap for those rebounds. Maurice Newby, who's shot at the buzzer at the NCAA Tournament game versus Missouri in Richmond, Va., tore the heart out of Tiger fans and caused 50 or so UNI fans in the arena to dump their sodas all over each other. The entire team that same year who, in front of over 22,000 fans defeated the Iowa Hawkeyes and pounded a stake

into the UNI-Dome court that read, "We are no longer your little brother!" Ben Jacobson, the player, who created so much magic on the court and thereby created so many memories. Eric Coleman and his 'get out of my way' attitude.

"Then there's that unassuming, quiet, lunch bucket kind of player who week in and week out just did his thing – burying three's; who on March 20, 2010 in Oklahoma City, in front of a worldwide audience, launched a shot that turned the basketball world upside down, sent an arena full of Kansas Jayhawks back to Lawrence and who helped plant another stake. 'It's Northern Iowa – Sweet 16 here we come!' Two hours earlier that day – no one other than Panther fans could pronounce his last name. The next day, every college basketball fan could say it perfectly – Ali Farokmanesh. That shot – that one shot – created arguably the biggest athletic stir to come out of Iowa in decades.

"The rest of my memories are wrapped around our coaches and the families of our student-athletes. Traveling with the Panthers to Hawaii and Europe gave me the opportunity to see these players in countless situations and I was always proud of how well they carried themselves and how well they represented UNI.

"As I put these thoughts to paper – another young team of basketball players are giving us thrills, cheers and tears. I thought this was to be a re-building year but here we are again with hopes of getting to the big dance.

"My daughter Nicole's first experience at a UNI athletic event was in January 1985 at a basketball game in the UNI-Dome. She was right behind me, in her mother's arms and just a few weeks old. Now – well, now she sits right behind me with my two little grandsons. Panther athletics – it's a family thing."

Women's Basketball

Joyce Barbatti, Wanda K. Green

Women's basketball at Northern Iowa can best be described as a kaleidoscope of transitions--from the East Gym to Price Lab, through the UNI-Dome to the McLeod Center; from the days of no uniforms, to gold pinnies, to shared uniforms, to home and away gear. The evolution from a minimal budget and sack lunches for road trips with only one coach to a full staff, recruiting budget and plane travel. Then there's the journey from competing at the state level championships to back-to-back NCAA appearances. The road to success may seem long, but the accomplishments have been great in light of the humble beginnings not so long ago.

Intramural Women's Basketball

From the earliest years of Iowa State Normal School, women were competing in basketball. *The Normal Eye* (Jan. 19, 1910) featured an article titled, "Inter-Society Basket Ball Again -- Women's Organizations to Play Annual Tournament of Nine Games". It stated: "The annual basket ball (spelled as two words in those days) tournament between the teams of women's literary societies will begin next Friday with the game between the Chrestos and Eulalians. Ever since the beginning of the winter term last November the teams have been practicing in preparation for an interesting series of games which will decide the school championship. Miss Ethel Vinall has complete charge of the games and has been coaching the teams."

The women competed in four rounds of a single elimination tournament. The paper went on to say "there is much speculation as to the outcome of these contests."

The March 5, 1924 issue of the *College Eye* quoted: "The W. A. A. tournaments are now being played off. It was impossible this year to arrange the students as to their classification in college, so the matches are being held between the classes as scheduled. Good spirit is evident, nevertheless. The basket ball games are especially good. Many are turning out for every game. The results so far are as follows: "Mrs. Whitford's 4th hour class won from Miss Cooke's 8th hour class by a score of 26-6. Miss Sweigard's 5th hour class won from Miss

Hollis' class by a score of 22-13 and Miss Gardner's class won from Miss Sweigard's 6th hour class by a score of 30-26. Miss Cooke's 7:10 class won from Mrs. Whitford's 6:40 class by a score of 43-5. The game between Miss Gardner's and Miss Sweigard's class was especially good. The first game, played last Friday was tied, the score being 13-13."



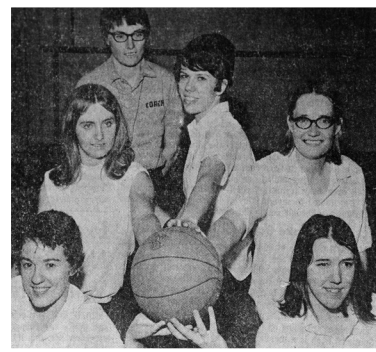
From the UNI Archives comes one of the first photographs related to women's organized basket ball.

Another issue of the *College Eye* (Feb. 21, 1929) reported "great excitement prevails as to the outcome of the women's basketball intra-murals which started Monday, February 18. Two games are played daily at 5 o'clock. The games have been marked with clean play and good sportsmanship. Members of the Junior theory class in basketball are acting as referees, umpires, scorekeepers and timekeepers. The new trophies for the intra-mural program have arrived and are on display in the first floor office."

The Women's Athletic Association began sponsoring "Play Days" for the colleges in the area to compete in intra-mural tournaments. In March of 1937 seven schools were entered with one or more teams—Independence Junior College, Drake, University of Iowa, Grinnell, Simpson, Parsons and host school, Iowa State Teachers' College. The *College Eye* reported, "Girls not taking part in basketball will participate in recreation-



Another archival moment of the women's organized basketball.



The five 1971 starters for the UNI team slated for the eight-team state intercollegiate basketball championship at the University of Iowa. Counterclockwise from left: Lois Hartman, Lavonne Pier-son, Coach Wanda Green, Carla Pletsch, Kathleen Wallace and Linda Allo-way. (Photo courtesy Waterloo Courier.)

The five 1971 starters for the UNI team slated for the eight-team state intercollegiate basketball championship at the University of Iowa. Counterclockwise from left: Lois Hartman, Lavonne Pier-son, Coach Wanda Green, Carla Pletsch, Kathleen Wallace and Linda Allo-way. (Photo courtesy Waterloo Courier.)

The Female Student Movement for Basketball

Connie Shafar was a four-year starter and two-time all-state basketball player at Bedford Community High School before coming to State College of Iowa because of its highly-rated physical education program. Shafar was asked to join an AAU team sponsored by Vigortone Feed Company from Whitten, Iowa. She recalls the miscommunication that eventually led to UNI establishing a women's intercollegiate team.

"For two years, we would travel on weekends in and out of state to compete with other AAU teams. During my junior year, my high school coach, Jerry Wetzel, asked if I could bring a team from UNI (the name had changed) to play a basketball game against JFK's junior varsity team for a fund raiser. I got several of the women who had played on the AAU team and new recruits to fill out the team. Jerry told me he had to get the fund raiser sanctioned through the Iowa Girls' High School Athletic Union so I told him specifically *not* to use UNI so we called our team 'The Roadrunners.' However, when the communication from the Union was sent out it read 'The Roadrunners from UNI.' It got back to the physical education department. The next time I went to check out a basketball for our team to practice, we were denied access to the equipment.

"This was the beginning of our fight to bring intercollegiate basketball to the university. I always believed that it was just a matter of time before this would happen and I believed that due to UNI's stellar women's physical

education program, this institution should be the forerunner in Iowa for establishing intercollegiate athletics for women. A few of us were called into the head of the department's office for a 'scolding' over the UNI Roadrunners mistake. Our explanation was not good enough, and we were not allowed to practice basketball any more in the women's gym.

"I told the department head that she had the right to deny us access to the women's gym but we would find some other place to practice — the Y, a high school, the men's gym. We had a right to play competitive sports and certainly, a right to practice with others who desired competition. We met secretly with professors who were on our side and we continued to promote women's intercollegiate sports.

"The last semester of my junior year, a committee of which I was a member, was formed of student-athletes along with physical education teachers who worked on starting the first-ever intercollegiate women's sports program at UNI. During my senior year, we competed in basketball, field hockey, and tennis. The seasons were shorter compared to today's program, and we only played about eight games in basketball but it was a start. I was really amazed and grateful that the department was able to put together a competitive program in such a short amount of time. I never thought it would be during my time at the university.

"The program has come a long way since that time in the '60s. I really enjoy watching the UNI women play. I am extremely proud of the success that the program has experienced, especially over the past couple of years. An old saying goes, 'We've come a long way, baby!'"

al games and swimming." Intra-murals continued for women through 1966.

The Rise of the Modern Women's Intercollegiate Sports Program

Around 1966, a rumbling was under foot within the WPE (women's physical education department) by female students who wanted a competitive sport experience beyond that afforded them by the WRA (women's recreation association). Students visited the office of the department chair, Dr. Jean Bontz, making their case for "intercollegiate" competition. Faculty began discussions and formulations of a document, "Standards for Intercollegiate Competition", which would provide the philosophy, requirements and regulations by which an intercollegiate program would be conducted. An Intercollegiate Competition Committee comprised of three faculty and two students was established to complete the Standards.

By fall 1968 implementation was ready. Three sports would comprise the first three years' competitive program, providing one sport for each season: field hockey in the fall, a traditionally female sport in the United States under the auspices of the USFHA (United States Field Hockey Association); basketball in the winter, a girl's high school sport paramount in participation; and tennis in the spring, a life-time individual sport. In 1968 all three sports were also offered within the Iowa High School Athletic Union.

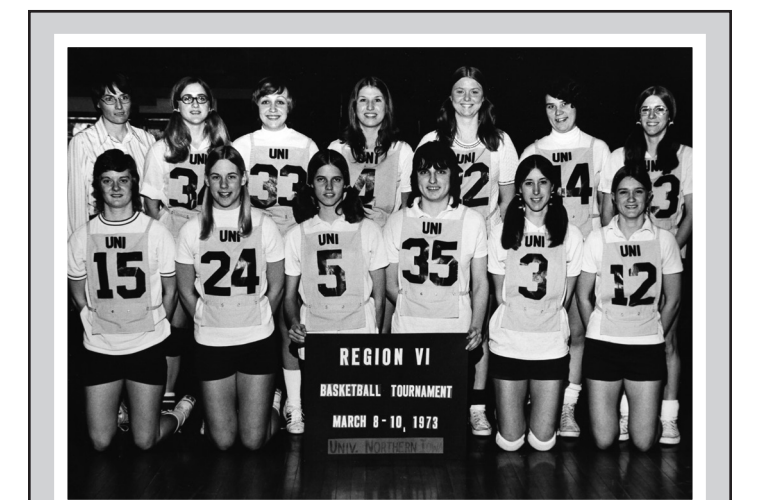
Regulations common to all three sports included: a minimum GPA (grade point average) for participating students (freshmen could not participate until a GPA was established), coaches were assigned from the faculty of the WPE Department based on a unique contribution they could provide the program: Dr. Elinor Crawford – field hockey, Wanda Green – basketball, and Betty Swanson – tennis. Funding was totally from the University, practice was limited to four hours per week, and competition was on weekends only. Governance of the program continued by the Women's Intercollegiate Athletics Committee made up of coaches from each sport, a student representative from each sport and a non-coach chairperson appointed by the WPE Department head. UNI was also a charter member of the Iowa Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Commit-

tee formulated by the IDGWS (Iowa Division of Girls' and Women's Sports) in 1968.

1968-1977

Thirteen UNI women reported to the Women's Gym 214 on Nov. 4, 1968, for the first basketball practice of a new competitive sport era. Practices were limited to four hours per week, held three nights each week between the hours of 8 and 9:30 p.m. Six A-squad (varsity) and two B-squad (junior varsity) games rounded out the first year schedule resulting in 5-1 and 2-0 records against Upper Iowa, Luther, Iowa Wesleyan, University of Iowa, Graceland and Central Missouri State.

Rules of the game common to college play were those published by the DGWS (Division of Girls' and Women's Sports), a division of AAHPER (American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation). Rules for the 1968-69 season were experimental with six-player teams, two roving players who could cross the center line and play both offensive and defensive ends of the floor, and an unlimited dribble. This was the transition year between the six-player and the five-player game instituted at the collegiate level during the 1969-70 season.



Members of the UNI 1973 Region VI. Front l-r: Kris Meyer, Pat Joachim, Kathy Shogren, Sherry Ebensberger, Mary Tietge, Nancy Miller. Back l-r: Coach Wanda Green, Deb Shay, Kay Whittaker, Jo Moeller, Diane Braun, Marcia Finn, Marie Burman. (Photo courtesy Waterloo Courier.)

Travel was by University car, games were held on Saturdays and/or Sundays. When more than one car was required, other PE faculty women volunteered to drive. Sack lunches from the dorms were brought to limit spending for meals. There were no team uniforms; players provided their own white shirt and dark shorts. Numbered pinnies from the equipment closet identified individual players. The budget actually spent for this first basketball season was \$192.00.

The first season evaluation resulted in recommendations for more the next season: more games, more publicity, earlier practice hours, numbered shirts as uniforms.

The 1969-70 season did result in a bit more. A total of 10 games, four A, four B, and two combined; 15 players beginning the season, five-player rules, and an expenditure of \$228.00. Premium quality yellow pinnies with "UNI" in black velvet above the front number became the first basketball uniform. The new pinnie uniforms were laundered and ironed at home by the coach. Fewer wins were recorded with records of 2-4 and 1-3 and publicity was deficient.

Two years after the start of intercollegiate basketball (1970-71) the school newspaper got involved with a pre-season announcement designed to get information out so non-physical education majors might also know about the opportunity to take their basketball ability to another level and play intercollegiate basketball at UNI. To address the scarce publicity of the past, a student player-reporter was designated to report to the paper so women's basketball might be noticed. The number of players on the roster increased to 20, including some non-physical education majors, and non-playing participants of team manager, scorer and timer for home games. Practice hours were changed to 5-6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, although this hour created problems with players getting to dorm dinner on time. With Kris Meyer officiating as player-publicity person, the newspaper coverage of UNI women's basketball flourished. Publicity even spilled over to a Waterloo Courier picture and article by Russ Smith.

The Iowa State Intercollegiate Committee, with representation from "member" institutions, met in April, 1970 and among other business, declared the sponsorship of the first annual Iowa Inter-collegiate Basketball Tournament to be held at the University of Iowa March 5-6, 1971. En route to participation in that tour-

namment, UNI's record went 5-3 (A) and 5-2 (B), with one of the A-squad wins over Northern Illinois. Eight teams participated in the first state tournament with all teams guaranteed two games, reflecting the philosophy of maximizing participation by playing out the bracket with the first-round loser moving into the consolation round. UNI lost its first-round game to Iowa Wesleyan, and then won the consolation bracket with wins over Briar Cliff and Luther. The championship was won by Iowa over Graceland College. Other teams participating were Grinnell and Northwestern. One UNI player, Linda Alloway, was selected to the first state all-tournament team.

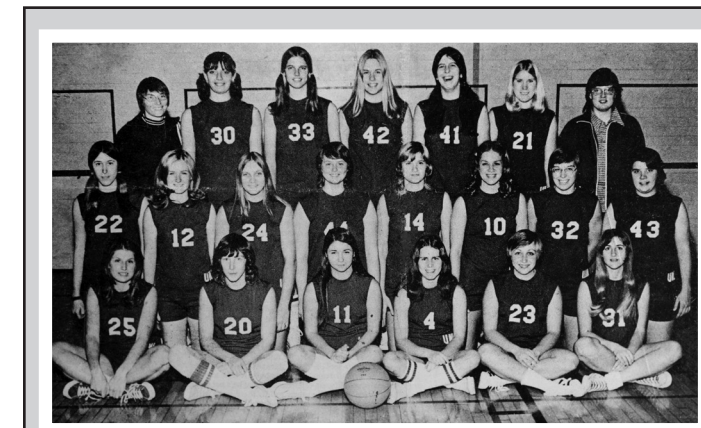
Now that a state tournament was an annual event and additional post-season play was being sponsored by the newly formed national governing body, the AIAW (Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women), additional budget requests were imminent, although \$433.00 for the 1971-72 season was still a bargain and any play beyond the state became part of a supplemental budget.

Twenty-three players formed the two teams competing with still one coach. Successful results were tallied for both teams: A-squad 8-1 and B-squad 6-4. State tournament play saw UNI win its first game against Iowa Wesleyan, then fall to Luther which went on to win the championship. Home Economics majors on the team presented a detailed proposal complete with drawings for making team shirts to replace the yellow pinnies. It didn't happen.

Season no. five, 1972-73, was recognition season. The word was out about UNI women's basketball when 50 interested students showed up to apply for the team. Team try-outs were conducted over three sessions to cut the final number to 21. Freshmen students could participate without a GPA but would be dropped at semester if the required GPA was not achieved. Practice began Nov. 13 and the season concluded with a trip to the second annual AIAW Region VI Tournament in Warrensburg, Mo. March 10, 1973. The A-squad turned in a season record of 7-2, including a key win over Central Missouri State, which was instrumental in securing UNI an at-large berth at the regional tournament. UNI finished second at the Iowa State Tournament with a championship-game loss to Westmar College.

Packing up their yellow pinnies, UNI proceeded to the eight-team Region VI Tournament. A first-round win against Mankato State put UNI in the winner's bracket. A two-point loss to Wayne State (NE), 52-50, followed with a loss to CMS, 49-40, gave UNI a fourth-place finish.

Upper-class team captains of the first UNI regional team were Meyer, Kay Whitaker and Mary Tietge. Regional tournament expenses of \$684.00 exceeded season expenditures, including the state tournament, of \$643.00. There were no sack lunches at regionals.



The January 10, 1974 Cedar Falls Record talked about the Panthers hosting the Iowa State Cyclones. The UNI team members that will meet this challenge are: front l-r: Joe Moeller, Pat Stockman, Susie Shinn, Barb Wahlstrom, Kay Whitaker and Debbie Shay; Middle l-r: Mary Tietge, Kris Harper, Donna Troyna, Diane Braun, Nancy Miller, Marce Rhoads, Lori Kluber, Marcia Finn; Back l-r: Coach Wanda Green, Deb Kaune, Kathy Shogren, Pat Joachim, Diane Hesson, Mary Rasmussen and Teresa Allen, Mgr.

Uniforms were still an issue, which basketball made a budget request for the next season, as well as for two hours more practice time per week. Since practice minutes required conditioning, skills, team offense/defense patterns and special situations, there was no wasted, low-activity time from the start of practice to the end, starting with the 12-minute stair-run loop from East Gym 214 to the ground floor and back. Free throws were shot in twos after fast break drills. Shooting practice was under pressure only. Feet were always moving.

The uniform movement was finally successful. Basketball had uniforms for the start of the 1973-74 season. Purple shirts and shorts, socks and warm-ups; however, uniforms were shared with softball in the spring. The basketball budget request and expenditures ascended to over \$1,000. Try-outs for basketball continued with the cut to 20; two teams, one coach, and more games for each team.

Players at UNI continued to be among the best in the state. Season results were A-squad 10-3, including state; and B-squad 8-2. A-squad wins occurred over such teams as Iowa, Iowa State, Iowa Wesleyan, Luther, Graceland, and Buena Vista. Losses were to Westmar and Grandview, two of those at the state tournament. Player-publicist for the season was Pat Joachim.

The 1974-75 season brought the search for facilities other than East Gym 214 for scheduled games. Price Lab School Field House became the home court whenever possible. All equipment had to be hauled in the coach's car from the Women's Gym to PLS and back for each contest, and practices were still held in Gym 214. Popularity remained high and try-outs intense as the cut to 20 players was made. Team selections were made in mid-October with the season starting in November. A pre-season work-out sheet was distributed for players to get a head start on conditioning before the opening practice and the 12-minute stair laps.

The schedule of games continued to increase in number for the A-team, 8-9; while fewer opponents were fielding two teams leaving the B-squad with just a 4-0 season. As the primary focus of these first years of the program was providing a quality competitive and educational experience for the participants, there was an attempt to expand the schedule each year to include some out-of-state competition. 1974-75 provided games and losses against Northwest Missouri State and Wisconsin-La Crosse.

Again, UNI met a formidable foe (William Penn College) in the first round of the state tournament and was relegated to the consolation bracket. Wins over Dordt College and Iowa State resulted in consolation honors again, while William Penn defeated Westmar for first. During this era, small colleges throughout the state had exceptionally good women's basketball teams and provided the highest level of competition. Also, the state was divided into four geographic districts with district play-offs held to determine the two teams

moving on to state. Luther and Wartburg were within the UNI district.

Basketball expenditures for year seven topped out at \$1,925. Meal allotments were up to \$7.00 per day, from \$3.50 in 1971-72. Maximum use of basketball uniforms was made when shared with volleyball and track. On the state front, the IIAAW abolished its scheduling committee, leaving each school to do its own for 1975-76.

The 1975-76 season was another roving year in facilities and rules. Gym 214, PLS Field House and the men's gym were all UNI home courts. The attitude was, "Have court, will play. Any court will do. They all have a basket at each end. The key is the same; some are just longer than others."

A 14-5 varsity record and a 9-0 B-squad record showed that UNI women could play anywhere. While maintaining the four-hour practice limits per player, the practice schedule for the coach was increased by separating A and B teams for two hours per week to give more concentrated coaching to each group. Senior varsity player and captain, Kathy Shogren, was asked to assist with coaching the B-squad. A few mid-week and Friday night games were permitted in the scheduling. UNI scored its first 100-point game over Northwestern in the opening round of the state tournament.

UNI was in position for another Region VI appearance but for the state championship game half-time decision made by William Penn. This was the year of small college, large college separate divisions for the regional tournament. Small colleges could select which division they wished to play in while large colleges could only play in the Large College Division. Leading at halftime over UNI, William Penn elected to commit to playing in the Large College Region VI Tournament. Had they elected the Small College Tournament Division, UNI would have represented Iowa at the Large College Division. A UNI win was required, but the team fell short in the last half for another second-place finish at state.

Home in 1976-77 was East Gym 214 and the men's gym with most home games in the men's gym. Practice per week moved up to six hours with two separate practice hours for each team. From 70 applicants, 22 players were retained for the two teams. Several out-of-state teams were on the schedule, including Illinois State, UW-La Crosse, Central Missouri State and

Wanda Green reminisces about the first 10 years

- Coaching was an assignment within the physical education department, the equivalent of one activity class, no extra pay, lots of extra job time.
- Two teams were coached and scheduled whenever possible.
- Game schedules increased over the first 10 years from eight games to 29 (both A and B teams).
- Ten-year records of each team were: A-squad (varsity) 78-59 and B-squad (JV) 55-17.
- Season budgets increased from \$192 to \$3,775.
- Officials were DGWS-rated basketball officials, mostly women. UNI faculty members Heidi Wieshaupt and Carol Phillips; University of Iowa physical education faculty; and June Courteau, an aspiring official from Minnesota, made up the core officiating team. A few local men sought the qualifying rating through the local DGWS officiating board and entered the pool of officials in the late '70s.
- Students chose UNI for their education and elected to play intercollegiate basketball because they loved to play and compete.

Central Michigan. With two losses at state, UNI finished the season with a .500 record, varsity at 10-10 and JV 8-1. Each year the JV players requested more games.

The interim between the '76-'77 and '77-'78 seasons brought to light the "R" and "S" words — recruitment and scholarships. In accordance with Title IX, the law and AIAW indicated scholarships must/could be granted by member institutions. During the '77-'78 year an "extensive study was done by an ad hoc committee", reporting results to President John Kamerick in April, 1978.

In the meantime, basketball went on as usual, recruiting players from the students who chose to attend UNI for its educational program alone. Attraction to other institutions offering basketball scholarships was likely beginning. A varsity schedule with 21 games provided diverse and ample competition. A 4-17 record indicated other teams were getting stronger. Another facility move brought UNI women's basketball to the Dome for practice and games.

Under AIAW regulations, the UNI WIAC (Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Committee) decided

the divisional status for the sports in the program. Golf, softball and volleyball would play in Division I, basketball and all other sports in the program would play in Division II. Budgets and proportions of athletic financial aid defined the three divisions. Title IX dictated the institution of athletic scholarships.

Athletic scholarship monies were allocated by President Kamerick in \$25,000 increments for a period of three years, beginning with the '78-'79 school year. Basketball received \$2,680 in the first increment. Coach-

es were given the opportunity to award them as they deemed appropriate under AIAW regulations. The first year, some scholarship monies were granted to returning varsity players. Recruitment with scholarships was left for the next UNI women's coach.



Kathy Shogren (no. 5) and Marcia Finn (no. 44) during a practice session in Women's Gym 214.



Pat Joachim (no. 24 shooting), no. 34 Deb Shay, no. 23 Marie Burman and no. 22 Diane Braun during a practice session in Women's Gym 214.



Helen Walker (no. 42), Jennie Diercks (no. 23) and Nancy Miller (no. 14) in a game in the West Gym.



Jo Moeller (no. 25) and Marcia Finn (no. 43) contesting a rebound during a game at the Price Lab Field House.



Pat Stockman takes the shot during a game at the Price Lab Field House. The Price Lab Field House was often used for games as scheduling events was an issue and it had seating capacity, although few came to watch the game.

The Williamson Years (1978-1980)

In 1978, Sandra Williamson was a graduate assistant at the University of Northern Colorado when Stan Sheriff offered her a job—teaching in the women's physical education department, serving as director of women's sports and as the head women's basketball coach.



Coach Sandra Williamson

Williamson recalled Sheriff saying they didn't have a place for the team to practice. "I told him we weren't going to play in the East Gym," the former coach said with her native Texas drawl. "I said we were going to practice and play in the Dome with the men."

The first day of practice, the team was on the court while the track team ran practice around the Dome. "There were no curtains or fencing around the court," Williamson remembered. "The balls kept going out on the floor. I told Stan we needed something to keep them from going on the track. The next day he had folding chairs set up all around the basketball floor."

Practice space wasn't the only thing missing from Williamson's job. She had no assistant coach, no recruits and very little money. Scholarship money had been allocated from financial aid the previous spring by President Kamerick.

All of the players during Williamson's first year were walk-ons. The core players were Nancy Winchip, Carmen Hernandez and Beth Andrieni, who Williamson recalls could shoot a three-pointer before it became part of the game. Pat Zalesky was also a big presence in the middle.

Williamson admits the first year especially wasn't stellar. "We had only a few wins. We were getting beat by Drake and Iowa, and even William Penn in their glory days. Everyone could beat us."

The second season Williamson set about acquiring an assistant. She didn't know many people in Cedar Falls, but did know Cathy Huffer, a police science student at Hawkeye Tech. Williamson approached Sheriff with her requirements. "I told Stan I wanted Cathy and he was going to pay her \$5,000 and I wanted her by 3 o'clock or he could come down to practice because he would have inherited the team!" Huffer showed up

at 2:30 asking Williamson what was going on. Williamson asked if Sheriff had given her a contract to which she replied yes and they both went to practice.

The coaches also hit the recruiting trail. "The first year was a shock because Iowa was still playing six-on-six basketball," Williamson remembered. "It was hard to figure out if any of these girls could play on a full court."

The second year Williamson says she and Huffer got smarter about their recruiting strategy, heading to Illinois where the five-on-five game was already being played. They landed several players from Illinois who joined Lisa Geske (who would become Lisa Bluder, the head women's coach at Drake and Iowa).

Williamson recalls fondly the road trips with her teams. "I think some of those kids just stayed out for the road trips. We didn't have any money so I'd drive a van and a trainer would drive another van. We'd leave in the morning, play, and then usually come home after the game. When we did stay overnight, half the team would end up in my room eating pizza and watching 'Dallas'."

After her second season, Sheriff called Williamson to his office. He knew she wanted to be an administrator and gave her the opportunity to step into that role and have J.D. Anderson take over the team. Williamson's final record in the two seasons was 7-40.

"I take a lot of that on my shoulders," Williamson admitted. "I didn't ever play basketball. I played volleyball. But you take what the job offers you and mine was to teach and coach. Later on, those women turned out to be a pretty good basketball team, with two of them going into the Hall of Fame."

"Our kids worked hard and never got down in the mouth when we couldn't win. As I look back over their lives, they all seem to be successful, well-rounded people. That speaks volumes."

J.D. Anderson Era (1980-1984)

J.D. Anderson had been coaching the Panther baseball team and served as an assistant under men's basketball coach Norm Stewart as well as having played basketball in college and the Army. Sheriff named him head coach of the women's basketball team.

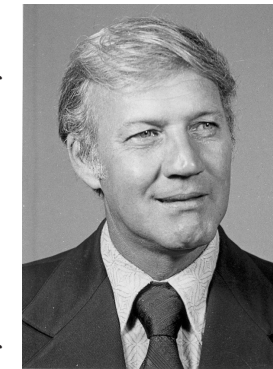
Anderson acquired nine returning players from Williamson's team and again held open tryouts for other

students interested in joining the squad. The *Northern Iowan* (Laurie Larson, Sept. 26, 1980) quoted Anderson saying, "Most of the women have been working out on their own which shows me they have interest in the program and in working hard. If they keep up this attitude, I think they'll go far."

The team finished Anderson's first season with a record of 18-10. The focus of the season was on the defensive side of the game. Sophomore Geske led the team in points scored with 369 with an average of 13.2. Deb Drenth led the team in rebounding with 224.

The 1981-82 record of 22-9 was the best in Panther history. The women were beaten in the first round of the AIAW State Tournament by St. Ambrose which made 31-of-38 free throws. However, the Panthers received a bid to the AIAW Region 6 Division II Tournament at Fargo, N. D. The Panthers defeated Northeast Missouri State 68-60. In the semi-finals, the women faced William Penn, the defending Division II national champions. The Panthers eventually lost 67-58, then beat Southwest Missouri State in the consolation round, 59-56, to claim third place in the region. The Panthers were led by junior Drenth with 443 points for an average of 14.8. Drenth also led the team in assists with 74. Sophomore Tami Schebler held the rebounding title with 208.

The 1982-83 season saw another transition with the program moving to Division I. The women finished 17-11 with five of those losses being by four points or less. Drenth and Geske both wrote their names in the



Coach J.D. Anderson

Deb Drenth, at the time she was playing basketball, was a goal setter striving to help the team by establishing records. She had a 13.1 point per game average. She is still one of the top five in career steals with 279.



UNI record books. Drenth achieved a career record 331 free throws made and free throws attempted with 449. She also set a record for steals in a season (84) and career steals (279). Geske set a record for rebounds in a game with 19 against Illinois-Chicago on Feb. 12, 1983.

In looking back at her time at UNI, Geske-Bluder remembered, "I learned many things (at UNI) about being a coach. Some of those things came from the basketball court, but several also came from my classes in the business school. I think that coaching at the University of Iowa requires a great deal of basketball expertise, but there are many things such as time management, organization, budgeting, personnel management, marketing and public relations that I learned from being a college student in the School of Business. Certainly, my love for the college game grew while I competed for the Panthers, and I also grew in my understanding of how to run a college program and what things that entailed."

The '83 season started as a "rebuilding year". Drenth and Geske had graduated with career stats that would eventually gain them inductions into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame. Only one starter, senior Schebler, returned with four other letter winners — sophomore Lisa Strub and seniors Lisa Laughlin, Gwen Ubben and Cindy Bowers. Anderson added two junior college transfers in Lynn Cuvelier, a Waterloo native who earned honorable mention all-American honors at North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) the previous season; and another Waterloo native, sophomore Lori Freshwater. (*Northern Iowan*, Gail McCombs, October 25, 1983)

The Panthers started the season with a huge loss against Missouri, 110-47. The team struggled all season, finishing 2-25. Anderson resigned as head coach at the end of the season.

The Maiden Years (1984-1989)

Kim Maiden was hired in 1984 after spending two years at Wayne State (MI), winning 32 games to 24 losses and finishing third in the Great Lakes Conference both years.

Coming to UNI, Maiden kept Terri Craft as an assistant from Anderson's staff along with one graduate assistant. Only four players returned from the previous

year. Lynn Cuvelier Hach, a 5-11 forward from Waterloo Central, was the only returning starter after averaging 10.4 points and 4.3 rebounds.

Mayden was very up front in saying Cuvelier Hach would "be the hub of our team". (*UNI Sports Information Women's Basketball Press Guide 1984-85*) Mayden also knew she would have to use freshmen Diane Roberts, Deanne Runge, Kim Smythe and Stephanie Miller. The team won five games that year.

Mayden added a second full-time assistant, Liz O'Brien, in 1985. The Panthers opened the season with eight new players. According to the *1986-87 Women's Basketball Press Guide*, the Panthers altered their lineup many times, yet despite these changes the Panthers compiled a 3-4 pre-Christmas record. Injuries began to pile on during conference play. Mayden lost her point guard, Erin Stoffregen, to a stress fracture along with starting center Tess Ira to a back injury and stress fracture.

The biggest win of the season came against third-place conference foe Eastern Illinois, 87-78 in OT. The injury bug then claimed Roberts who had been the leading scorer and rebounder. Anne Otten suffered a knee injury to miss the final five games. Freshman Kris Huffman avoided injury and started all 27 games. In the last game of the 1986 season she broke the record for assists held by future Hall of Famer Drenth. The team finished 9-18.

Hopes were high for the 1986-87 season. The previous year's injuries had allowed four freshmen precious starting experience. For the first time, Mayden would have an experienced team with a strong bench. Roberts held 10 individual records coming into the season and led the Panthers in scoring in 12-of-21 games the previous year before an ankle injury ended her season six games early. Sophomore Huffman came off a great year in which she was a finalist for Gateway Newcomer of the Year.

Unfortunately, the team didn't perform in the areas of rebounding and defense. The *1987-88 Women's Basketball Press Guide* says UNI gave up over 90 points



Coach Kim Mayden

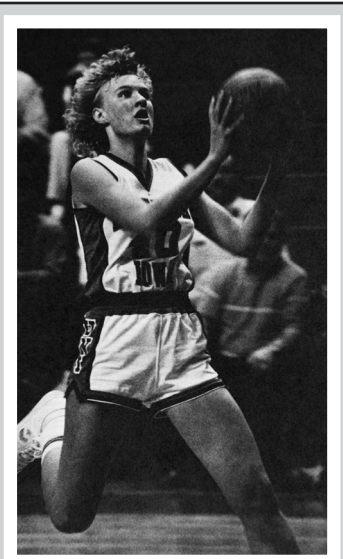
six times and under 75 only twice. The team won only six games against 20 losses.

Roberts had an excellent year after returning from her ankle injury. She led the team in rebounding (7.0/game), scoring (16.9 points/game) and was the team's high scorer in 14-of-26 games.

At the beginning of the 1987 season there was a new look to Mayden's staff. Craft and O'Brien were replaced by assistant coaches Jane McConnell and former Drake Bulldog star Mary Otten. With Roberts heading into her senior season along with many experienced underclassmen, Roberts was quoted as saying, "Now it's time for my fourth and final year, and I really want to leave on a positive note. I want our team to improve each game and work together." (*UNI Women's Basketball Press Guide 1987-88*)

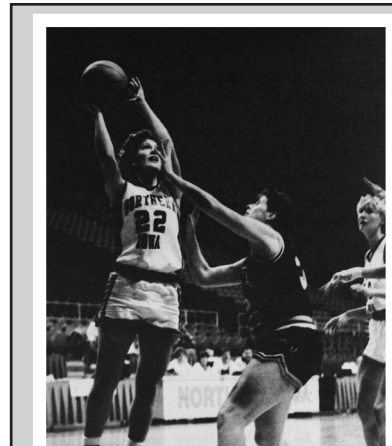
Roberts set several records that season, including three-point field goal percentage, career scoring (1,701), career field goals made (664) and career field goals attempted (1,552). She became the first Panther to be named All-Gateway Conference. The team posted a 9-17 record. Four of the wins came in the last six games of the season.

Those final wins along with a strong senior class gave Mayden hope for the 1988-89 campaign. Leading scorer Huffman returned for her senior year. Senior forwards Sandy Grabowski and Cindy Harms both showed flashes of greatness the prior year. Three additional talented athletes were expected to contribute—junior Molly Kelly at point guard and freshmen Loretha Mosley and Nicki Rohde, who Mayden believed were the best athletes on the team.



Diane Roberts was the first UNI Panther to be named to the All-Gateway Conference Team. Against Illinois State (3/1/1985), she scored 40 points, which leads the record book in points scored in a single game.

Injuries again hit the Panthers hard, leading to a 7-18 record and the departure of Mayden as head coach. Huffman wrote her name in the record books, leading the Gateway Conference in free throw percentage (88.1). Mosley set the assist record of 117 despite an early season injury. Mayden finished her tenure with a 36-96 record.



Kris Huffman was one of the leading scorers for the Panthers during her basketball career. She continues to sit in the top 10 with 1,294 career points.

The Lasswell Years (1989-1995)

In August of 1989, Terri Lasswell, an assistant coach at Kansas State, came to the UNI campus. After a morning meeting with Athletics Director Bob Bowsby, she was announced that same afternoon as the new UNI women's basketball coach.

In addition to the new head coach, three new assistants arrived in Cedar Falls—program assistant Cindy Johnson, Holly Huso, who served two years as a grad assistant with Coach Kay Yow at North Carolina State; and graduate assistant Annette Gonzales.

Lasswell had many challenges ahead of her with the still-fledgling program. She gave credit to Associate Athletics Director "Jersey" Jermier for keeping in touch with two recruits—Julie Street and Katie McFadden—the only two committed to play at UNI. There were several others who were partially recruited. Her schedule the coming year was only half done. Her office was a cubicle.



Coach Terri Lasswell

Lasswell commented in the *1989-90 Women's Basketball Press Guide* on rebuilding the program. "We have an immediate goal of finishing in the top half of the Gateway this season. But, generally, we want to be in every game and go to the wire in a competitive sense. "Everyone's long-term goal is to win a conference championship. And I want my players to experience what it's like to be in the NCAA Tournament. But one of our primary goals is to learn how to win. And to accomplish that, we need to win smaller battles along the way."

Coming from a major program like Kansas State, Lasswell was surprised how much was needed at UNI—simple things like a recruiting database which had been created by someone before her tenure at K-State. UNI was once again in a period of transition.

As a young coach, Lasswell was shocked at the steep learning curve. Not only was she building a staff and foundation in the office for success, she also saw her players struggling to learn to get into a position to be winners. She and her team set small goals not based purely on wins and losses, such as looking and acting like a Division I program, getting the right people in the right place. Lasswell emphasized "team" to everyone. She remembered looking around the locker room early in her first year telling her players, "These are the people who will have your back. They will be in your weddings."

Lasswell's first team won only two conference games and five overall for a 5-22 record. However, the Panthers made their mark on the record books, setting 15 individual and team records. Sophomore Stephanie Davis wrote her name in the records for best field goal percentage, shooting nine-for-nine against Creighton. Kelly set several records, including three-point field goals made with 73 and attempted, 159, which ranked her in the top 15 nationally for most of the season.

The Panthers took out a lot of frustration against non-conference Creighton, beating the Blue Jays 107-80.

The 1990-91 season resembled a roller coaster ride. The Panthers opened with a win over Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the first season-opening win since 1986. Entering conference play they had a 3-6 record. In three conference losses, the Panthers battled from double-digit deficits to lose close games.

The Panthers swept their series against Wichita State, the first sweep of any team since the 1988-89 season. The team lost a hard-fought game against Eastern Illinois on late free throws. The final game of the season was a crushing last-second loss to Western Illinois, 69-67.

Mosley tied Geske-Bluder's school record with 19 rebounds against Drake. She also tied Bluder's record for career points with 1,036, placing them sixth all time. She finished with 425 career assists. The Panthers finished the season 6-21.

In 1991-92 three starters returned, including leading scorer Jill Jameson and seniors Karen Amrhein and Davis. Lasswell also had a strong sophomore class with Street and McFadden. Injuries and inconsistencies led the Panthers to a 4-23 record.

Lasswell remembers that a number of key players had roles in these years. McFadden and Street were the cornerstones for the young team. Street played her freshman year then decided she didn't want to play basketball. During that year off, she would always run the track in the Dome during basketball practice. In 1991, she came to the coach admitting she wanted to be a part of the team again. Lasswell saw this as a turning point. McFadden also started as a young player before suffering a knee injury that forced her to sit out a year. Davis was a track athlete at the University of Iowa who desired to play basketball and transferred to UNI. She made the starting lineup after walking onto the team. She averaged nine points and 4.6 rebounds her first year.

In 1992, UNI celebrated 25 years of women's basketball along with the merger of the Gateway Conference into the Missouri Valley Conference and Lasswell's deepest and most experienced team returned all five starters and nine letter winners.

The team did improve in many areas, including the final record of 10-17, good enough for its first-ever trip to the conference postseason tournament. UNI was 3-3 with one pre-conference game remaining against Iowa State. The Panthers beat the short-handed seven-player Cyclone team 68-50 to post a 4-3 mark heading into Valley competition.

The Panthers lost close games in the final two minutes to Illinois State and Bradley. After winning two of the next three games, the Panthers faced new challenges. Two players were suspended for the Wichi-

ta State game for violating team rules. Two weeks later, Street's cousin, Iowa basketball player Chris Street, was killed. After the funeral, Street returned to the team to endure a long-fought four overtime loss to Drake, 112-106. The Panthers would battle the Bulldogs later in another overtime loss, as well as a two-point heart-breaker to future Big Eight champion Kansas.

Lasswell recalled viewing these "near misses" as progress. She believed the 1992-93 season to be a turning point.

The 1993-94 season opened with confidence built on the previous season along with four seniors, but resulted in a 6-20 record. Street finished her career eighth in overall scoring with 1,016 points and third on the all-time rebounding list with 700. She was the MVC rebounding champion her senior year.

The 1994-95 season record of 4-22 resulted in Lasswell's resignation.

The DiCecco Era (1995-2007)

Having spent several years at conference-rival Creighton, Tony DiCecco thought he knew UNI basketball. Upon his arrival as head coach in 1995 after 12 consecutive losing seasons for the Panthers, he had to find ways to measure success other than the scoreboard. "We couldn't concentrate on wins and losses or the score," the coach remembered. "It was too demoralizing. We set other goals—off-season training, practices, attitudes, commitment and work ethic."

DiCecco's staff included Colleen Heimstead who stayed on from the previous staff and Tanya Warren, a graduate of Des Moines Lincoln High School and a past Kodak All-American at Creighton.

His first team started out 0-11. The night of the 12th game, DiCecco recalled everyone was on the court ready to begin. "There were about 52 people in the Dome including fans, players and coaches, and a blizzard was raging outside." The basketball court was covered in water from condensation and the leaking roof. The Dome staff and coaches conferred with the



Coach Tony DiCecco

officials and decided to move the game to the Physical Education Center. It was the team's first win.

Despite the rough start, the team won five of its final eight games which propelled it into the conference tournament. The bad news was the no. eight seed Panthers had to go up against first-seed Southwest Missouri State. The Lady Bears would beat the Panthers 83-67 and go on to win the tournament and secure the NCAA bid.

Four Panthers were recognized on the all-conference team as honorable mentions—junior guard Karen Fenske, junior forward Kate Lawler, sophomore forward Jen Steffens and junior guard Kelley Westhoff. Prior to the tournament, freshman guard Erin Fox achieved MVC Player of the Week honors for her performance against Drake (20 points) and Creighton (19 points).

"Making the tournament was a major step," DiCecco recalled. "It was our first really good feeling. We were on the right foot."

Another key component in the rebuilding process was the commitment from Jim Coloff at KCNZ Radio. DiCecco recalled, "We had very little exposure for our games before Jim came on board." The first year several Panther home games were broadcast. The following years brought a few road-game broadcasts and the live airing of the weekly Tony D show. All helped build awareness and support in the Cedar Valley.

In his second year, DiCecco's team had a lot of experience and would build off of its late season success from the previous year.

The team started strong with a 6-4 pre-conference record, but five straight losses—three of which were by five points or less—dampened any hopes of repeating the 1995-96 season performance. Injuries took a huge toll on the team with key players missing a combined total of 44 games, including injuries to two starters—Steffens and leading scorer Fox. Allison Starr earned all-freshman team honors after she stepped in for injured teammates. Westhoff was named honorable mention all-conference. Six Panthers made the academic all-conference team with honorable mention honors.

DiCecco was quoted, "After the injuries, it seemed as if we were fighting an uphill battle. I was proud of how our players reacted to the adversity. Our young players got some opportunities to show what

they have and I think that will help us in the long run." (1997-98 Women's Basketball Press Guide)

The 1997-98 season brought several breakthroughs for the Panthers. It was the first season they finished above .500 since 1983 with a 14-13 record and a seventh-place finish in the conference. Several other accomplishments were achieved, including the eight wins in conference play—the most since joining the Missouri Valley – and five wins in the first six games, which marked the best since the '82-'83 season. The Panthers made their second appearance in the MVC tournament, again facing Southwest Missouri State.

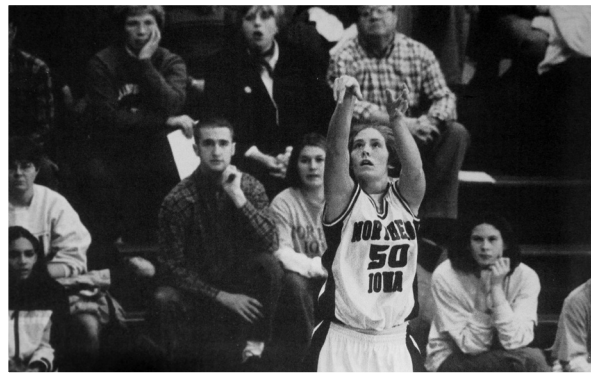
DiCecco saw the eventual loss to SMS as an opportunity on which to build. In the 1998-99 Press Guide he stated, "We had the opportunity to play SMS in front of a large crowd and that can only help us down the road. We gained a lot of experience and maturity by battling SMS for a major part of the game."

At the end of the season, UNI led the Valley in rebounding. Sophomore Starr was named first team all-MVC and to the All-Defensive Team. Nadine Brandt earned a spot on the All-Freshman Team. Senior Steffens finished her final season third in the Valley in rebounding with a career-best 15 against Drake on Dec. 30, 1997.

The Panthers continued to build on experience and their success in 1998-99. The team finished with an impressive 19-8 record for a third-place finish in the Valley. Brandt set records for consecutive free throws (30) and career three-pointers (113). Despite their strong year, the Panthers suffered a disappointing first-round loss in the conference tournament to Indiana State in overtime, 61-58.

Starr earned her second spot on the all-MVC team and All-Defensive Team with Barb Bennett earning honorable mention all-conference. DiCecco was runner up for Coach of the Year in the Valley. The Panthers broke attendance records, topping the 15,000 total attendance mark. They experienced their first ever sellout crowd of 2,225 in the West Gym against no. 16 Iowa State on Dec. 20, 1998. They followed that number a little over a month later with an attendance of 1,922 against SMS on Jan. 30, 1999. Overall average attendance grew from 267 prior to DiCecco's arrival to 1,155 during the 1998-99 season.

The success of the 1998-99 season earned the Panthers a prestigious invite to the 1999 Pre-Season



Allison Starr was always the player the opponents had to contend with. Her aggressive play was one of the reasons for Panther success. Holding a 13.5 point average, she finished her career with 1,463 points.

Women's NIT, one of 16 teams. UNI faced Oklahoma State in the first round, losing 73-55. It was picked fourth in the MVC preseason poll, the highest spot it ever achieved.

Once again, injuries took a toll, especially a season-ending torn ACL injury to sophomore center Abbi Schutte, along with serious injuries to Brandt, Ky Petersen and Katie Sorrell. Despite the injuries, the Panthers, with only eight players dressing at the end of regular season, had wins over conference leaders Wichita State (83-80 in overtime, Feb. 25, 2000) and SMS (75-67, Feb. 27, 2000). The SMS win marked the first win over the Lady Bears since 1988.

The Panthers finished the season 15-13, in fifth place in the conference and achieved their first ever win in the Valley tournament over Wichita State.

Starr made her third consecutive appearance on the all-conference and the All-Defensive teams in addition to being named the MVC Defensive Player of the Year. She also earned a spot on the MVC All-Academic Team.

2000 brought some new faces to DiCecco's staff. Brad Nelson replaced Heimstead, who moved to Compliance/Life Skills Coordinator for the Athletic Department. Former Panther stand-out Starr also joined the staff as an assistant.

The Panthers defeated 24th-ranked Illinois 74-70 and gained their first-ever votes in the Top 25. The highlight of the regular season was a decisive victory over no. 18 SMS, which would go on to the Final Four. The Panthers finished the season 18-11 and in

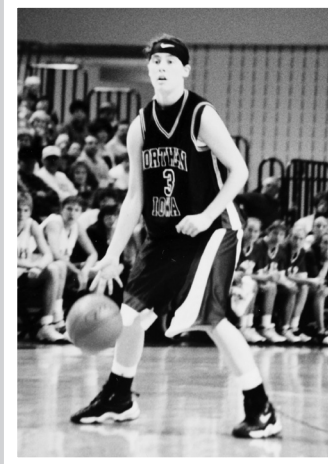
third place in the conference. They defeated Wichita State in their first MVC conference game before falling to SMS.

The Panthers' season wasn't over yet. They received their first-ever post season bid to the Women's NIT. Facing DePaul on its home court, the Panthers put up a great battle before falling 76-73 in overtime.

DiCecco became UNI's all-time winningest coach in just his sixth season. Kary Dawson and Schutte were named first team all-MVC, Swisher was named to the All-Freshman Team and Nicki Spettel made the All-Defensive Team for the second straight year.

The 2001-02 season brought some interesting challenges to the Panthers, leading off with 13 straight road games. They won the Skyhawk Classic at Tennessee-Martin then headed to San Juan, Puerto Rico for the San Juan Shootout and some fun in the sun. After suffering a tough loss against SMS at Springfield on a buzzer beater, 56-55, the Panthers finally came home January 4 with a 5-6 record. They then won three straight. A landmark-win came on Jan. 19, 2002 in Des Moines when the Panthers beat Drake on its home court for the first time. Swisher led the team with 20 points. Throughout the season, senior Schutte achieved four double doubles and set a school record for career field goal percentage (.560, 1997-2002).

The Panthers finished with a 14-16 fourth-place finish in the Valley for their fourth consecutive finish in the top half of the conference. They suffered a disappointing loss to Evansville, 70-69, at the Valley Tournament. Sophomore Swisher was named first team all-conference with teammate Schutte earning honorable mention. Four Panthers were named to the MVC Schol-



Like Panthers before her, Kary Dawson was the "go to" player who could make things happen on the hard court. She ranks in the top five for 3-point field goals attempted (451) and made (151).

The Panther "Family"

Tony DiCecco and his staff and players strove to become a presence in the Cedar Valley community off the court. The players and coaches visited elementary schools talking to students about the importance of education. The Panthers also participated in the MVC reading programs in the schools.

DiCecco's teams took the "family" relationship to a more personal level with one young lady. Nick Evens remembers "as if it was yesterday" how his daughter, Kaitlyn, became a part of the Panther team. The Evens family, Nick and his wife, Kelly, and their two daughters, were at a local restaurant when then-assistant coach Tanya Warren and a few players sat at a table next to them.

"Tanya leaned over and began talking to Kaitlyn, asking how old she was. Kaitlyn told her she was in first grade. Tanya said that was too bad because she needed to be in second grade to be a ball girl, but maybe they could figure something out," recalled Evens. "Tanya remembered Kaitlyn and the next season she got a personal letter inviting her to be a ball girl."

Evens said from that point on the whole family was a part of the Panther family. "We would go early to the games and visit with the coaches and players. We always sat with the other parents and got to be very close, especially with the parents of the players from Cedar Falls."

On July 27, 2000, Kaitlyn was diagnosed with brain cancer. Evens said the first two people who contacted them were Bobbie Petersen, UNI volleyball coach, and Warren. Kaitlyn underwent surgery on July 29 and received numerous emails, cards, autographed shirts and other gifts from the basketball team. "The first photos we sent from Mayo, our first update to the world, Kaitlyn was wearing a Panther women's basketball t-shirt and you could see in the picture Tanya Warren's autograph on the shoulder," Evens remembered.

The team embraced Kaitlyn and her family even more. DiCecco invited the family to sit behind the bench at a December, 2000 game against Iowa State. "Kaitlyn had been very sick all day," recalled Evens, "but at about 2 p.m. she got out of bed and said 'We're going to that game!' The first person we met when we arrived was



Panthers Katie Miller, Alex Cook, Emily Berry and Amy Swisher with Kaitlyn Evens. (Photo courtesy of Nick & Kelly Evens.)

Bill Fennelly, the Iowa State coach, who Tony brought over. He was very nice and sat and talked to us."

The "Cedar Falls Pipeline" players—Emily Berry, Amy Swisher and Alex Cook—took special interest in Kaitlyn. "They had attended Lincoln Elementary where Kaitlyn went and would call the school and go have lunch with her," Evens said.

One special game Evens remembered was the Panthers versus no. 18 Southwest Missouri State and all-American Jackie Stiles. The Panthers were not expected to win. "We got to the game and Tony waved Kaitlyn down to the bench. She got to be an honorary manager—she'd hand the towels to the players and do whatever the regular managers told her to do. At halftime I was expecting her to come back to our seats but one of the players grabbed her hand and started to the locker room! Tony smiled and signaled it was okay. She told us later that she had made a comment to the players that got them all giggling before the coaches came in. Tony was really amped, it was an intense game. When I asked her later about being in the locker room she said 'Coach said a few cuss words!'" UNI went on to win 99-80.

Evens remembers how much those players and coaches meant to Kaitlyn and their family. "To us, they weren't just players and coaches. It wasn't just about basketball." DiCecco also said the Evens' don't realize how much Kaitlyn meant to the team and to him.

Kaitlyn lost her battle with cancer but still holds a special place in the hearts of many Panthers.

ar Athlete Team -- Kara Opp (second team), Schutte (second team), Brandt (honorable mention), and Katie Miller (honorable mention).

Warren left the Panthers for an assistant coaching position at Missouri. Former Panther Westhoff rejoined the staff as full-time assistant.

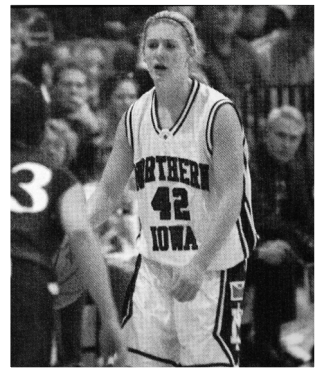
More landmarks were achieved in the 2002-03 season. The Panthers took on in-state rival Iowa for the first time since 1983. Miller scored her 1,000th career point against no. 12 Minnesota in a hard-fought 69-62 loss. Swisher achieved the feat the same season against Drake.

One game that stands out in DiCecco's memory was a special milestone for him. "It was the night of my 100th win. The West Gym was packed. There were little kids sitting all around the balcony with their feet hanging down. The atmosphere that night—that was special." The Panthers took on 24th-ranked Iowa State. The official attendance was 1,691. Emily Berry scored six-of-13 from the three-point line. UNI upset the Cyclones 65-58 for its coach's 100th career win.

Six straight wins at the end of the season moved the Panthers from sixth place in the Valley to third. Miller suffered an ankle injury against Drake. Freshman Sara Larsen came in for a career-high 33 minutes. Swisher scored 26 points and UNI won, 53-50. The Panthers also celebrated an upset win over Creighton, 63-55.

In the Valley Tournament, the Panthers were down by 10 points to sixth seed Bradley when Swisher took over the game. She scored 27 of her 36 points in the second half, going 14-of-23 from the field and five-of-nine from three-point range. Her effort tied her for fourth place in the Valley for most points scored in a game. UNI won 72-62.

In the second game of the tournament, UNI fell to no. 2 Indiana State, 83-54. Its efforts for the year



Katie Miller set the mark for others to follow scoring that elusive 1,000th point. In the end, she finished her career with 1,343 points.

Amy Swisher topped the record book with 1,851 career points. She was the consummate offensive player, always looking to take the ball to the hoop scoring 34 points against Illinois State (2/7/2003) and 36 points against Bradley one month later.



were rewarded with an invite to the Women's NIT to play Baylor. Berry was out with a foot injury but Swisher again had a good game with 21 points. The score was back and forth throughout with Baylor winning on a last-second shot (58-56), knocking the Panthers out of the tournament.

Several Panthers received acknowledgement, including first team all-conference selections Swisher, Cook and Miller. Miller was named Verizon First Team Academic All-District, to the MVC Scholar Athlete first team and third team academic all-American. Cook was also named to the All-Defense Team. Swisher made the All-MVC Tournament team.

Starting the 2003-04 campaign, DiCecco looked to develop what he called his "core four"—seniors Swisher and Opp and juniors Berry and Cook.

Swisher, Berry and Cook were all products of Cedar Falls High School and had played together since early childhood. In addition, Swisher had managed Type 1 diabetes with which she was diagnosed at age 11. As a freshman, she made the decision, along with her parents, to begin using an insulin pump which monitored her blood sugar levels and delivered insulin through a catheter-type port in her side. Swisher credited Panther assistant coach Starr whose undergraduate degree was in nutrition. Starr assisted Swisher in balancing her diet. (*Waterloo Courier, Sean Hylton, Feb. 15, 2001*) Swisher also received a great deal of support from her head coach who himself battled diabetes. By the end of her senior year, Swisher would become UNI's all-time leading scorer.

Injuries again diminished the Panther squad to only nine players by the end of the season. That didn't keep the seventh-seeded Panthers from upsetting number two-seed Creighton in the Valley Tournament,

71-65. The Panthers finished their season with a loss to Drake the next day to close out with a record of 12-17 overall. Swisher and Cook made the all-conference first team with Jessie Biggs named to the All-Freshman Team. Cook also made the All-Defensive Team.

The biggest challenge for the 2004-05 squad was how to fill the shoes of Swisher. Because of injuries to key players the previous year, DiCecco was hopeful that the experience of the younger players would help this team. With only two seniors in Berry and Cook, the team would need the underclassmen to step up. So, under the leadership of Berry and Cook, the Panthers recorded their best-ever Missouri Valley Conference record with a mark of 13-5 and a second-place finish. The team's 20-11 overall record was the first time the team had reached the 20-win mark since joining the Division I ranks. The Panthers posted an impressive home record of 11-2 and won eight of their last 10 games heading to the MVC Tournament.

UNI tied an MVC Tournament record with 11 blocked shots, eight coming from Cassie Hager, to defeat Evansville 58-47 in the quarterfinals. The Panthers were upset the following day by no. eight seed Illinois State which would go on to win the tournament.

DiCecco was quoted after the season, saying, "It (the season) has to be one of the most enjoyable seasons I have ever had in my 34 years of coaching, not only from a win-loss record, but because of the opportunity to deal with the people that I dealt with, the commitment that our kids made and how well our team got along. There is no possible way we would have had a year like this if those things had not fallen into place." (*UNI Women's Basketball Press Guide 2005-06, pg. 42*) DiCecco was honored as the Rawlings Missouri Valley Conference Coach of the Year.



Emily Berry finished her career as UNI's leading 3-point shot attempter with 563 with 200 made.

Alex Cook concluded her career with 44 double doubles. She became the first Panther to ever score 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds, a feat accomplished by only three other women in Missouri Valley history.



Junior Hager also got in on the record writing with a mark of eight blocks in a game, 135 blocks in a season and 209 career blocks.

Cook and Hager earned first team all-conference as well as All-Defensive Team honors. Hager was also named to the State Farm All-Tournament Team.

Expecting to build on the previous season's success, the Panthers started the 2005-06 season winning six of their first eight games. After a season-opening loss to Valparaiso, DiCecco was pleased with how his team responded. The Panthers came back to beat Colorado and Illinois on the road. DiCecco was quoted saying, "I think that was the turning point of our season. Our kids' response after the Valparaiso game was just amazing. We realized we had to be more competitive, a stronger team." (*UNI Women's Basketball Press Guide 2006-07 pg. 42*)

The Panthers ended their regular season second in the Valley. In the process, UNI snapped Wichita State's seven-game winning streak with a 63-56 victory in Wichita and followed that performance with its first road win in 20 years over Missouri State, 64-47. The Panthers would defeat both teams again in the West Gym.

UNI defeated Illinois State in its first game in the MVC Tournament but Missouri State got revenge on its home court, defeating the Panthers 62-59 before going on to win the tournament title. Once again the Panthers were honored for their efforts with an invitation to the Women's NIT. They drew Kansas as their first round opponent and lost a hard-fought game 59-49.

Hager was named to the MVC first team with King named to the second team. Hager also was named to the all-tournament team and honored as Defensive

Cassie Hager set a Missouri Valley Conference record for shots blocked with 337. DiCecco praised her career as, "one of the best coaching stories I have had in my 35 years." (2006-07 UNI Women's Basketball Press Book)



Tara King was one player her opponents didn't want to send to the free throw line. She finished her playing days with a .845 free throw percentage, which set the bar very high for those who would follow.



A New Home

While many student-athletes and fans have a fond spot in their hearts for the UNI-Dome, few can deny it was a less than perfect venue for basketball. In his early years as head coach, Tony DiCecco made the decision to move the women's games back to the West Gym. It had been a successful home for the volleyball team. Perhaps it would benefit the women's basketball team as well. He was quoted saying, "I really feel getting to the West Gym was as big a part as anything in changing the program. Once we moved here, a lot of positive things began to happen for us." (Northern Iowan, Andres Arispe, 2/28/06, pg. 15)

Still, the dream of a state-of-the-art arena was many years away. DiCecco recalls, "The dream and concept of a basketball arena was brought to my attention by Eldon (Miller). Almost every day he would stop in my office when we both had offices in the Dome and he would say, 'Tony, someday we will have an amazing facility to play in and it will be first class!' My only regret was he never got to coach in the building as a UNI coach."

After much planning and pounding the pavement, the dream finally came true in the fall of 2007.

DiCecco shared the emotions he felt coaching his first women's basketball game in the McLeod. "I had feelings very different than I think anyone else at the time. I had just had the biggest scare of my life with my heart condition, and I knew I was very lucky to even be alive. The time I spent recovering I thought a lot about the 'what ifs'. I thanked God every day that I had the oppor-

tunity to make a huge dream of mine come true. And to top it all off, I was getting the chance to open the McLeod playing against my best friend (Bill Fennelly) at Iowa State. The rush I had going into that game was more than anyone will ever know."

Jessie Biggs recalled the excitement that led up to that first game. "The McLeod Center was a dream in the planning stages when I was being recruited. We knew that for UNI to take things to the next level a facility such as this was needed. We were all pretty pumped to finally be playing in that environment. I remember our first game in the McLeod during the National Anthem, not being able to stand still and getting goose bumps as they called my name for the starting line-up."



Jessie Biggs was always ready to execute her offensive posture and her solid defensive play.

Player of the Year. The Panthers finished the 2005-06 season with a record of 19-11.

In the summer of 2006, DiCecco was scheduled for a routine procedure to put in a heart stent. Instead, the coach underwent quadruple bypass surgery. It was a life-changing shock. "I had no idea I was at risk for a heart attack," he recalled.

DiCecco was quoted in the Sept. 1, 2006 Northern Iowan (Frank Tarasi), saying he was "100 percent committed to coming back and leading the team". The coach did return to lead the Panthers and see the dream of the McLeod Center become a reality. The Panthers opened against Iowa State on a busy four-day celebration for their new home. King scored 38 points to help establish a lead over the Cyclones much of the game before falling in overtime 80-74.

A few weeks later the Panthers faced their biggest challenge in the school's history when they hosted no. 1 power house and defending national champion Maryland. The Lady Terrapins came into the game with a perfect 10-0 record on a 17-game winning streak dating back to the previous NCAA Tournament. Maryland proved too tough for the Panthers who lost a lopsided game 77-33. DiCecco said after the game, "Maryland is as good as people say they are. I don't think we were intimidated, and we came out hard and battled and scrapped but our shots weren't falling and it just started to snowball on us." (The Northern Iowan, Frank Tarasi, Dec. 8, 2006, pg. 15)

The Panthers went on a seven-game winning streak, including a win in Iowa City over the Hawkeyes. The 83-62 win featured 14 made three-pointers by the Panthers, a school record. It was also the first win for UNI at Carver-Hawkeye Arena since 1975.

The Panthers also celebrated their first-ever sweep of the Creighton-Drake road trip in January and went on to defeat both teams at home in February. They headed into the Valley Tournament with a 17-12 record before falling to Evansville, 58-57, in their first game.

Senior King earned first team all-conference honors and set a record for most games played as a Panther. Senior Biggs was chosen second team all-conference and entered UNI's 1,000- point club during the year.

On Monday, March 19, 2007 at the weekly press luncheon, DiCecco announced his resignation. Saying the decision was the most difficult he had ever made,

he said that while his health was a factor, he also took into consideration what was best for the school and the program. (Northern Iowan, Frank Tarasi, March 23, 2007, pg. 19) He left coaching with a UNI record of 183-161 with three appearances in the Women's NIT.

Westhoff Jacobs, a former player and assistant under DiCecco, believes his hiring was a major turning point for the program. "There is no question in my mind that he was absolutely the perfect fit for us and what this program needed. He was not looking to make this a stepping stone for a bigger and better job. He was going to stick it out for the long run. He was truly invested in making this program better.

"That staff came in and changed the program in so many ways beyond just the x's and o's. They instilled a sense of pride in the program. Everyone around the program would see that the culture was changing. Because of Tony and Tanya and the rest of the staff, they were able to bring in some talented athletes that may have not given UNI a look if it was not for their vision of where the program was headed. Players like Allison Starr, Amy Swisher, Katie Miller and Alex Cook, who all took a chance on UNI and believed in Tony D's vision of where this program would go."

Starr Pohlman echoed Jacobs. "I give a lot of credit to Tony and what he did in the Cedar Falls community and what he did for the women's basketball program. His legacy is one that should not be quickly forgotten."

DiCecco said he doesn't remember a lot of details about many of the games. "I remember more of the people, the players who were involved and our involvement in the community.

"I look at the transformation over those 12 years, where the program was in 1995 and where we were in 2007. I'm most proud of all the people who were a part of it—Allison Starr, Amy Swisher, Nicki Spettel, so many others, who came in with an attitude of 'We're going to make a difference.' That I'll remember more than the games."

Building on the Past—Tanya Warren (2007-Present)

When Warren interviewed for the head coaching position at UNI, she talked about playing hard and

Success in the Classroom

The theme "Students First" is taken seriously at Northern Iowa. The women's basketball athletes are great examples of this motto. Under Tony DiCecco, the women's basketball student-athletes consistently achieved among the highest cumulative grade point averages (GPAs) in the Athletics Department. He had 29 players named to the MVC Academic All-Conference team during his 12 years as head coach.

In addition, both DiCecco's and Tanya Warren's teams have been ranked in the top 10 nationally of all Division I schools for highest grade point averages. The highest ranking was achieved in 2006-07 with a second-in-the-nation. In 2007-08, UNI ranked sixth in the nation and seventh in 2008-09. Warren's 2010-11 record-breaking team also featured four players with GPAs of 4.0 and two others with a GPA of 3.9.

thinking like a champion. In her third year, her Panthers won the MVC Tournament and made their first appearance in the NCAA "Big Dance."

Warren said it was an easy decision to come back to UNI after serving as an assistant to DiCecco (1995-2001). "I have so much respect and admiration for Tony as a person. I couldn't think of a better opportunity than to coach at one of the four (Division I) schools in my home state and continue the work he started."



Coach Tanya Warren

Warren also felt blessed to have her family support. "It's like when I was playing in college (at Creighton). I would always look into the stands to see where my parents were sitting. I do the same thing every game when I come out of the tunnel into the McLeod Center and they are still there."

Warren admitted her first year was at times overwhelming with so many different expectations and hats to wear outside of just coaching. She credits strong friends and mentors Bobbie Petersen (UNI volleyball head coach) and her former coach, now Creighton Athletics Director Bruce Rasmussen, for helping her to prioritize.

Because she came on board late in the previous season, Warren spent the first year getting to know her team comprised of mostly freshmen and sophomores. She gives much credit to Tracy Ollendieck, the lone senior, for the way she embraced the new staff and her role as leader.

The Panthers battled in many close games and won their first round game in the MVC Tournament, which was held at a neutral site (St. Charles, Mo.) for the first time. The Panthers fell in the second round to Evansville to finish the season 13-18.

Jacqui Kalin was named to the all-conference second team and earned the MVC Freshman of the Year award.

The 2008-09 season began with a strong foundation of players returning despite no seniors. The Panthers returned their top three scorers and five players who started 18 or more games the previous year.

Injuries played a major role in what became an up and down season. The Panthers fought hard against a talented Drake team in the MVC Tournament before falling 68-57. Their final record was 11-19. Junior transfer Kim Wypiszynski earned recognition as the MVC Newcomer of the Year. Freshman K. K. Armstrong made the All-Freshman Team.

Warren's third year, 2009-10, saw the Panthers return their entire starting lineup, 13 letter winners and 96 percent of their offense from the previous season. (*UNI Women's Basketball Press Guide 2009-10, pg. 16*) Kalin was back from an injury the previous year which gave Armstrong the opportunity to play more than 25 minutes per game. The Panthers started out with four straight losses before winning the next four-of-five games. They were up and down to start



K.K. Armstrong may have been the shortest player on the floor, but with speed and determination, she was quite often the one who got the rebound.

MVC play but went on a streak of six straight wins in late January and February.

Warren admitted she and the team had been too focused on the end goal and not enjoying the journey. "Halfway through the season I met with them and said we were going to play our best each game and enjoy every game." The Panthers went into the MVC Tournament with a conference record of 10-8. However, the loss to Missouri State on March 4 would be their last MVC loss of that season.

Heading to St. Charles, the Panthers faced Bradley in their first game of the MVC Tournament. The Panthers won handily, 70-50. The next game featured the Redbirds of Illinois State. The Panthers won a hard-fought battle 61-59. UNI was in the championship game for the first time in history, facing Warren's alma mater, Creighton. The under-ranked Panthers were down late in the game when Lizzie Boeck scored the game's final nine points, including two free throws with 7.1 seconds left to upset the Blue Jays 54-53 and win the automatic NCAA Tournament berth. Boeck's efforts earned her Most Outstanding Player of the tournament. Teammate Kalin was named first team all-conference.



Lizzie Boeck was a dominating player in the paint.

The Panthers' first-ever trip to the NCAA pitted them against highly-seeded Nebraska. A tough loss (83-44) did not diminish the obvious growth the team had experienced under Warren's leadership.

The Panthers were eager to build on their taste of success in the 2010-11 season. Warren again told the team to enjoy the journey. "We'd celebrate till midnight or be disappointed till midnight, but only look at one game at a time, one day at a time."

The Panthers gained the attention and respect of the Missouri Valley, being chosen as the no. two team in the conference going into the season. The ranking proved to be one too low.



The Panthers celebrate their MVC Championship. (No. 20, Lizzie Boeck; no. 10 Jacqui Kalin; no. 44 Erin Brocka; no. 49 Mercedes Morgan)

The historic wild-ride season of 2010-11 was best recapped in the *University of Northern Iowa 2010-11 Season in Review* publication from UNI Media Relations. "The University of Northern Iowa women's basketball team followed its history-making 2009-10 season with yet another season for the record books. After going to the NCAA Tournament for the first time last season, the Panthers repeated that feat and also tacked on the school's first ever regular-season Missouri Valley Conference Championship.

"Led by MVC Coach of the Year Tanya Warren, the Panthers accumulated a school-record 27 wins, posted a 17-1 record in MVC play and won the league by five games. Along the way, UNI strung together a 19-game win streak, the longest in program history.

"The 2010-11 season was just the third 20-win season in program history and the Panthers' 17 league



Jacqui Kalin had to endure an injury-laden career, but she never gave up and completed her eligibility while garnering an undergraduate degree and graduate degrees.

wins were the most in program history. UNI proved to be road warriors, winning a school-record 11 true road games.

“UNI proved that defense wins championships with a stifling D that allowed just 50.5 points per game in conference action. UNI held a 19.2 scoring margin against Valley opponents, ranking tops in the league.”

After winning the regular-season MVC title, the Panthers went on to defend their tournament title, defeating Bradley 87-57, Wichita State 61-44 and Missouri State 69-41.

Coming into the NCAA Tournament as a no. 13-seed, the Panthers drew fourth-seed Michigan State. Battling back from a 14-point second-half deficit, time ran out on the Panthers' upset bid with a final score of 69-66.

The 2010-11 Panthers rewrote the record books with their domination of the Valley. Here are just some of the remarkable accomplishments: (*University of Northern Iowa 2010-11 Season in Review, UNI Media Relations*)

- UNI became the third program ever to win back-to-back MVC Tournament championships and the first since 2004.
- The Panthers entered the NCAA Tournament with the nation's sixth-longest winning streak of 19 games.
- UNI won the regular season title for the first time in school history with a 17-1 MVC mark.
- UNI ended the season with an RPI of 41, the best in school history. The next highest RPI ever achieved was 78 (1998-99).
- UNI earned 19 votes in the March 14 WBCA Coaches' Top 25 poll, ranking 27th nationally. UNI finished seventh in the Collegelinsider.com Mid-Major poll.
- UNI's NCAA Tournament game was the 127th career game for senior Lizzie Boeck, giving her more games played than any player in Panther history.
- Jacqui Kalin was named the Jackie Stiles MVC Player of the Year—the first Panther to ever win the award.
- Lizzie Boeck and Jacqui Kalin were selected first team All-Missouri Valley Conference. Erin Brocka earned a spot on the MVC All-Defensive Team.
- Panther coach Tanya Warren was named MVC Coach of the Year.

- Jacqui Kalin was named MVC Tournament MVP. Lizzie Boeck and K. K. Armstrong were named to the All-Tournament Team.
- Jacqui Kalin was named MVP of the 2011 MVC Scholar Athlete Team. She led UNI with 15.1 points per game and graduated in December 2010 with a degree in Exercise Science with a 4.0 GPA. Lizzie Boeck was named to the MVC Scholar Athlete first team and Erin Brocka received honorable mention.



Coach of the Year Tanya Warren cuts down the net after winning the 2011 MVC Tournament.

The Future

On a winter evening in 2011, Lasswell sat in the McLeod Center watching the nets being cut down as the Panthers clinched the Missouri Valley Conference regular season title. “I thought back 22 years. These women were the same kind of kids I had. The vision that was in my head as a 33-year-old coach was finally being realized. It was a defining moment for Northern Iowa basketball, and I was so proud even though it took many years,” she recalled. “We all had a piece of doing something to arrive at this point. The history is different for everyone—some have good memories, some not as good an experience. My hope is everyone associated with this program can find a moment for them personally, where they are now, that they were touched in some way that influenced their life.”

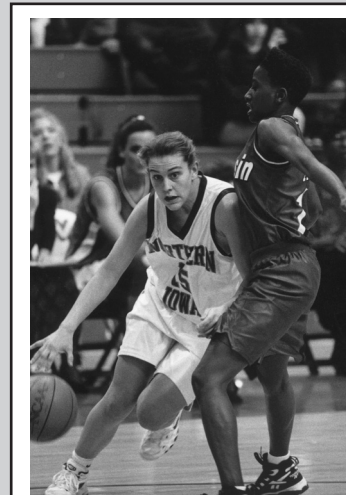
Looking back over the two successful seasons, Warren emphasized, “Our success this year, where this

The Continuity of a Panther

Change is a constant in college athletics. One person on the women's basketball staff has been a part of all of the last three coaching regimes—Kelley Westhoff Jacobs. Recruited out of Dubuque Wahlert by Terri Lasswell, Jacobs played two years before Tony DiCecco took over. Jacobs recalled why she chose UNI.

“I chose UNI for three reasons. One, I fell in love with the campus when I came on a visit. It is such a unique setting compared to a lot of other Division I schools and it had such a safe and homey feel. Second, I liked the players on the team and they treated me very well on my visit. Finally, I would say I chose UNI because it was a little bit of a challenge. The program was not very successful and I wanted to try to be a part of something that would be more of a building process.”

Jacobs' position coach was Tanya Warren, assistant to DiCecco. “Playing for Tanya was a lot of fun. We had a great coach/player relationship



Kelley Westhoff Jacobs, a UNI player that leads the record book in assists and assist average is now part of the coaching team.

program has come; it's so much bigger than this team or this staff. It goes way back to those who started to lay the foundation. It's important to me that our current kids understand that and give credit to all those who came before us.”

The challenge now, according to Warren, is to continue to put the Panthers in a position to be successful on and off the floor. When asked what she wants her legacy to be, Warren answered, “The most important thing is for young women to leave here as better people and players than when they came. If that happens, we've achieved our motto—‘Champions for Life’.”

because she was very easy to talk to and I had a lot of respect for her.”

After graduation, Jacobs became a graduate assistant, then a full-time assistant for DiCecco. When Warren took over the reins, Jacobs stayed on the staff for her former position coach.

Jacobs shared her feelings on how the program has changed over her tenure. “When I came to UNI the program was not very successful and in my first two years as a player you could probably count the number of fans in the stands just using your own two hands (and most of them were my family!). That same theory could go for the number of wins we would get in a season. It was not a very exciting time for women's basketball. Back then only the top eight teams would make the conference tournament which meant for me in my four-year career I only went to the tournament one time.

“Tanya and I often talk about the fact there are really only a few people who truly understand where this program has evolved from. The true depths of what took place in changing an environment where losing was expected and winning was a rare occurrence. When we think back to the years of not even going to our conference tournament to now winning back-to-back conference tournaments and going to the NCAA gives me chills every time.

“This program has been built little-by-little over the years. It has taken many years and many different student-athletes time and dedication to raising the bar of UNI women's basketball. I take an extreme amount of pride in watching our team take the floor now. Our opponents now give us a whole new level of respect.”

Women's Intercollegiate Field Hockey

Wanda K. Green

Introduction

It was September 1901 when George Baird Affleck arrived at the Iowa State Normal School campus as the Physical Director. Having been trained at the YMCA Training School in Massachusetts, he brought with him an event that was popular on the east coast called "lawn hockey." While it seemed to take to the men of ISNS at that time, an article in the campus paper, *The Normal Eye*, stressed that this sport was indeed not gender-based and "should become a favorite among both sexes in high schools and colleges," and it did. It was played by both men and women on the campus, but the men soon left the sport in order to focus on football.

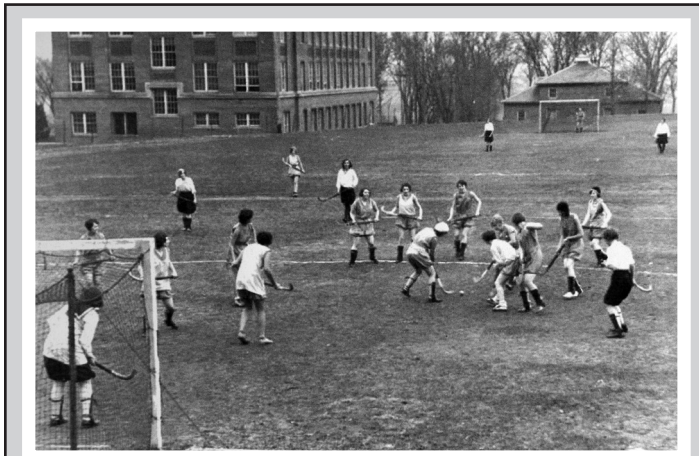


The earliest photo of Normal School women playing field hockey. Note: the smokestack for the school's first modern power plant, still under construction. The power plant was built where Maucker Union now stands.

The women, in the meantime, found field hockey as a great physical education activity and a game that sponsored a sense of competition. From the online article written for the UNI archives, it is noted . . . "In 1923, the Women's Athletic Association (WAA) was formed. This association was created to address both active and honorary aspects for women's athletics. The WAA helped organize women's athletics and it honored women students who participated in what would become intramural athletics. In the days before women's intercollegiate competition, this in-house activity was the highest level of competition to which

most Teachers College women could aspire." The article states the purpose for the creation of the WAA was "to foster interest and participation in athletics, to increase physical efficiency and to develop a higher degree of sportsmanship and school, and class spirit among the women students of the college."

Field hockey continued to be a favorite for women's intramural athletics. In the early 1930s, various campus organizations fielded teams to compete within the intramural program. One early tradition of homecoming was a field hockey match between the physical education students and the physical education alumni.



A 1936 field hockey game with the Vocational Building in the background. The Vocational Building is now known as Wright Hall.

In the late 1940s, field hockey was very much a part of the women's intramural scene. In 1949, two extramural teams traveled to Iowa City to compete and learn from colleges who were a part of the Midwest Hockey Umpiring Tournament. Dual matches soon followed with Iowa State and the University of Iowa. The Teachers College team was made up of intramural all-stars and had success playing against the sister institutions.

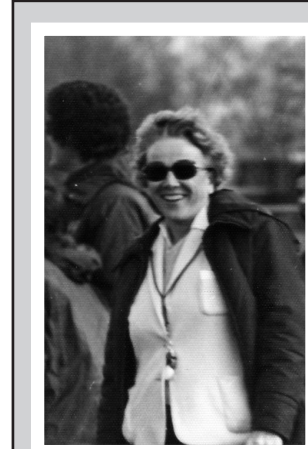
Throughout the next 15 years, matches were scheduled and played, even against international teams that were touring the United States. During the 1968-69 academic year a number of changes were happening for women at the newly named University of Northern Iowa. A major change was the fact that three new sports

were being offered as intercollegiate athletics: basketball, tennis and field hockey.

The Elinor Crawford Era (1968-1972)

On Sept. 10, 1968, Dr. Elinor Crawford blew her whistle for the first time as 14 UNI physical education majors gathered round to begin the first practice of the newly implemented Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Program. As with all three sports -- field hockey, basketball and tennis -- practice was limited by the Women's Intercollegiate Standards and Procedures to four hours per week. Practice and home matches were held on the central campus field, located in the area between the Women's (East) Gym, Men's (West) Gym and Lawther Hall. This green area was designated the Women's Physical Education (WPE) Field to be used in teaching all outdoor field sports. Practice time was scheduled between 4 and 6 p.m. so students could get to dinner at 6:00 p.m. The players that qualified to be a part of the field hockey team were primarily juniors and seniors; until 1972 freshmen could not play without establishing a GPA first and had taken the required field hockey class, which was offered at the sophomore level only.

Dr. Crawford was assigned to coach because of her expertise in field hockey via teaching the required activity class to major students, her membership and participation in the Northeast Iowa Field Hockey Club, her membership in the USFHA (United States Field Hockey Association), the official field hockey official's rating organization, and her membership and leadership positions within the Midwest Field Hockey Association. Field hockey was one of the three sports that got the nod to begin because it was a fall sport that was traditionally played and governed in the United States as a women's sport associated with the USFHA and also an affiliate with the International Field Hockey Association. And finally, field hockey was offered to align UNI



Dr. Elinor Crawford, UNI field hockey coach 1968-72.

with the other colleges within the state that also had field hockey teams. Other Iowa colleges fielding hockey teams at this time included: Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, Luther College, Grinnell College, Iowa Wesleyan College and Graceland College.

The Division of Girl's and Women's Sports (DGWS) published the necessary rules books and guidelines in conjunction with the USFHA. In 1968, field hockey was also an Iowa High School sport sanctioned by the Iowa Girl's Athletic Union, which also sponsored a state tournament, even though the number of high schools involved in field hockey was a very small number. Dr. Crawford coached the first five years of UNI's intercollegiate hockey's 15-year tenure.

The first season had a very limited schedule: two home and two away matches. Uniforms were hand-me-down wool purple tunics donated by the Northeast Iowa Field Hockey Club (a local adult affiliate club of the Midwest Field Hockey Association (MWFHA)). The cost for the first field hockey season was \$94.00 out of the total \$600 budget allocated for all three women's sports. The breakdown of this budget was as follows: \$78 for transportation, \$14 for officials and \$2 for refreshments. A field hockey tradition was to provide cut oranges at halftime to all players and meet with opponents following the match for punch (Kool-Aid) and cookies. With a very limited budget, sack lunches were taken on away trips so no meal requests were made. Judy Martin was the captain of the 1968 team.

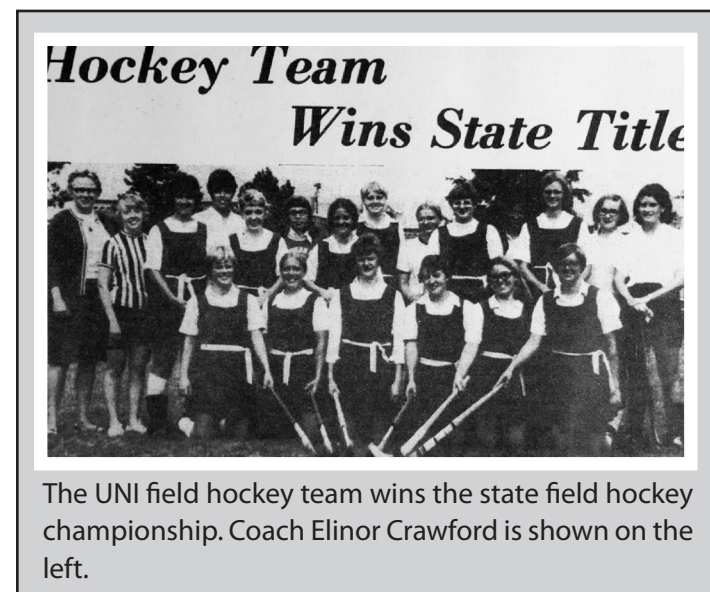
The second season (1969) saw an increase in matches with three home and three away games. Avenging a first game of the season loss to Iowa Wesleyan, 2-1, the UNI squad posted wins over Iowa Wesleyan and Iowa State to win the first ever field hockey state championship. A traveling trophy was purchased and awarded to the school winning this title until the formation of the Iowa College Association (ICA), which then allowed the winning teams a chance to keep the trophy forever if they had the most wins in a five-year stint. The UNI women won the State championship enough times that the coveted trophy did reside in the West Gym for several years and then later in the UNI-Dome trophy case upon completion of that facility. UNI was inscribed on the trophy more than any other school. Members of the ICA were Graceland, Grinnell, Iowa State, Iowa Wesleyan, Luther, Iowa and the University of Northern Iowa.

Field hockey's expenditures for its second season jumped to \$286. Four players on the 16-player roster were returnees from 1968 including: Jo Hoffmeier, Judy Martin, Jane Montgomery and Kathleen Wallace. Captains for the season were Martin, Wallace and Adele Today.

After the 6-0 opening-match win in 1970 over a team from La Crosse, Wis., Dr. Crawford allowed her thoughts to be known. "The team displayed good team effort" with the hope that same effort would continue. Unfortunately the season record ended with two wins and four losses, not exactly the preferred plan.

In season four (1971) 10 players returned from the previous season to add experience which should make a "much improved" team. It apparently did just that as UNI had an undefeated season at 5-0-1, plus winning 3 games at the state tournament in Ames to take home the traveling trophy. The tie game was against Iowa. Scoring accolades for the season went to Brenda Coffield, Jan Meier, Janan Haugen, Theresa Roth, and Lois Hartman. Coach Crawford's response regarding her scorers was, "you can give credit to the scorers, but any victory is a TEAM victory". Eighteen goals were scored throughout the entire season, including state, while only four goals were allowed to be scored by the opponents. Thus, the defense made its statement and the season was truly a team victory. Meier was the team captain.

The cost of funding hockey continued to rise and went up to \$348. There was no expense line for officials as the practice was for each school to provide one offi-



cial for each match. Thus, a second staff member usually traveled with each team as an official. A dual function was served when the official also drove the second vehicle, a model that followed USFHA club play.

1971 saw the founding of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). The AIAW was established to replace the Commission for Intercollegiate Sports; UNI was a charter member.

Ten players returned in 1972 forming an experienced core for the 21-player roster, and for a second consecutive season, the UNI field hockey team was undefeated at 5-0-3, including the state tournament. Wins were recorded over Luther, Iowa Wesleyan, Grinnell, Graceland and Iowa State, and ties were with Iowa twice and with Iowa Wesleyan once. UNI's scoring output again overshadowed its opponents' 15-4 as Coach Crawford credits, "This is a team game; it depends on everybody; star players wouldn't be anywhere without the others." And like any sport, both a scoring offense and a strong defense are required if winning is the objective.

The 1972 season also brought yet another organizational change within the state. Up to this point the Iowa State Tournament was the culminating event in field hockey. By 1972 the colleges that had field hockey joined together to form the Iowa College Association and petitioned for membership in the Midwest Field Hockey Association (MWFHA) and the USFHA. Two other college associations were in existence in the Midwest region; the Midwest College Association-North and the Midwest College Association-South. These associations included colleges and universities from other Midwest states like Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois and Indiana.

This organizational change added a player selection process to the state tournament following the format of USFHA play, wherein individual players were observed at the state tournament and the best players for each position were selected to form an "all-star" team to represent the Iowa College Association at the regional MWFHA tournament. This avenue allowed Iowa college players an opportunity for "post season" play.

Two Iowa College All-Star teams were selected at the state tournament and of the 24 players selected to play in the post-season tournament on those teams, 10 were UNI players. The six players selected to play

on Team 1 were Theresa Allen, Brenda Coffield, Cindy Ohlson, Theresa Roth, Mary Vliet and Myra Rasmussen. The players selected for Team 2 were Betty Hala and Carol Sorenson. Kay Whitaker and Deb Busch were selected as alternates.

The 1972 season would bring an end to the Elinor Crawford era. Wrapping up the season and five years of coaching field hockey, Coach Crawford said in a Northern Iowan interview about the value of intercollegiate sports as a part of education, "I think there is value in developing a great degree of skill in anything ...this experience will prepare students for teaching/coaching responsibilities and can carry on as a hobby."

The Wanda Green Era: 1973-82

In the spring of 1973 Dr. Billie McFee appointed Wanda Green to replace Dr. Elinor Crawford as the field hockey coach. The whistles were exchanged; Green became the coach and Crawford became the official. Although not an undefeated season, 1973 was a great year for UNI field hockey. The season record, including two state tournament wins over Iowa and Graceland was 6-3-1. Captains were Lori Kluber and Whitaker.

At the State Selection Tournament eight UNI players were selected to Iowa College teams for further play at the Midwest Sectional Tournament in Macomb, Ill. On Iowa College Team 1 were Allen, Diane Braun, Kluber and Mary Taylor, and Team 2 members were Jenny Alberti, Hala, Lauri Hanson and Donna Troyna.

Goalie Braun was selected at the Midwest Tournament to play on the Midwest III team at the National Field Hockey Tournament in Boston. Due to non-budgeting for national-level play, she elected to pay her own way to play at the National USFHA Tournament. Flying stand-by from Chicago to Boston, Diane and Coach Green, also a selected player, finally arrived in Boston for Thanksgiving weekend and Nationals. Of this first of four National Tournaments as a UNI field hockey player Braun responded in a November, 1973 Northern Iowan interview, "Competition was at its best, the trip was a great experience and most worthwhile".

Budget was always an issue with the beginning of women's sports. The expenditures for 1973 were \$589 for the season and \$334 for regional play. The budget for 1974 would include potential national tournament play and a first request for UNI's own hockey uniforms;



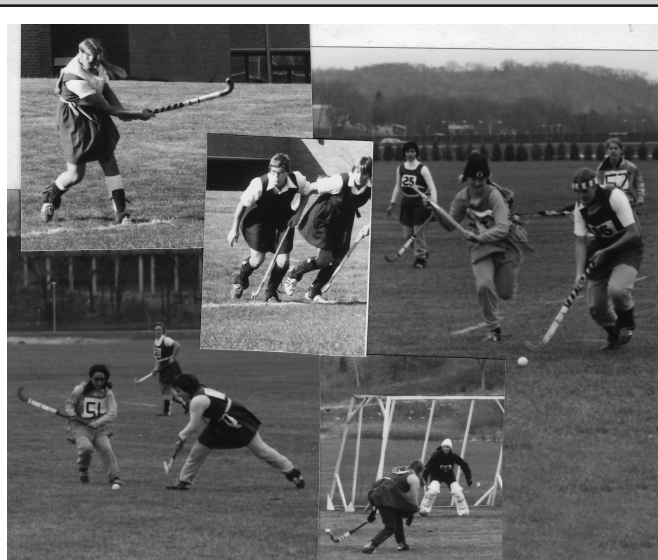
everyone thought it was time for the team to have Panther uniforms. Getting them, however, took until 1975. Of the 21 players on the 1973 roster, six seniors had graduated and 11 returned to play in 1974.

Field hockey was played on a 100x60 yard "pitch" with two 30-(later 35) minute halves, a five-minute half time and no time outs. Players had to exhibit sprinting and endurance abilities when the first match was played. With only four hours per week allowed for practice, pre-season conditioning became each player's responsibility with conditioning exercises and procedures distributed to all interested hockey players at the first meeting. Three weeks of skill and team practice prepared the players for the first scheduled match and each week thereafter the players worked on respective conditioning along with team play.

The Physical Education Center (PEC) was a new facility on the west side of campus where field hockey equipment was stored. A new hockey field was created west of the PEC and designated as home turf. The field was at the edge of university property next to a corn field. It was necessary to lug the equipment from the PEC to the playing field in the infamous green army duffle bag and then, of course, lug it back. But with the new field, we were able to have home matches on the familiar West Field. It was our home field.

A midseason highlight in 1974 was the Iowa College (1973 Team 1) versus Wales (England) match held on the University of Iowa campus in Iowa City. Arrangements for the stop by the Wales touring team were made by Iowa hockey coach Dr. Christine Grant. UNI had three players from the 1973 team still on campus and one graduate who returned in order to play

1973 Field Hockey Action



Coach Green shares some of her field hockey action shots.

From Lori Kluber comes a personal sentiment for the sport of field hockey and the way they played the game. "Most of us had never seen a field hockey game before let alone played in one until we got to UNI! Once I experienced the game, I was hooked. We had excellent camaraderie plus we had two of the best coaches in the Midwest (Dr. Elinor Crawford and Wanda Green). Under their leadership we were a team to be reckoned with, year after year.

"We played for the love of the sport, no frill, no fancy uniforms (purple wool tunics!) and not much of a budget. We made it work with a 'never say die' atti-

in the Wales-Iowa College game. Forward Kluber, half-back Taylor, goalie Braun and graduated player Theresa Allen (defense) played on the Iowa College team against the Wales team in front of approximately 500 spectators.

As the 1974 season came to an end, UNI found itself undefeated again at 9-0-1 while outscoring opponents 32-10. The lone tie was against Luther at 1-1. Three of the highest scoring games were against Iowa, 6-1 and 5-2, during the season and 4-0 in the state tournament. Six UNI players were selected to the two Iowa College teams headed to the Midwest Tournament. Iowa College Team 1 players were: Kluber (Center Forward),

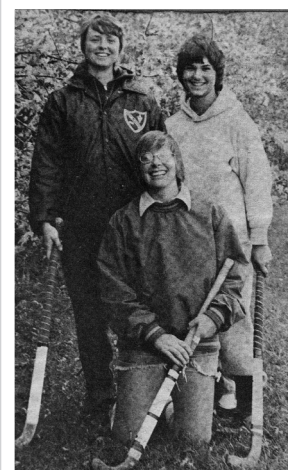
tude. Those of us in the dorms would meet at the crack of dawn in the food service kitchen and we'd make our own brown bag lunch. Then we'd head over to the 'horseshoe' (the driveway between Lawther and Bartlet) and pile into the UNI station wagons and set out for our next conquest!! Those are great memories – we played for the love of the game and for lasting friendships!"



1973 UNI field hockey team at State Selection Tournament

Back Row – L to R: Coach Wanda Green, Mary Drey, Theresa Allen, Jenny Alberti, Diane Braun, Lauri Hanson, Mary Ann Smith, Pat Brown
Front Row – L to R: Becky Gillaspie, Deb Turnball, Kay Whitaker, Betty Hala, Lori Kluber, Donna Troyna, Sara Knott, Sue O'Brien

Diane Braun, Lori Kluber and Mary Taylor played on the Iowa College Team vs. Wales October 1974.



Sue O'Brien (Left Halfback), Taylor (Right Halfback), and Troyna (Left Wing). The Iowa College Team 2 players included: Braun (Goalie) and Jenny West (Left Inner). Other players were ultimately involved as the Midwest Tournament was hosted by the Iowa College Association at UNI. Two UNI players--goalie Braun, who played on the Midwest Team 1; and Taylor, an alternate defense player, earned berths to the USFHA National Tournament, in Dekalb, Ill. As the 1974 season came to an end, the uniforms that were available to the players were still the wool tunics.

Finally, in 1975 the heavy wool tunics were replaced by purple and white plaid kilts, shirts, socks, and warm-ups. These were such a great improvement



Jenny West dribbling downfield during a 1974 match.



Donna Troyna challenging at the left wing position.



1974 field hockey team

over the wool tunics, but the downside of it all was the new uniforms had to be shared with softball, swimming and gymnastics. In 1975 the field hockey team was able to add two more hours per week of practice time, which gave it a total of six hours of practice per week. During this same year, the AIAW decided to sponsor national tournaments for field hockey, but as a team qualifying event rather than all-star player teams. When given the option, the UNI team members voted to remain with the ICA and USFHA selection route rather than switching to the AIAW team competition for national play qualification.

Following a 10-4-1 season, including three wins at the state tournament, UNI player selections for post-season play hit a new record with nine of UNI's 11 players forming the bulk of the Iowa College Team 1 roster and one player on Iowa College Team 2 roster. Team 1 players were: Carol Abbott, Jan Blank, Braun, Dava Kiewiet, Jill Mable, Mary Taylor, Troyna and Barb Wahlstrom. The Team 2 player was Carla Carton. UNI was nearly playing as a complete team at the regional level. The next surprise was the selection of seven of the 10 players to move on to play on Midwest teams at the National Tournament in Harrisonburg, Va. Midwest Team 1 UNI players were: Braun at goalie and Wahlstrom at the forward line. They were accompanied by Coach Green, from the Northeast Iowa Club at center defense. UNI players on Midwest Team 2 were: Kiewiet and Troyna at the forward line positions, Blank at the link position, and, Taylor and Abbott at defense positions. Both USFHA and AIAW national championships were held over Thanksgiving weekend in Harrisonburg.

For several players the air flight experience was a first and for all a thrill to fly over the nation's capital into Washington D.C.'s National Airport. On the return, an extra night in Washington allowed a private limo tour of Washington at night, complete with an experienced driver of former presidents. Whenever asked about their playing experiences, the team and their coach would respond that 1975 was a very good year.

By the 1976 season the UNI-Dome was up and running. This ushered in a new part-time facility for field hockey. Two days-per-week practices were scheduled in the Dome on the artificial football turf and the third practice day was held on the outdoor field. Whenever possible home matches were played in the Dome. The Astroturf created a much smoother and faster

surface for hockey and was a fairly common surface other teams played on.

While 11 seniors graduated off the spectacular 1975 team, 10 returning players formed the core of the 1976 team. Knowing the accomplishments of the previous year, the 1976 team posted a 7-3-2 record with losses only by a single-point margin. Remaining with the player selection tournament route UNI placed 10 of its 11 players on the Iowa College teams with five players



These seven players and their coach represented UNI in the National Field Hockey Tournament in Harrisonburg, Va. From L-R: Front row: Mary Taylor, Diane Braun, Barb Wahlstrom. Back row: Coach Wanda Green, Jan Blank, Dava Kiewiet and Carol Abbott. Missing from the picture is Donna Troyna.

on each of the two teams. Team 1 players were: (Kiewiet) Boller, Braun, Glenda Jacob, Mable and Wahlstrom. The UNI players on Team 2 were: the Abbott sisters, Carol and Cathy; Carla Carton, Norma Johnson and Mary Taylor. After completion of the Iowa College Tournament, Boller and Wahlstrom were placed on Midwest 2 as forwards and Braun was placed on Midwest 1 as a goalie.

1976 would mark the end of the team's selection route membership. But during that era Braun went to the USFHA National Tournament four consecutive years, Taylor, (Kiewiet) Boller and Wahlstrom two years and Abbott, Blank and Troyna one year each as UNI students. Braun and Taylor played field hockey all four years of their UNI tenure. Following graduation several of those players went on to play at the adult club level and saw additional national tournament play. By fall 1977, the Iowa College Association had disbanded and the AIAW team championship route was declared the only accepted option for post-season play.

With the graduation of 10 seniors, who commanded a lot of intercollegiate field hockey experience and a change in the physical education requirements which no longer required the field hockey course as a pre-entry activity, the future success of intercollegiate field hockey was faced with obstacles. In order to attract the players needed to field a team, on-campus recruitment efforts began in the spring of 1977. Senior players would offer introductory skill clinics to generate interest in field hockey and in the end, three returning players, along with nine rookies, reported for fall practice. The team was small in number, but dedicat-

1976 field hockey team

Back Row L to R: Glenda Jacob, Leanne Hinricks, Cathy Abbott, Deb Craft, Dava (Kiewiet) Boller, Norma Johnson, Karen Willard, Susan Weier, Barb Dearborn, Denise Burnball, Beth Ann Strub, Diane Braun

Front Row L to R: Mary Taylor, Jill Mable, Dana Bainbridge, Pam Schneider, Carol Abbott, Carla Carton, Barb Wahlstrom, Susan Ruble, Mindy Rice, Ann Cooper



ed and enthusiastic and when an injury occurred, the team played with 10 players instead of the usual 11. You might say adaptation was the strategy.

Although the scorebook success was short during the 1977 season (4-11-3), the team garnered some wins at the state round-robin tournament and finished in third place behind Iowa and Graceland. While not the successes experienced in the previous years, the players were not discouraged; they liked field hockey, its experiences and their teammates. At the end of the second semester of the 1977-78 academic year, four seniors graduated and one of the field hockey players transferred to another institution leaving just seven players for the next season.

In 1978, UNI field hockey was now a Division II, AIAW Region 6 participant. This was the first year scholarship monies were appropriated by President John Kamerick to comply with Title IX. Three returning senior members and two new junior players were awarded fall tuition scholarships. Player performance and potential performance were the criteria used to determine who would receive scholarship money. There were 12 players in all on the 1978 roster.

Of the seven returning players only six completed the season. Third-year player Denise Turnball, the senior honorary captain, was diagnosed with cancer at the beginning of the season and by the week of the state tournament she had lost her battle with the disease leaving a huge empty spot on the team. With heavy hearts



1977 field hockey team. Back Row L to R: Mary Phillipson, Barb Dearborn, Linda Nelson, Terri O'Connor, Cindy Dickey, Kristi Olson

Front Row L to R: Teresa Schreier, Mary Ott, Glenda Jacob, Cathy Abbott, Denise Turnball, Carol Breuer

the UNI ladies fought on at the state tournament registering three losses and two ties finishing in a fifth-place tie with Iowa Wesleyan. Although the season's success in the win-loss column was small with just two wins beating Concordia College and the University of Chicago at the Lake Forest Invitational Tournament, the obstacles the team faced throughout the year were overcome; friendships were cherished and a dedication to the sport persevered.

Noted in a detailed evaluation of whether field hockey should continue as an intercollegiate sport, players unanimously supported the continuation of field hockey in spite of no classes in the curriculum and no Iowa high school feeder system. As a result, five of the 12 players would return in the fall of 1979. They assisted with spring skill sessions at 7 a.m. and they helped with on-campus recruitment of new players to stimulate interest and preserve the intercollegiate sport. Their work seemed for naught, however, as only four to 17 attended any given practice session with some making a commitment to field hockey while others deciding against becoming involved. Two out-of-state scholarships were offered at this time, but neither was accepted.

Season 12 had a team membership of 20 players. Students recruiting students finally did pay off. Monday (4-6 p.m.) and Wednesday (6-9 p.m.) nights were practice nights in the Dome and three nights of practice were



1978 field hockey team

Back Row L to R: Susan Stork, Jo Klein, Lori Miller, Mary Phillipson, Teresa Kennedy, Mary Ott, Lauri Tidball

Front Row L to R: Teresa Schreier, Kristi Olson, Cathy Abbott, Carol Breuer, Karin Gustafson

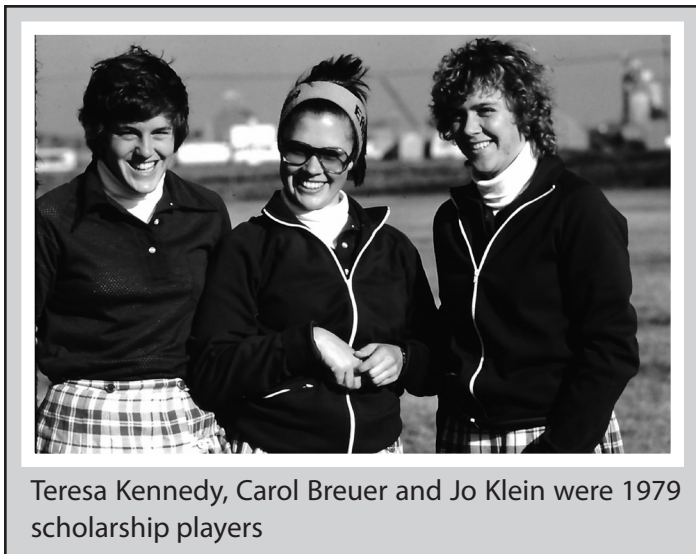
held on the West field, which was now frequented by the rugby club leaving the field in very poor shape for field hockey. Because hunting season was now open, flying bullets overhead during one outdoor practice left players a bit skittish on the West Field. Luckily all home matches were in the Dome.

The season started with a string of eight losses followed by three consecutive wins and two out of three wins at the sub-regional playoff to qualify for the Division II AIAW Region 6 Tournament. Wins posted to qualify were over South Dakota State and Emporia State. At regionals, in Warrensburg, Mo., UNI failed to win any pool play games and came home with two regional losses. The final season record was 5-12-1.

It should be noted that evaluation of field hockey was becoming an on-going process. The stated reasons for continuing field hockey were: student interest, it provided a new sport experience for participants, it accommodated a different population from other sports and UNI was competitive enough with other Midwest schools to continue to schedule games. Breuer,



Denise Turnbull, 1978 honorary captain. Carol Breuer and Jo Klein in background.



Teresa Kennedy, Carol Breuer and Jo Klein were 1979 scholarship players

Kennedy and Klein were three returning players that received tuition scholarships for 1979.

During the fall of 1980, Lois Hartman, a former UNI hockey player and physical education teacher at Grundy Center, took the coaching reins for the year while Coach Green was off campus attending graduate school. She had a roster of 21 players to work with, 14 of which were returning from the 1979 team. With an experienced core of returning players the 1980 record was 10-10. At the division playoff series UNI beat Moorhead State and lost to Bemidji State, North Dakota and South Dakota. UNI hosted the Region 6 Division II Tournament in the Dome. Southwest Missouri State and UNI played in the tournament as the host school since South Dakota, who would have been designated

1979 field hockey team

Back Row L to R: Carol Knoll, Kris Houston, Teresa Kennedy, Jo Klein, Jolene Eiklenborg, Judy Ruehle, Sue Anderson, Laurel Magee, Pat Jensen, Barb Dralle, Kim Gibbs

Front Row L to R: Diane Kittrell, Laurie Tidball, Carol Breuer, Cindy Brandes, Deb Mooney, Leann Erickson, Sheryl Sigmund, Peg Ricke, Karin Gustafson



Text and photos by DAVE PETERSON

CEDAR FALLS, IA. — Northern Iowa was in the process of losing its fourth and final game in last weekend's AIAW Region 6 field hockey tournament here, when someone jokingly remarked to Coach Wanda Green that her bench appeared thin.

She replied promptly, without turning to look at the empty chairs behind her: "What you see on the field is the A team, the B team and all of the reserves."

Indeed, it takes 11 players to make up the various forwards, thrusters, sweepers, links and goalie. And that's exactly what the Panthers numbered after losing Robyn Murken to an injury early in the tournament.

"We have only two girls on partial scholarship," said Green. "Since Iowa high schools dropped the sport several years ago, this is a new experience for most of the girls."

For the team members, the experience is not likely to be remembered in terms of wins or losses — but that they gave it the old college try.

Although short on numbers, talent and experience, Northern Iowa's field hockey team resurrected that old amateur creed — playing sports for the fun of it. A tradition of clapping sticks before a match.

Left to right: Laurel Magee (23), Kim Gibbs (32), Robyn Murken, Sheila Soehner, Theresa Neville (27), Des Moines Register, 1981

the host team, did not attend. Southwest Missouri State won the championship over Central Missouri State 6-2.

At the end of the 1980 season, eight seniors would graduate including Breuer, a four-year player and captain for the team. Also lost were: Laurie Tidball, Karin Gustafson, LeAnn Erickson, Kim Gibbs and Carol Knoll.

It was during the 1981 spring semester the Athletic Policy Advisory Council proposed field hockey should be cut from the athletic program. Student action came from seniors on the team; they had a meeting with UNI administrators and Coach Green and in the end, they got the action to drop field hockey tabled until further review could be completed. Field hockey would not die during the 1980-81 academic year.

The 14th season was the last year for AIAW as the governing organization and for its respective field hockey tournament. The NCAA would assume the role as the sole governing body with the 1982-83 season. Green was back at the helm of the hockey program with six players returning from 1980 and six rookies to learn the game. Of the 12, only four were physical educa-

tion majors with others coming from such majors as: accounting, elementary education, social work, public relations and administrative management. The only returning player who had ever played high school field hockey was Sheila Soehner. Soehner had come from New York where the sport was very much a part of prep athletic programming.

Season matches were played across all three athletic divisions (I, II, III) resulting in a 4-15 record. Wins were over Division III Grinnell twice, and Iowa Wesleyan and Taylor University. High scorers for the season were Laurel Magee with 10 goals, Lynn Herder with seven and Sheryl Sigmund with four. However, it seemed that many goals were scored against the Panthers. 1981 saw the last AIAW Region 6 Field Hockey Tournament, which was held again at UNI in the Dome. Five teams played including fifth-seeded UNI. The other tournament participants were: Southwest Missouri State, North Dakota, Central Missouri State and Bemidji State (#1 seed). The closest UNI contest was a 3-2 loss to CMSU. SMSU placed first and advanced to the National Tournament in New York.



1981 field hockey team

Back Row L to R: Sheila Soehner, Theresa Neville, Laurel Magee, Kim Gibbs, Vickie Judkins, Kathy Bonnie, Sheryl Sigmund

Front Row L to R: Audrey Perisho, Diane Kittrell, Robyn Murken, Mary Blickman, Lynn Herder

During the spring of 1982, Athletic Director Stan Sheriff requested a comprehensive evaluation of field hockey as a funded part of the athletic department. Budgetary concerns, staffing readjustments and the 1981 Athletic Policy Advisory Council's recommendation to cut field hockey drove the process. In April 1982, the decision was made to eliminate field hockey from the women's intercollegiate program following the conclusion of the 1982 fall season. Contributing factors leading to the decision were: there was no field hockey in the UNI curriculum; there was no feeder system from Iowa high schools; recruiting experienced players would require out of state and out of region recruitment which was economically not feasible with stated budgetary concerns; scheduling of comparable competition was increasingly difficult and without major player recruitment, UNI would be non-competitive within the newly formed Gateway Conference, which was to become operative with the 1982-83 academic year. Field hockey had one more season.

Seven experienced players returned: five forward line players, one defense player and one goalie. For Magee and Sigmund it would be their fourth year, Herder and Soehner their third, Vickie Judkins, Robyn Murken and Theresa Neville their second. Six first-year players came out to learn the game, participate in the field hockey experience and give their all to one season of competition. Heather Draper, Jeanne Johanna, Stephanie Peters, Julie Petersen, Denise Still and Jane Wagner

were those dedicated rookies. These ladies worked hard to learn a new sport, accepted the challenge of competing in a totally new arena and endured the adversities of another losing season with determination and loyalty. In its last season, the field hockey team recorded five wins against 13 losses.

Said Coach Green following the 15-year run for field hockey, nine years of which she coached and a last place finish in the first Gateway Conference Championship: "It's better to have played and lost than not to have played at all. Those that played had an experience that is shared by an elite few [at UNI]." As the goalie and a player who had been involved for three years, Judkins summed up the players' commonly shared feelings saying, "I'll miss it [field hockey] mostly because of the players. They made it fun....you got to meet a lot of people on other teams as well. We tried our best, but if we didn't win we knew we did try and also had fun doing it." The field hockey players did finish their educational careers at UNI.

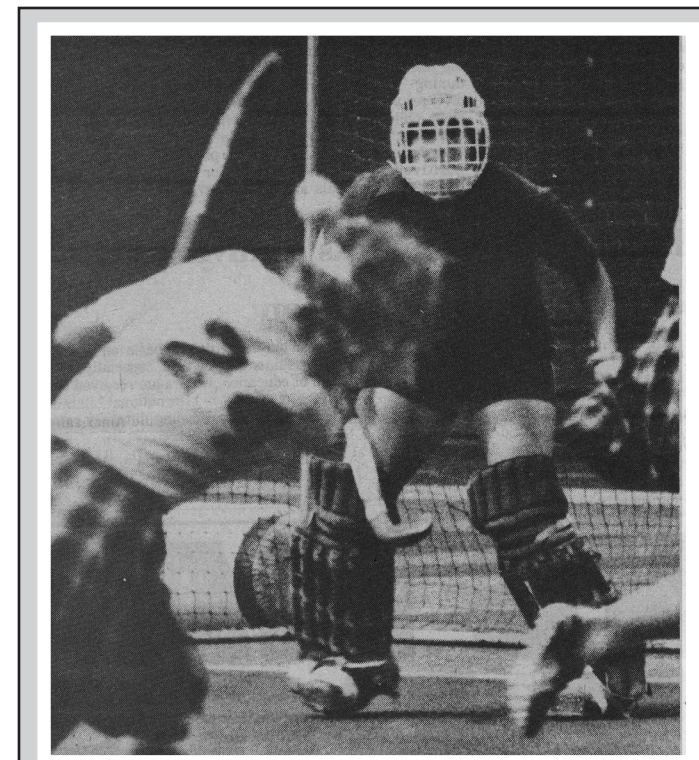
In October 1982, field hockey alumni were invited back to campus for a final match with the 1982 field hockey team. Eighteen alumni returned and of that number, 15 played one final game on the UNI West Field for a memorable reunion with known and unknown hockey teammates. As good things often do, they pass on and with that field hockey became history in November 1982.



1982 – UNI's Last Field Hockey Team

Back L-R: Denise Still, Robyn Murken, Jeanne Johanna, Lynn Herder, Heather Draper, Vickie Judkins

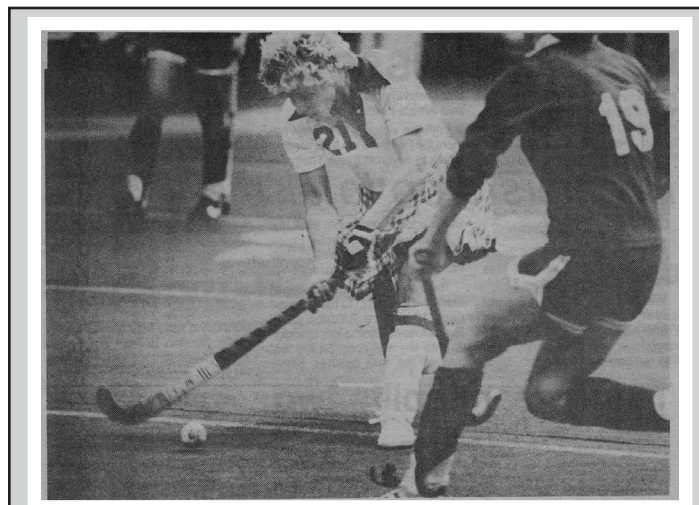
Front L-R: Laurel Magee, Theresa Neville, Sheila Soehner, Julie Peterson, Stephanie Peters, Missing from picture: Sheryl Sigmund, Jane Wagner



In this Cedar Falls Record, Rick Chase photo, Vickie Judkins is captured defending the goal during the AIAW Region 6 Tournament.

And from this coach's position, "Thanks to all who took the risk."

About the coaches. Three coaches commanded the field hockey team during its 15-year lifespan as a Women's Intercollegiate Sport at the Univer-



Panther Laurel Magee moves the ball against her Iowa Wesleyan defender. The Panthers won one of their last 1982 games in the Dome.

sity of Northern Iowa. Dr. Crawford coached the team for the first five years. She was an active member of the NEI Field Hockey Club as a player and as an official. She also extended her leadership skills to the Midwest Sectional organization and was instrumental in forming the Iowa College Association.

Wanda Green coached the remaining years, 1973-82, excluding the 1980 season, when on leave. She also played club hockey, officiated locally and at Midwest Tournaments and one National Tournament. Green was a selected player to the Midwest teams for a

10-year period beginning in 1968 and served as an officer in the Midwest organization.

Hartman, a Grundy Center physical education teacher, coached the team during the 1980 season. Hartman had played for UNI in 1971 and was an experienced NEI Club player and hockey official.

The three coaches also served the program as field hockey umpires during their non-coaching years. Green umpired for Dr. Crawford's five coaching years, Dr. Crawford and Hartman umpired during Green's coaching tenure. All three umpired at various state, regional and national tournaments.

The UNI Hall of Fame:

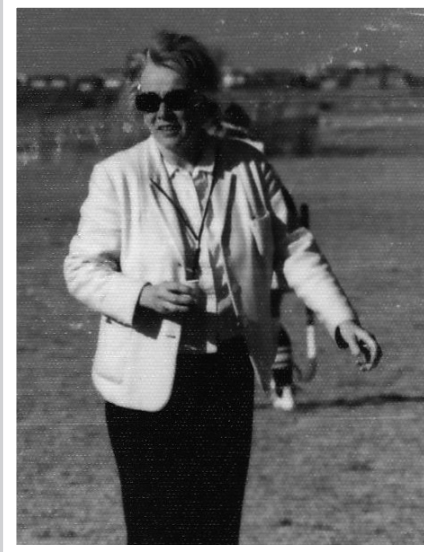
The field hockey coaches and players that have been inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame are:

Dr. Elinor Crawford – Coach (1968-72) – 1985 (Charter Class)

Dr. Wanda Green – Coach (1973-79 and 1981-82) – Class of 1990

Diane Braun Eckhardt – Player at the Goalie position – Class of 1992

Barbara Wahlstrom Carter – Player at the Right Inner position – Class of 1996



Dr. Elinor Crawford, 1968-1972



Dr. Wanda Green, 1973-79 and 1981-82



Lois Hartman, 1980

Football

Jeff Kurtz, David Whitsett, Jim Nelson

1895-1909: Birth of the Iowa State Normal School “Normals”

Panther football on Saturday afternoons is now an established part of life in Cedar Falls, Iowa. But football's presence here took many years to take root. Indeed, football itself was a game that migrated to Iowa from the east coast during the late 1800s, making a slow but steady march westward and growing in popularity almost everywhere it appeared.

While ball games of all types have a long tradition in both Europe and the new world (indeed, early European settlers in Jamestown, Virginia are reported to have organized games with inflated balls as early as the 17th century), the game we today refer to as football, traces its “official” origin to a game played on November 6, 1869. On that day, Rutgers defeated Princeton 6-4 in a game today's spectators would find difficult to recognize. Two teams, each with twenty five players, attempted to score by kicking the ball into the opposing team's goal. Players were not allowed to throw or carry the ball, and the first team to score six goals was declared the winner.

During the game's formative years, the rules varied widely and often changed from venue to venue at the preference of the home team. Walter Camp, a student at Yale in the 1870s, contributed greatly to the standardization of the game's rules, and as such, he is regarded as one of the most important figures in the history of American football. As a result of his input, the number of players was fixed at eleven, the line of scrimmage and quarterback snap from center were established, and modern field dimensions became standardized. Scoring rules for touchdowns and extra points were also adopted.

College football spread rapidly as the 19th century drew to a close. In 1879, the University of Michigan became the first school west of Pennsylvania to establish a football team. Soon the University of Chicago, Northwestern, and the University of Illinois were likewise competing. The State of Iowa would soon follow suit. On October 6, 1889, the State University of Iowa

(now the University of Iowa) published a statement in the Vidette-Reporter newspaper which read: “The State University football team hereby challenges any college or other team in the state of Iowa to a game of football.” Up to the challenge, a group of young men from Iowa College (now Grinnell College) squared off against their Iowa City rivals and defeated them on November 19, 1889 in what was the first official intercollegiate football game ever played west of the Mississippi River.

These events did not go unnoticed in Cedar Falls. Indeed, while just eight universities fielded teams in 1880; forty-three did so by 1900. One of these original forty-three was the Iowa State Normal School (ISNS), known today as the University of Northern Iowa (UNI).



The 1898 ISNS football team was coached by E.K. Leighton and had a 5-0-1 record having beaten the Waterloo YMCA 23-0, Cornell 40-0, Coe 18-0, tied Upper Iowa 0-0 and beat Iowa 11-5. From l-r back row: Joe Adams, McNally, Stokes, George Ballard, Frank Carle, J.P. Woodruff, and E.V. Hemsworth. Middle row: A.C. Wyant, Calderwood, A.L. Hoover, and W.G. Detwiler. Front row: Eugene Clarke, R.V. Hemsworth, Benjamin Boardman, Chalmer Love, Berkshire, Clem Seerley, Jay C. Huntley, and Kinney. (Note: Not all first names or initials for some of the players were unattainable.) The starting lineup featured Love (r.e.), McNally (r.t.), Stoakes (r.g.), Ballard (c), Carle (l.g.), Woodruff (l.t.), Wyant (l.e.), Huntley (qb.), Hoover (r.h.b.), Kinney (l.h.b.) and Detwiller (f.b.).

Founded in 1876, ISNS traces its origins to the establishment of an orphanage for children of Civil War veterans in 1866. When the facility became obsolete, new opportunities for the grounds were sought. Filling a need for a training school for teachers, ISNS was born. The first class was held on September 6, 1876, with twenty-seven students in attendance.

Although a variety of physical education courses were offered during the early years of the school, the first official trace of the game of football at ISNS cannot be located until 1892. This small clue is nothing more dramatic than the receipt for the purchase of a football by the Athletic Association. Furthermore, it was not until the fall of 1894 that a team was formally organized. The first official intercollegiate game involving ISNS occurred in October 1895, in which the newly coined "Normals" travelled to Cedar Rapids to face Coe College. While Coe College boasted a coach at the helm and the Normals did not, the Cedar Falls squad prevailed 12-10. The other two outings of the 1895 season were losing efforts, as Lennox College and Upper Iowa College defeated the fledgling squad. The 1896 season, producing a 4-3-0 record, also had no coach at the helm. Competitions often included local high schools during these early years, such as, Cedar Falls High School (1896), Reinbeck High School (1896) and Waterloo High School (1896, '97 twice, and 1900). The games always produced a "win" for the team. The Normals played the Waterloo YMCA team in 1898 and the Cedar Valley Seminary in 1896. These too were on the winning side of the ledger. But maybe more important than the win was the recognition that teams were taking root in high schools and in various organizations, thus saying, this sport is becoming an established part of extra-curricular activity.

As for ISNS, it would go on without a coach until 1897, when the ISNS Athletic Association put up \$139 in debt to hire Fred Wolff, the first man to lead a team at ISNS. Securing a 5-1-0 record in 1897, Wolff and his squad raised the spirits among the ISNS faithful with defeats over rivals Coe and Upper Iowa that year. The 1898 squad was led by E.K. Leighton. 1898 was the first year for the school to register a victory in football over the University of Iowa with an 11-5 win on November 5. Leighton's impressive 4-0-1 in 1898 was followed by disappointing seasons in 1899 (1-3-2, under a coach

known today only as "Mr. Sweetland") and 1900 (3-4-1 under Fred Williams).

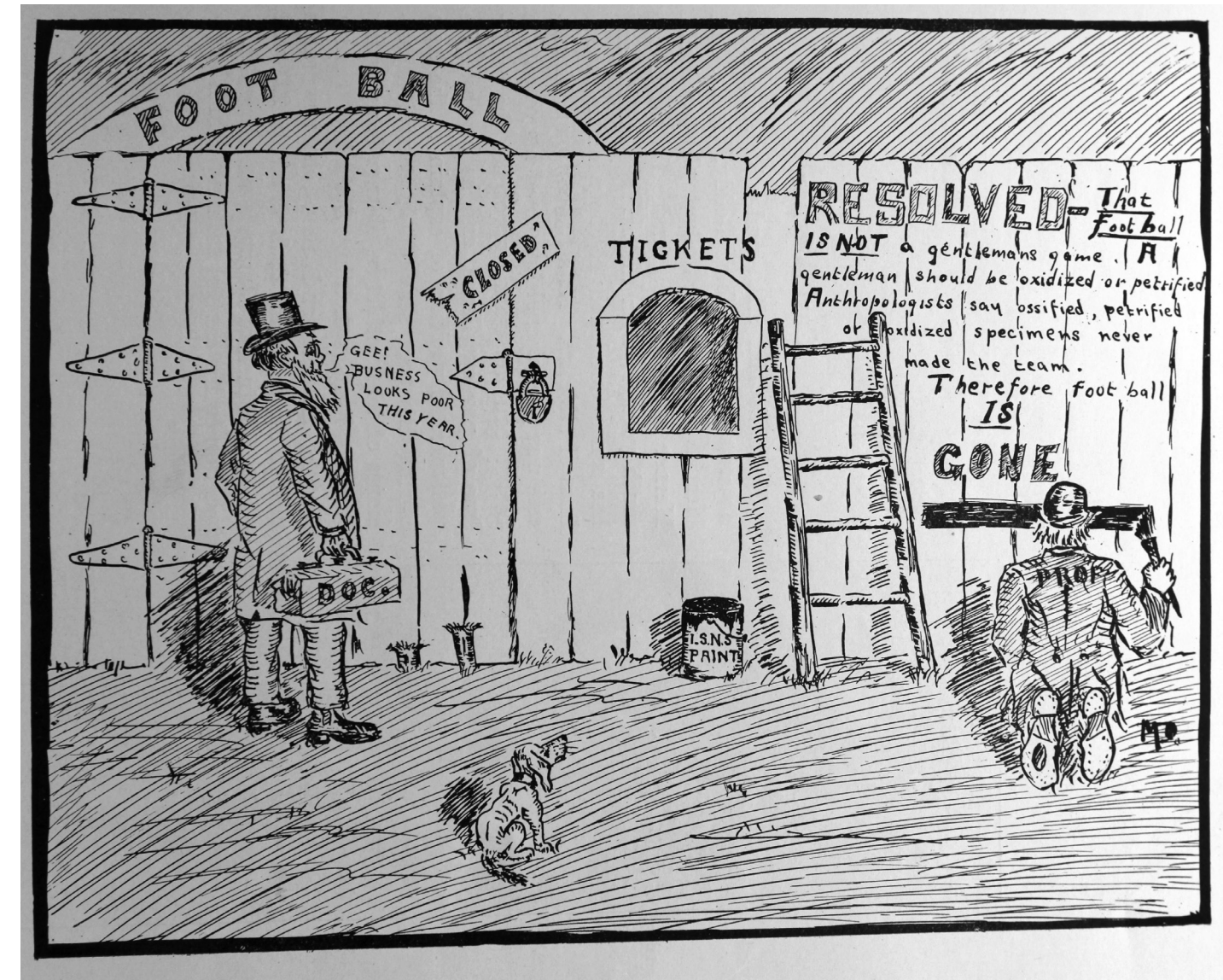
Following a 5-3-2 season by G.B. Affleck in 1901, ISNS would finally secure a coach who remained at the helm long enough to provide the school with some tenure in the coaching position. Charles A. Pell coached from 1902-1905 attaining a 15-15-5 record.

Although football at ISNS enjoyed a great deal of success in these early years, it was not without its detractors. Controversy surrounding the sport of football dates back almost to its origins on campus. As far back as 1897, the newspaper had published several pages of discussion concerning athletics, and one noteworthy entry was a series of quotations from educators and the press entitled, "Shall football be abolished?" Despite the game's controversy, the success of the ISNS team during its early years led to a great deal of general enthusiasm and pride on campus and as such the sport overcame the initial objections it encountered.

The sport's opposition, however, was far broader than just Cedar Falls. By the middle of the first decade of the 20th century, the concern about the violence, injuries, and even deaths associated with football had generated calls for the abolition of the game by college presidents, teachers' associations, magazines and newspapers across the country.

The ISNS football program could not escape the rising tide against the game. In late 1905, the yearbook staff made the following disclosure in their annual publication, known as the Normal-Eyte. "On account of the evils that are often connected with football, and the new rules regulating the eligibility of the contestants, it is thought that in a school of this character the game as now played is undesirable. The athletic board has therefore decided that Normal shall hold no more interscholastic games until there has been a radical change in the rules. Considerable interest has been taken in this department of athletics and the benefits and pleasures derived from it will be missed by all connected with the school."

As such, there was no football played at the school in 1906 or 1907. Poems, editorials, and cartoons provide evidence of the outrage felt by fans of the increasingly popular sport. ISNS was not alone in this decision, as Penn and Simpson Colleges also discontinued football during this era. While the game continued to be played at Iowa State, Coe, Cornell, Drake, and at



This 1907 Old Gold political cartoon depicts the sentiment of early football.

the State University of Iowa, concerns about injuries and violence persisted. As similar debates roared across the nation, President Teddy Roosevelt even took an active role in the debate, advocating for football's reform rather than abolition. After the dust had settled, significant rule changes were put into effect in 1906 and 1907, and all were designed to reduce the likelihood of injuries.

The result was what the Normal Eyte described in 1908 as a "more open game and one of skill and generalship, rather than one of mere brute force" and optimistically stating that, "...it seems to be the 'psychological moment' for Normal to answer the call of the gridiron." Ultimately, the Athletic Board consented to giving football a probationary return to ISNS, but with one important catch; in order to secure the return of

football at the school, the players and coaches were required to raise the sum of \$350 by selling 700 season tickets at a price of 50 cents apiece. At that time ISNS had about 1000 students, so selling 700 tickets constituted a considerable challenge. By September 1908, 400 tickets had been sold and by early October the goal of 700 was reached, assuring all concerned that the intercollegiate football drought at ISNS would soon come to an end.

With this successful effort completed, the game was ready for its triumphant return. "After two weeks of stormy agitation for the restoration of football to Normal's athletics," stated the Old Gold, "the Athletic board cast a mighty vote in favor of the great American college game." On October 17, 1908, head coach Clayton B. Simmons, who had served two years as an

assistant in the Physical Training department at ISNS, lead his squad to a 22-0 defeat over Lenox College in the first intercollegiate football game on the ISNS campus in three years. The 1908 season consisted of just four games, but the Teachers team was scored on only once. Of the 30 Normal players, only one had ever participated in an intercollegiate game - George Vinall, who had been a substitute on the 1905 team, and thus became the 1908 captain. According to the Old Gold, some members of the squad had never even seen a football. As such, the now-nicknamed Tutors had a soft schedule, but a successful year, going undefeated in their subsequent outings again Fairbank High School, Charles City, and Ellsworth twice. The Normal Eye reported that at the end of the season, Coach Simmons "entertained his war-scarred veterans to a three-course dinner served at his home on Clay Street."

In January of 1909, the ISTC Athletic Board voted to continue the football program and give Simmons exclusive control of the program. This allowed him to schedule games and arrange for officials. For the '09 season, Simmons had a much more experienced squad to work with than he had in '08. Of the 35 men who reported for the first practice, nine were veterans from the previous season. In addition, he was able to begin practice a full two weeks earlier than he had in '08. These advantages translated quickly into results when ISTC again went undefeated. Simmons resigned after the '09 season to take a position as Professor of Physical Education at Kirksville, Missouri. He has the distinction of never having lost a game while at the helm at Iowa State Normal School.

In 1909, reflecting the school's adaptation to a four-year academic program, the Iowa State Normal School changed its name to the Iowa State Teachers College. Although the school was growing at a rapid rate, the football program entered a valley of frustration following the 1909 season, and it would be many years before the spirit of success would be recaptured.

1910-1922: Struggling to Gain Ground

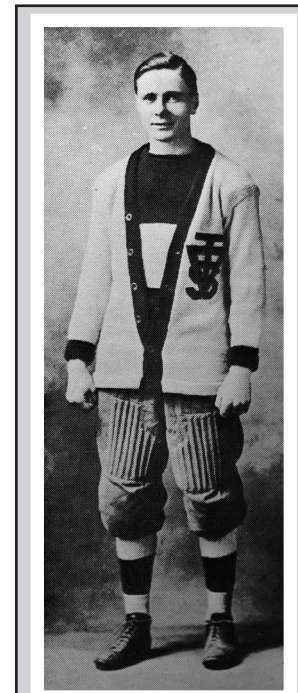
1910-1922 was an unremarkable era in the school's football history, marked by frequent coaching changes and far more losses than victories. However, as with any team, there were bright spots and memorable moments.

1910 was the first year for Coach J.O. Perrine. Although hopes may have been high following the undefeated run of 1909, Perrine's 1910 squad mustered only one win and one tie, while losing four.

Gleaning some gentle humor from the team's misfortune, the 1911 Old Gold presented the following quip from a longer poem, entitled "That Football Team."

*The reason why they just won that one game
Was because they didn't care for fame
And the honor and joy of winning them all
Because, don't you know, they did that last fall!*

The 1911 squad was led by head coach H.F. Pasini, who went 3-2-1 in 1911. One of Pasini's distinctions was his tendency to swat his players with a decorative wooden paddle, a habit which prompted local football fans to urge him to "Paddle us to victory!" Spirits were clearly on the rise in 1912, when Pasini returned for his second and final season, leading his squad to a 5-2-1 record. A 6-3 victory over Ellsworth on November 15, 1912 prompted "a near riot" according to subsequent reports, when the victory was sealed by a drop-kick by "Speedy" Richards with less than two minutes of play remaining.



H.F. Pasini believed the paddle helped with his coaching and that a good swat was okay to make his point.

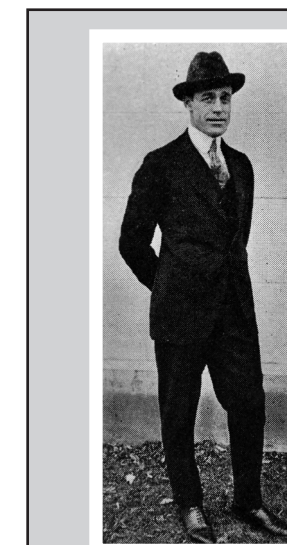
Pasini, aka "The Man with the Paddle," departed following the 1912 outing, and was replaced by Allen P. Berkstresser, a graduate of Morningside College. Berkstresser's four years, from 1913-16, were among the most difficult in the team's history, as his overall record was eight wins, eighteen losses, and two ties. This era also included a 95-0 drubbing by the University of Iowa, a loss that retains the distinction of the largest margin of defeat in school history. Some at the time, were convinced and even suggested that football be dropped once again.

Berkstresser moved on and J.O. Perrine returned to coach the team for the 1917

season. As it turned out, 1917 fostered a shortened season due to World War One. The war sent many young men overseas, and as such had a devastating effect on male enrollment at the school. Football participation suffered as a result. Male students who were enrolled at ISTC participated in compulsory military instruction. Eventually, it was decided that two days of military drill each week would be allowed for athletics, and football remained an option. So Coach Perrine established a schedule of games with only two veterans on his team. Only 16 players were able to make the trips to Penn and Upper Iowa and in the end, ISTC completed the season with a 2-3 record with the wins coming from Iowa Wesleyan and Des Moines College.

Even more tragic than the losses on the football field was the death of Ackley, Iowa native Arnold Arends on November 11, 1917. The day before, ISTC had played Camp Funston in a scrimmage. Arends apparently had contracted spinal meningitis as a result of his participation in the game. Funeral services were held near Ackley on November 13, followed by a campus memorial service on the 18th. Eulogies were offered by Coach Perrin and ISTC President Homer Seerley.

The football program was still limited in 1918 under head coach Russell Glaesner, with ISTC playing just four games and losing three of them. In addition to being reduced in numbers because of the war, (Coach Glaesner did not even have enough men for a second team), over half of the team apparently succumbed to bouts of the flu, which delayed practice for about three weeks.



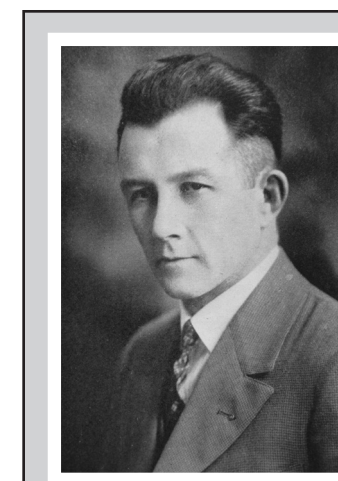
Ivan Doseff was the new coach in 1919. According to the Old Gold reporters, Doseff "...not only trained a fighting machine, he also won the respect of every man on the squad for his honesty, friendliness, clean living, hard work, and frank open-heartedness that was an inspiration to all the men."

The year was 1919 and Ivan Doseff was now at the helm; a ten year coaching veteran, who had previously coached at the University of Chicago. Numbers continued to be a challenge. There were about 100 fewer men on campus than there had been before the war. Although Doseff was hampered by an inexperienced roster and equipment shortages, his 2-4-1 outing in 1919 was followed by a 4-2-1 record in 1920, which marked the first winning season for the team since 1912 and only the third-winning season since the 1909 squad went undefeated.

The success continued with two strong seasons under L.L. Mendenhall in 1921 (5-1-1) and 1922 (5-2-0). Mendenhall, a graduate of Iowa University Law School, came to ISTC in 1921 following a stint as head football coach at Carleton College in Northfield, MN. He was to become very influential in the history of ISTC athletics, becoming the Athletic Director in 1925. Perhaps his initial success provided a sense of optimism in Cedar Falls as the squad entered a new era in 1923 through the birth of the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

1923-1934: Membership in the IAC and the Birth of the Panthers

While 1923's inconspicuous 3-3-1 record under Mendenhall is not widely remembered, the year did mark a turning point in the history of men's athletics at ISTC. In 1923, a four-year coaching course in men's physical education was offered, thereby attracting greater participation and enrollment of male student athletes than ever before. "With an increasing wealth of material, State Teachers will make a prominent place for

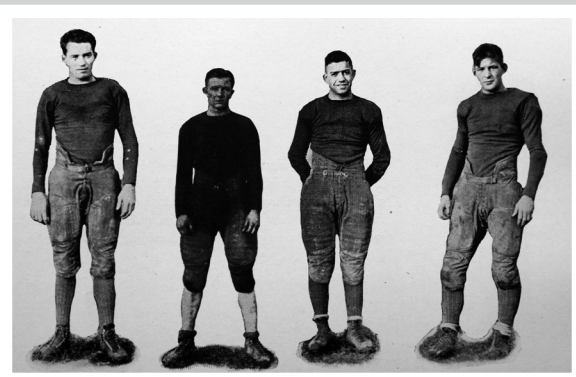


L.L. Mendenhall. It was mainly through his work and efforts that the four-year coaching course was made possible at ISTC, and as a result, rapid progress made in athletics at T.C. was largely due to his efficiency and personality.

herself in the major sports - football, basketball, baseball, track and wrestling,” raved the Old Gold staff.

With this change, new opportunities would follow. During March of 1913, 10-years hence, ISTC had been instrumental in the formation of the Hawkeye Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (HIAC). In addition to ISTC, the conference included: Ellsworth, St. Joseph, Parsons, Charles City, St. Ambrose, Central, Buena Vista, Upper Iowa, Penn, Luther, Iowa Wesleyan and Tabor Colleges. The Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (IIAC), which was originally named the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Association, was established on December 8, 1922 to replace the HIAC. Charter membership included: Buena Vista, Central, Ellsworth, Iowa Wesleyan, Luther, Morningside, Parsons, St. Ambrose, Simpson, Upper Iowa, Western Union and William Penn. During their first meeting, the charter members voted to admit Des Moines University as the 13th member. The group established a constitution a month later and at that time, accepted ISTC as a member.

After a disappointing 2-5-1 record in 1924, Coach Mendenhall gave up coaching to administer the athletic department. He was replaced by Paul Bender,



The 1926 squad had a lot of talent on the team. Four of the players who offered their skills to the team were l-r: “Pud” Horton who played right end. He was considered the headiest man on the team with an uncanny ability to snare passes. Clyde Drury who played at the opposite side from “Pud.” Drury was considered to be the best end to ever play for TC. His defensive play was often considered sensational. Ray Andrews was the quarterback. Andrews was a level head coupled with flashy runs that ran the team well. “Joker” Harshbarger was the fullback and considered to be the hardest hitting back on the team.

who had been on Mendenhall’s staff. Bender first came to ISTC in 1921 when he joined the newly constituted Physical Education department. He had two years (1916-18) of experience as an assistant instructor in gymnastics at the State University of Iowa and two years (1919-21) as Athletic Director at Shenandoah, Iowa. He introduced wrestling at ISTC and took charge of track and gymnastics. He wasted no time in making a name for himself among Iowa coaches, guiding his 1925 and 1926 squads to 5-1-2 and 5-3-0 records, respectively.

In 1927, the team won the school’s first official championship going 7-0-1 and earning the IIAC title. There was a repeat performance in 1928, as ISTC went 5-1-3 and won its second consecutive title. Quarterbacking the 1928 squad was a young Dave McCuskey, who would later guide the ISTC wrestling team to a national championship in 1950.

Unfortunately for ISTC, the successful run in the IIAC stopped in 1928. Five of the next six seasons produced losing records. Bender coached a fifth and final year in 1929, earning a 3-4-0 record. In May of 1930, he announced that he would take a leave of absence to complete his master’s degree at Columbia University in New York. Returning a year later, Bender would eventually handle a wide variety of administrative positions at ISTC with great success, but he never returned to football coaching duties.

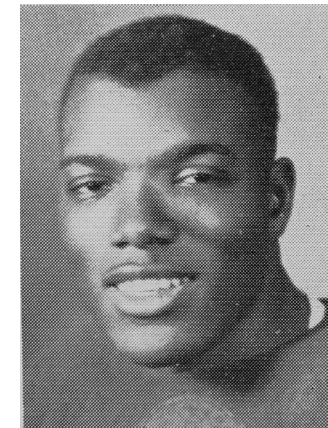
Bender’s replacement, L.W. Whitford, managed his one winning season in 1932, going 5-3-1 after frustrating outings in 1930 (2-5-1) and 1931 (3-5-0). Whitford is notable for coaching the first team to be known as the Panthers. General interest in athletics among members of the ISTC student body was at a low level during the Great Depression. In 1931, in an effort to turn the tide, the campus newspaper (now called the College Eye) sponsored a contest to name a new school mascot. The winning entry came from Wellman, Iowa native Burl Berry, a talented center on the football team.

As reported in the College Eye, “The sinuous grace and bestial ferocity of the panther makes him one of the most savage and respected of animals. He never leaps upon his prey without first sizing up the situation and once he does strike he seldom misses.” As such, the team’s initial venture onto the field of play as the Purple Panthers occurred on September 26, 1931, which yielded a 19-0 victory over Columbia College of Dubuque (now Loras College). Berry, who also happened to be

that year’s football MVP, won a briefcase from Berg Drug Co. The second place winner received an alarm clock. It is also known that the third place submission was the “Purple Grackles” which was a name submitted by a group of students living together in a rooming house near campus.

Whitford completed his run as the ISTC football coach with a 5-3-1 record in 1932. Following his departure, new coach John Baker guided the Panthers to records of 3-6-0 in 1933 and 3-3-2 in 1934 records. On the 1933 team is Russell Bell, who was the first black player on the football squad. Bell had played high school ball at East Waterloo, and was considered a very promising addition to the 1933 squad. The September 29, 1933 College Eye stated “Russell Bell, giant colored tackle, has been hampered by injuries but is a tower of strength on the left side of the frosh line.” Although Bell appeared in numerous photos and press clippings, he was plagued by injuries and eligibility issues.

A September 27, 1935 College Eye article states. “When Russell Bell, giant Negro tackle reported to school last week, it seemed certain that one more veteran lineman would be added to the squad, but the athletic board discovered that Bell had carried but 10 hours of work during the spring term, making him ineligible for competition this fall.” Bell was never awarded an athletic letter and apparently did not finish school. His presence on the team did cause a reaction from teammates and opponents alike since integrated football in the 1930s, in any form, was almost unheard of. The NFL was not integrated at this time and integration in southern colleges was almost unthinkable. It would be almost a decade before another African American player would join the Panther football team.



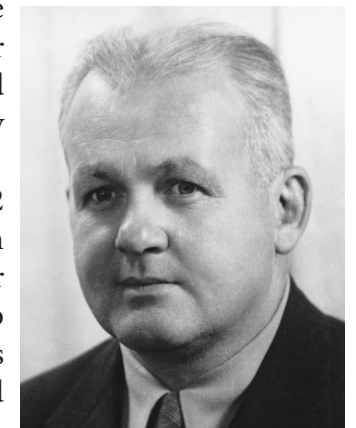
Russell Bell

1935-1957: Starbeck Dominates the North Central Conference

The 1935 football season was a time of transition for the Panthers. Coach John Baker resigned in June to accept a position at Municipal University of Omaha. His replacement was Dave McCuskey, but McCuskey wasn’t named until late August. A 1930 ISTC grad, McCuskey was a three-year all-conference selection and had been team captain his senior year. Since his graduation, he had served as the ISTC backfield coach as well as head wrestling coach. Unfortunately, McCuskey was forced to undergo nasal surgery, which required a leave of absence just four weeks after his appointment. As a result, on September 16, another new coach took over. Tom Johnson was a 1922 graduate of the University of Illinois where he had played for Robert Zuppke, “the Dean of Big Ten Football Coaches.” Johnson would lead the team only for one year until a search would designate a permanent coach for the team. ISTC opened against Cornell just three weeks after Johnson arrived on campus. Cornell fielded a strong squad that year, so it was considered a success when ISTC held them to a scoreless tie.

Also in 1935, ISTC began competing in the North Central Conference (NCC). Notably, however, they did not immediately leave the Iowa Conference right away, and as a result they could not vie for a title in either conference that year. Formed in 1922, an NCC title enabled the champion a shot at regional competition. At the time the Panthers joined the NCC, the affiliates included: North Dakota State, North Dakota University, Omaha University, South Dakota State, South Dakota University and Morningside College. The Panthers’ first win in the NCC came on November 16, 1935 when they defeated Morningside in Sioux City by a score of 41-7.

Following the 4-2-2 record by Coach Johnson and his team, a new leader was to emerge, one who would become synonymous with Panther football and NCC domination by ISTC. When Clyde “Buck” Star-



Buck Starbeck

beck was announced as the new head coach in March 1936, few perhaps could have imagined the impact he would eventually have on the program. Although ISTC had seen an almost revolving door of coaches during the first forty years of the program, it would be over twenty years before the Panthers would have another coach at the helm.

Starbeck was born January 7, 1900 at Montevideo, Minnesota. After graduating from high school in 1920, his first job was at Pipestone Indian School in Pipestone, Minnesota, where he served as coach and boys' counselor from 1921 to 1923. Starbeck went on to earn his Bachelor of Science degree from South Dakota State College in 1926, where he majored in history and biology and starred as a center on the football team. From 1927 to 1928 he headed up the physical education program at Eau Claire (Wisconsin) High School and coached football. The following year he began work as the football line coach at North Dakota University. He also carried the title Assistant Director of Athletics and remained in that position until coming to Iowa State Teachers College September 1936.

The new coach was an immediate sensation on the ISTC campus. "Yes sir!" exclaimed the school newspaper. "He's an all right guy. Our guess is that he's at least 6-feet, 1-inch and weighs nothing under two hundred pounds."

By the summer of 1936, Starbeck announced that his two assistant coaches would be Arthur Dickinson (who was also head track coach) and David McCuskey (who was serving as the head wrestling coach). Despite the destruction of the football stadium by a tornado on July 24, 1936, workouts with his new team progressed. The stadium that was destroyed had been a wooden structure and its devastation following the tornado was virtually complete. Plans to replace it with a new brick structure were undertaken almost immediately. Plans included expansion of the seating capacity, as well as office space, locker rooms and an indoor track. Work was completed on the first phase of the grandstands in time for the game against Coe on October 17.

Starbeck produced a 5-2-2 record during his first season. This was followed by disappointing outings in 1937 (2-4-3) and 1938 (3-5-1), but the team did manage another winning season in 1939 going 5-3-1. The 1939 season was considered a great comeback for the Panthers, as the squad had dropped three of their

first four contests before turning things around with victories in their last four outings.

Momentum was beginning to build and stars were developing under the new system. George Dutcher, a 1934 graduate of Waterloo West High School, was one of the standouts of this era, playing quarterback and halfback at ISTC from 1936 through 1939. He was named NCC All-Conference in 1938 and 1939 and was the conference MVP in 1938. He was also named to the honorable mention Little All-American team in 1938 and 1939. A notable aspect of Dutcher's history at ISTC is the fact that he later played one year of football for ISTC in 1945 at the age of 29. Having left school in 1939 without graduating, Dutcher returned for the 1945-46 academic year, played football, and graduated with the 1946 class. Due to the fact that he was married and the father of a baby girl during the 1945 season, he earned the nickname "Pappy."

Paul Jones, another early standout under Starbeck, was a 1938 ISTC graduate. Starring at the offensive end position, Jones was an all-conference selection in 1936 and again in 1937. In January 1938, Jones became the school's first first-team All-American football player when he was selected as first-team left end on the Williamson class-two squad (class-two selections were chosen from what would now be called the "mid-major" schools).

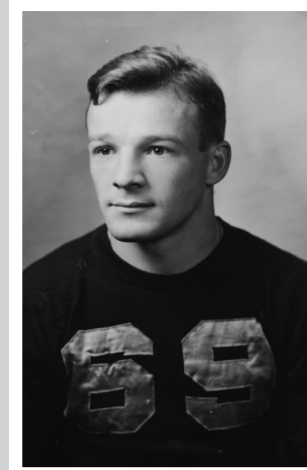
The backdrop of the 1939 squad's success occurred at the new and yet to be named stadium. The expansion of the stadium's seating capacity to 6,000 had been completed, but there was still work to be done on the interior of the building. Consequently, the dedication of the stadium, originally scheduled for the first football game of the '39 season was postponed pending its completion. During this delay, ISTC's President, O.R. Latham, who had been the driver behind the new stadium project, as well as a strong supporter of ISTC athletics, died following surgery in July of 1940. The decision to name the stadium for the late President was made and O.R. Latham Stadium was officially dedicated on October 26, 1940 at the ISTC vs. Kansas State Teachers football game.

1940 would be memorable in other respects. Indeed, while it took Starbeck five years of work before he fielded his first conference championship team. 1940 would see Starbeck win the first of the eight NCC titles he would earn during his tenure. Despite an opening

season loss to Creighton, the Panthers secured victories over their next eight opponents allowing Starbeck to officially clinch the NCC title for the first time on November 9 while defeating his alma mater.

Members of the 1940 ISTC football squad were often out-weighted by 10-15 pounds per man. As a result, they carried the nickname the "Mighty Midgets."

One of the notable "midgets" at this time was Charles Pastorino, who played high school ball at James Monroe High School in New York City before taking the field as the ISTC quarterback from 1939 through the 1941 season. A letter winner each year, Pastorino was named first-team North Central Conference quarterback and Little All-American in 1941. Pastorino was short in stature and weighed just 150 pounds enabling him to visually give credit to the proclaimed nickname. He later served in the US Army only to return after the war was over receiving his degree in 1947.



1940's success continued, as the Panthers locked up NCC titles in 1941 and 1942, going 4-3-1 and 6-1 respectively. Fans in Cedar Falls were becoming accustomed to winning. NCC losses were unheard of, but the rare non-conference losses still stung. Indeed, Iowa governor George Wilson was one of the stunned attendees when a jam-packed Latham Stadium crowd of 6,500 witnessed the team's twelve-game winning streak snap at the hands of Western Michigan the 1941 homecoming game. By 1942, the squad had shaken off the "Mighty Midget" label, as the size and potency of the Panthers was dramatically changed, but the successes continued to be documented. The team scored the most points in the history of the conference for a single season (175) and set the NCC record for the highest average points per game (35).

Despite the success on the football field, the attention of ISTC, like the attention of the nation, was turned overseas in the early 1940s. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on December

7, 1941, the United States found itself a participant in World War II. By 1943, induction into the armed services had claimed almost all able-bodied college men, leading to the temporary disbandment of the North Central Conference in the spring of 1943. On September 17, 1943, the College Eye reported that physical education director, Mendenhall, followed suit, and ordered the discontinuation of football at ISTC. Four of the coaches had joined the war effort and those that were still on campus were spending most of their time training the remaining male students for prospective military service and instructing a group of Army air crew students who were stationed on campus.

Football careers had been interrupted during the war years, but following its end, the game would return for the 1945 season. August "Pudge" Camarata, a Cedar Falls native, was a star halfback for ISTC and typified the career of many participants by serving both before and after the war. Starring as an all-state halfback for Cedar Falls High before enrolling at ISTC in 1942, Camarata was selected to the all-conference team in 1942 in spite of the fact that he missed the first three games of the season due to an ankle injury. In the fourth game of the year, he made his debut against Morning-side and rushed for 165 yards. After the '42 season, he served in the Marines from 1943 to 1945, receiving a Silver Star and a Purple Heart for action on Okinawa before returning to campus and leading the Panthers to the 1946 NCC Championship. He was the team's leading scorer (66 points) that year and averaged 8.6 yards-per-carry. He was a 1946 all-conference pick as well as



Coach Starbeck is shown here working with his team members. The football equipment being worn by the players was considered the most current at the time.

a third-team Little All-American choice by the Associated Press. In 1947, Camarata was a 12th-round draft choice for the Detroit Lions and signed with the Lions for that season. He returned to campus and finished his degree in 1948.

Despite a 3-3 record in 1945, in which the NCC was still disbanded, the post-war teams returned to championship form soon enough. Starbeck and his Panthers claimed at least a share of the NCC title in 1946, '47, '48, and '49. In 1949, the remarkable NCC streak finally ended with a 13-14 loss to South Dakota State. This loss marked the first conference defeat for ISTC since 1939, a streak that totaled 31 consecutive conference games without a loss (although there had been ties). With this streak, the Panthers became the first college in the nation to win or share a conference championship seven consecutive times.

Notably, the post-war squads were the first to represent any notable level of integration within the Panther program. Although Russell Bell attempted an injury-riddled career in the early 1930s, it was not until 1945 when other African American players would join the Panthers. One, Paul DeVan, was a key member of the Panther football team between 1945 and 1949.

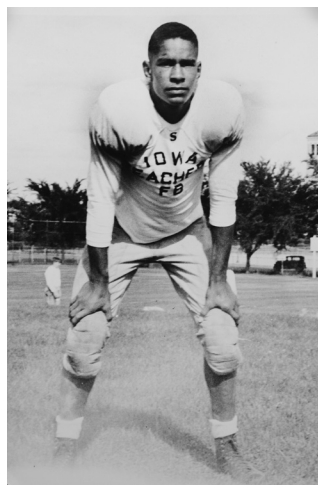
DeVan, who led the league in scoring in '47, '48 and '49, accumulated a total of 132 points in the three years, making the 6-foot 170-pound halfback the highest scoring player in the history of the NCC. He was an honorable-mention Little All-American in 1947, and in '48 and '49 he was named all-conference on both the offensive and defensive teams. In 1949 DeVan was named to the Associated Press First-Team All-American squad. In 1953, he signed with the LA Rams and then moved to the Canadian League with the Calgary Stampeders before returning to the Rams the following year.

The 1950s produced only one additional conference title (1952), but still produced many standout performances and moments. Dick Beetsch was a standout pass receiver for the Panther football team in the

mid-1950s. In his career at ISTC, he had 153 receptions for a total of 2,288 yards and 53 touchdowns for 212 points. He once scored four touchdowns in one game. In 1953, he had 54 catches to lead the nation's small colleges. He was a letter-winner in football, basketball and baseball and was an all-conference football selection in 1954. In an article in the March 2, 1956 *College Eye*, he was referred to as "Iron Man Beetsch" and it was reported that he had never missed a college athletic contest in any sport due to injury or illness over his entire four-year career at ISTC. Beetsch was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams in 1956.

The record book identifies eight Panthers that have scored four touchdowns in a single game beginning with Art Landau (1953 vs. Morningside), Dick Beetsch (1954 vs. South Dakota), Randy Schultz (1965 vs. South Dakota), Terry Allen (1976 vs. Nebraska-Omaha & 1978 vs. North Dakota), Kelly Ellis (1977 vs. South Dakota), Dedric Ward (1995 vs. Western Illinois), Adam Bengel (1998 vs. Youngstown State), and Tirrell Rennie (2010 vs. Illinois State).

Starbeck was an intense and tireless worker. He suffered the loss of two of his three young sons in 1944, and his wife passed away in 1947. Football became the intense focus of his life, and his health suffered accordingly. He suffered the first of his heart attacks in 1952, after which his doctor advised him to "Give up football." In an interview sometime later, Starbeck remembered, "I never thought twice about taking the doctor's advice and giving up football. I simply told him this. A man can't spend over 35 years in the game and suddenly brush it aside. I would rather continue coaching and ease off a bit than retire to an easy chair and worry myself to death. And I can think of no place I would rather die than between the goal posts." Starbeck continued to coach for five more years until he suffered his second heart attack during a game against South Dakota on November 2, 1957. He again survived the coronary and physicians ordered him to remain physically inactive for a few weeks. Starbeck said, "My doctor advised me to take this rest to give my heart a chance for complete recovery. That means going home and going to bed." Unfortunately, the bed rest was not enough, Starbeck passed away after suffering yet another coronary on December 21, 1957.



Paul DeVan

Starbeck's legacy at ISTC was indisputable. His all-time record of 95 wins, 58 losses, 10 ties, and eight conference championships, makes him one of the most notable figures in Panther football history. However, as unbelievable as it would have sounded to the mourning Panther faithful in 1957, a new "Sheriff" would bring the team to new heights soon enough, but first it was time for the Hammer era to take front and center stage.

Lay the Hammer Down

Following the death of Starbeck, ISTC chose Willard "Bill" Hammer to lead the squad for the 1958 season. Hammer had been coaching football at the University of Oregon since 1953. Prior to his time at Oregon, he had been an assistant coach at Springfield College in Massachusetts and at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He played at the guard position while in college at Springfield, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1949 and his master's degree in 1950.

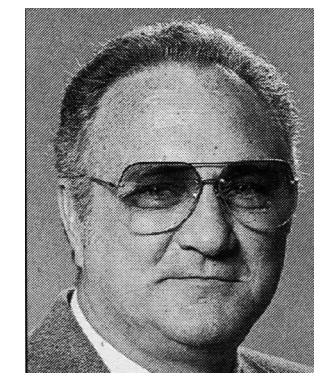
Hopes were high that year. A number of stars from the Starbeck era were returning, including Mason City native Dennis Remmert, one of the premier offensive linemen in small college football. Shortly after he arrived in Cedar Falls, Coach Hammer initiated a weekly column in the campus newspaper called "The Coaches Corner," which was intended to help establish a relationship between the football program and ISTC's 3,500 students. In the first edition of the column, Hammer extended, "... an open invitation to students to visit with us on and off the practice field." The concerted effort to develop support for the football program among the students was initially successful, as was the program. Roaring to a 4-0 start, the Panthers were at one point the eighth-ranked small college football team in the country. A rather dismal finish (five straight losses and 7th place finish in the conference) resulted in substantial dissatisfaction once the dust settled on 1958's outing. At one point, the coach was even hanged in effigy by a group of ISTC students. Apparently, following the legendary Coach Starbeck and his outstanding record was going to be a challenge.

However, Remmert did enjoy another banner year and at the end of his playing days as a Panther Remmert signed with the Buffalo Bills. The December 17, 1959 *College Eye* reported that a "solemn ceremony"

was held as part of the football banquet, during which "Coach Hammer announced the retirement of Dennis Remmert's jersey which, judging from its appearance, was ready for the archives anyway." After playing with the Bills that year, he returned to campus in 1961 to complete his undergraduate degree and serve as an assistant football coach with the Panthers.

After a somewhat better (6-3 and 4th in the conference) season, Hammer moved on to Santa Barbara, California and was replaced by the man who had been his line coach for two years. Stan Sheriff, like Starbeck before him, personified the toughness he brought out in his squads. While few fans could imagine a Panther squad without Starbeck in 1957, few likewise could imagine the Panther squad without Sheriff when he departed following the 1982 season.

A New "Sheriff" in Town



Stan Sheriff

Sheriff was a 1954 graduate of California Polytechnic University in San Luis Obispo, where he had been a three-time all-conference selection and most valuable player in the league and was named Little All-American in 1953. He had also been selected that year to play in the East-West Shrine game and in the Hula Bowl, which was a game played between college all-stars and professional players. He then played one year with the Pittsburgh Steelers before entering the US Army during the Korean conflict. Thereafter, Sheriff played a year each with the San Francisco '49ers and the Cleveland Browns before beginning his coaching career at ISTC.

As the new head coach, Sheriff produced immediate results, and in his first season at the helm in 1960, he led his squad to a feat that even the legendary Buck Starbeck could not boast: an undefeated regular season. The 9-0 record that year marked the first squad to accomplish an undefeated regular season since Clayton B. Simmons produced a 6-0 outing in 1909, 51 seasons prior. This also earned Sheriff the NCC title and a nomination for the American Football Coaches Association's Small College Coach of the Year award (he was ulti-

mately selected as the NCAA's Fifth District Coach of the Year.)

Led by quarterback Jerry Morgan, the 1960 squad was at times a high flying offense (the team trounced Mankato State 41-0 and South Dakota 40-0), while at times they relied on a scrappy defense (the team gutted out a 7-3 victory at North Dakota). Morgan earned the nickname "Mr. Everything," that year, as he was also the team's placekicker and punter and sometimes played wide receiver and returned kicks. He was chosen an all-American by both the Williams committee and the AP. After graduating in 1961, he played for the Providence Steamrollers of the Atlantic Coast Conference, where he was conference MVP in 1964.

Also aiding the Panthers cause in 1960 was George Asleson. Originally from Charles City, Asleson spent the first two years of his college football career at the University of Iowa. Following a four-year stint in the Air Force, Asleson then came to UNI and spent the 1959 and 1960 seasons as an offensive guard and tackle. He was a co-captain of the 1960 squad, during which he was also selected as a first-team all-conference lineman and an AP All-American

Unfortunately for the Panthers, the dream season of 1960 ended with a blemish. Earning a bid in their first-ever bowl game, ISTC went down in defeat 17-6 to Hillsdale College at the Mineral Water Bowl in Excelsior Springs, Mo. Despite the conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday, 600 excited Panther fans made the journey to support the team. George Asleson was chosen the most valuable lineman by the bowl's officials.

In 1961, the Iowa State Teacher's College became the State College of Iowa. The renamed SCI Panthers remained in fine form in the early 1960s, going 7-2 in 1961, 7-1-1 in 1962, and 5-3-1 in 1963. The '61 and '62 squads earned ties for the NCC title, aided by outstanding halfback/fullback Dan Boals. Boals, originally from Urbandale, Illinois, rushed for a total of 2,377 yards during his 1959-'62 college career and had a 5.8 yards-per-carry average. A four-year letterman and a co-captain his junior and senior years, Boals was chosen to play in the All-American Bowl his senior year in 1962, the first player in school history to boast such an honor. He set the SCI school records for rushing yards in a single season (1,039), points scored in a single season (90) and most yards in one game (208).

Also providing a spark for the Panthers during this era was Wendell Williams of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa who played for Sheriff from 1958-1962. He was one of the best defensive guards in school history, earning first-team all-conference honors in 1960 and 1961 and an AP All-American in 1961.

It was the 1964 season, however, that culminated the early success of the Sheriff era. The '64 roster was loaded with some of the most revered names in Panther football history. The roster included such names as: Columbus Junction native Loren Buser who played from 1963-1965 for SCI. A standout defensive player, he was an all-conference linebacker his senior year and was elected captain of the SCI team. In 1965, he captained the Small-College All-Iowa team in a game pitting players from the University of Iowa and Iowa State against small college players. Buser was drafted by the Montreal Alouettes of the CFL for whom he played linebacker for two years. In his first season with the Alouettes, he called the defensive signals, a rarity for a rookie.

Then there was the ignitable Phil Minnick of Iowa City who was co-captain in 1963 and 1964. He was chosen the most valuable lineman in the NCC in '64 and was an honorable mention all-American in 1963 and '64. He later played for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the CFL for eight seasons, during which he was the team's most valuable lineman three times, team captain for three years, and was selected as a CFL All-Pro three times. He was elected to the CFL Hall of Fame in 1988.

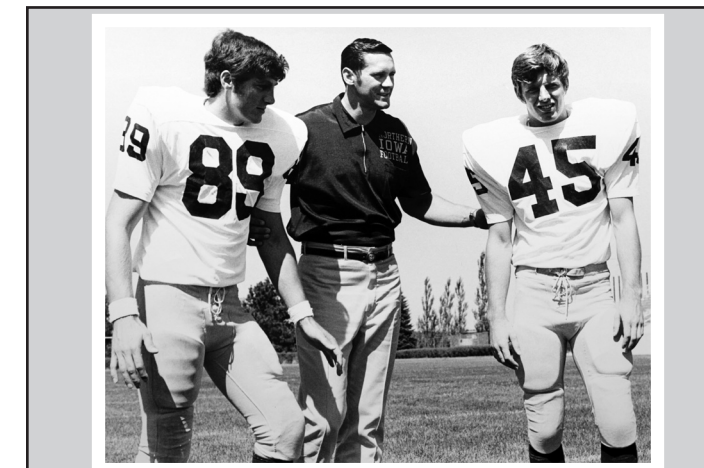


Randy Schultz still shows up in the record book as ninth in rushing yards, ninth in rushing attempts, points scored in a single game (24) and making four touchdowns in a single game.

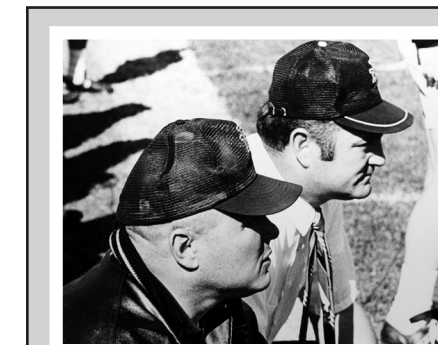
And what can be said about Randy Shultz, a native of Alden, Iowa who played from 1963-1965, and was arguably the most outstanding player of Sheriff's tenure? A three-time all-NCC running back, he also led the conference in rushing for three-consecutive years

and was chosen the outstanding back in the conference twice. He held many conference records including most TDs in a game (4), most points in a game (24), and most yards in a single game (253). He was a two-time AP Little All-American and boasted career totals of 2,800 yards, 581 carries and 22 TDs in his 28 games at SCI. In his final year, Schultz was selected to play in the Senior Bowl. He was the first SCI player to be drafted by the NFL having been selected in the fifth round by the Cleveland Browns for whom he played in 1966 and '67. He also played for the New Orleans Saints in 1968 and 1969.

Despite two regular-season losses, the 1964 Panthers claimed a share of the NCC title yet again, and their 8-2 regular season record earned the squad a trip to their second post-season test in school history. On December 12, 1964 the Panthers earned a hard-fought



Coach Dennis Remmert coached the defensive line and the linebackers. He is talking with two of his defensive players, no. 45 Jim Luhring and no. 89 Mike Filer; both were co-captains on the 1970 team.



Coach Sheriff always had a talented staff of assistant coaches working with him. He chose his staff carefully and had them coach in the lineup where they would benefit the team most. Coach Sheriff is seen here with assistant coach Don Erusha, his offensive line coach.

19-17 victory over Lamar Tech in the Pecan Bowl in Abilene, Texas. Randy Schultz was chosen the outstanding back and Loren Buser was chosen as the outstanding defensive lineman in the game.

Unfortunately for the Panthers, the 1965 season would usher in an era of frustration for the fans because from 1965-1973 there was only one winning season, that being 1967, the year State College of Iowa became the University of Northern Iowa (UNI).

1975 saw a change in the team's fortunes, when Sheriff's squad managed a 9-2 regular season outing. Providing thrills to Panther fans that year was quarterback Bill Salmon. A native of Cedar Falls, Salmon was the starting quarterback 1972-75. In 1975, he was chosen most valuable player in the NCC, as well as all-conference quarterback and an AP All-American. He amassed career totals of 4,234 regular season yards and 5,731 yards including playoffs. He was drafted by the Minnesota Vikings, but an off-season injury prevented him from playing for them. Salmon would later return and have a successful career as an assistant coach at UNI, where he remains as the offensive coordinator.

UNI's successful regular season in 1975 led the squad to the Division II playoffs for the first time in school history, in which the Panthers drew Western Kentucky in the first round. It was also the last game ever played in O.R. Latham field, and as a result of the difficult weather conditions that prevailed that day, the game has been remembered ever since as the "Mud Bowl." Hampered by heavy rain, 42 degree temperatures and a 16 mph wind, the Panthers trailed the entire game, but closed to within two points when they scored a touchdown with 12:25 left in the game. UNI's defense held the Hilltoppers scoreless the rest of the way, but the Panthers missed field goals of 38 and 27, and lost the game, 14-12. UNI finished the season with a 9-3 record, their best effort since Sheriff took over in 1960.

The 1976 season is not widely remembered for the results on the field (a respectable 8-3), but rather for the christening of a new venue for the Panther football team. For years, Sheriff had been working to secure an indoor, multi-use, domed facility to replace the aging O.R. Latham Stadium. Although the idea was controversial before and after it became a reality, Sheriff saw the project through. The dedication of the UNI-Dome took place on September 4, 1976, during a football game against Northern Michigan. It provided seating



These Cedar Falls Records photos by Mike Weber capture the infamous "Mud Bowl" played under the most horrific conditions.

Coach Remmert discussed the game this way. "The weather was miserably cold with a combination of rain, sleet and snow. The athletic administration attempted to improve field conditions by spreading sand and straw over the wettest areas in the middle of the field and inside the 10-yard line. By the second quarter, players were in ankle deep mud and water. Many of the UNI players got in the showers with their uniforms on at half-time to wash the mud and sand that had worked up under their shoulder pads. Since they were already soaked from the rain, some players simply took a hot shower to warm up.

UNI lost 14-12 by missing two extra points and two late field goals. Kicking the football was very challenging due to weather and field conditions. Coach Sheriff commented on the kicking conditions which appeared in the January 1976 UNI Century, "The difficult weather made kicking an uncertain art since the

kicker could never be certain where his stationary foot would go in the mud."

Late in the game, UNI forced WKU to punt close to their goal line. The lone UNI punt returner, Jim "Speedy" Thomas, was sent late to rush the punter rather than attempt a return. He approached the line-of-scrimmage full speed, but his timing was early. He had to try to stop or be called offside and give WKU a first down. Mud was flying from his feet much like ice shavings when a hockey player attempts to stop quickly. The mud sprayed on the ball and the long-ball snapper. The ball rolled back to the punter who narrowly got the punt off. The ball went downfield and abruptly stopped in the mud.



The hard fought game is probably best seen on the face of no. 77, Mike Timmermans from George, Iowa. The all-conference, Little All-American played on the defense side of the game.

for 16,400 spectators for football, which was played on a synthetic turf floor which could be rolled up in about 45 minutes. Under the turf were a basketball court and an eight-lane 220-yard track. The roof, rising 124 feet above the arena floor, was a 168,000 square-foot fiberglass dome. It was supported by 12 steel cables and four air blowers so that no pillars were necessary and thus there were no visual obstructions. The days of outdoor football games on the UNI campus were at an end.

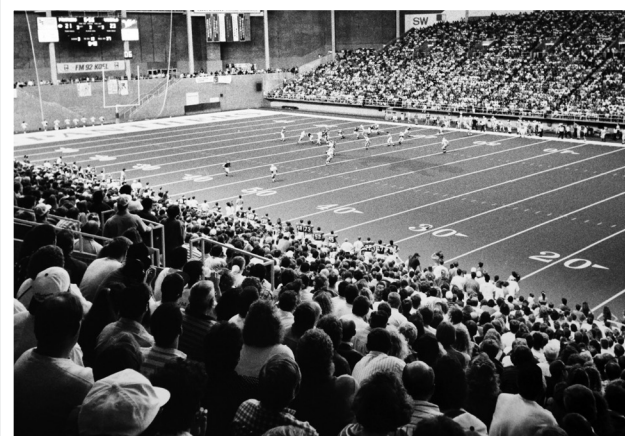
Although the team stayed respectable during the remainder of Sheriff's tenure, sharing the Mid-Continent Conference title during his final two seasons (1981 and 1982), he was unable to duplicate the success of his early years. Indeed, at times the UNI-Dome was

as much an attraction as the team itself. In September 1978, influenced by the new facility, ABC broadcast the first ever televised Panther football game in history, a 31-14 loss to Youngstown State.

Sheriff continued as UNI's head coach until 1982, compiling a 129-101-4 overall record. His teams won or shared four North Central and two Mid-Continent Conference titles. Sheriff produced 88 all-conference players; eight first team Little All-Americans and eight league-leading rushers. Nine of his players also won league most valuable back or lineman awards. Beginning in 1970 he also served as the school's athletic director, a post in which he remained after his resignation as head football coach.



The 1976 version of the UNI-Dome shown across Hudson Road from O.R. Latham Stadium. As the Dome became the home for UNI football, basketball and indoor track, the O.R. Latham complex was demolished and turned into a parking lot serving Schindler Ed. Center, the West Gym and the yet-to-be-built Kamerick Art Building.



The inside of the UNI-Dome provided a constant environment for the players and the fans. While some quipped when the Panthers were on offense, "Okay, now we have the wind in our backs," the friendly confines of the Dome produced its own ledger full of records.

Coach Remmert remembers Stan Sheriff this way. "Stan Sheriff was a tireless worker whose ground breaking achievements are evident at UNI today with the Scholarship Club, conference and NCAA affiliations, Title IX structures and the UNI-Dome. These projects were either initiated or greatly enhanced by

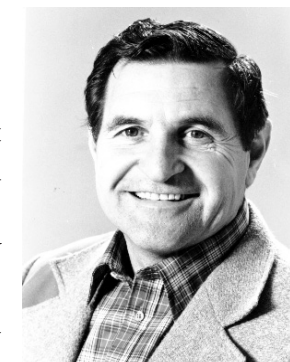
Stan while serving as the athletic director and football coach. Stan's strongest attribute was player/coach relationships, particularly evident during the early stages of his head coaching years.

"Stan had an excellent football mind, especially with defensive strategies. He demanded hard-nose play and a player's best effort as he demonstrated himself as an All-American and NFL linebacker. Beneath the hard shell of Stan Sheriff was a considerate and soft-hearted person. Being the father of three sons, he knew parents' concerns about the future of their sons so he always met with visiting recruits and their parents privately. This was a very time consuming process, but effective with recruit commitment."

As the man largely responsible for the construction of the UNI-Dome, its playing surface is named Sheriff Field in his honor. In August of 1983, Sheriff became the Athletic Director at the University of Hawaii, the state of his birth. Stan Sheriff died of a heart attack on January 16, 1993 at the age of 60. As of 2011, he retains the distinction of being the winningest football coach in history at UNI.

1983-1997: Mudra and Allen's Panthers Rock the Dome

On December 21, 1982, UNI named the replacement for Stan Sheriff. New head coach Darrell Mudra came to UNI with a considerable legacy of success in college football. At the time of his hire, Mudra boasted a record of 157-65-3, during which he had led several



Darrell Mudra

different squads to no fewer than nine post-season playoff bids. A native of Omaha, Nebraska, Mudra was a 1951 graduate of Nebraska-Omaha and, in 1965, completed an Ed.D. at Colorado State. That degree, along with his many victories in I-AA football, earned Mudra the nickname "Dr. Victory" in coaching circles. Never one to conform to orthodoxy, Mudra did not coach from the sideline during games, but rather remained in the coaches' box high above the field. While at the helm at UNI, he took the Panthers to the NCAA Division I-AA Semifinals in 1985 vs. Georgia Southern (40-33) and

Dr. Victory, as he was often called, always coached his teams, during the games, from the booth. He was in communication with his coaches on the field, but felt he could see what was happening from the booth better and could make decisions accordingly.



1987 vs. Louisiana-Monroe (44-41 in OT). Both times the team that defeated UNI went on to capture the championship. At the end of his final season, Mudra's squad was ranked fourth nationally and finished with a 10-4 record.

Some of the biggest stars Mudra coached were 5-foot-10 quarterback Mike Smith who passed for 9,067 yards and 68 touchdowns from 1984-87. Smith still ranks third, all-time, on the Panthers' career-list for total yards with 8,982.

Among other stars for Mudra were running back Carl Boyd, an all-American in 1987, and defensive back Joe Fuller, an all-American in 1985. It was also during this time a walk-on player from Waukon, Iowa by the name of Mark Farley earned all-conference honors in 1984-86. Although he graduated from UNI in 1986, it wouldn't be the last time Panther fans would hear the name Farley.

Mudra coached for five years at UNI and retired (to "go fishing" as he put it) in May of 1988 having compiled a 43-16-1 record in Cedar Falls. At the time of his retirement (at age 59), he said he did not intend to coach football again and, true to his word, he never did.

Following Darrell Mudra's retirement, Pittsburgh, PA native Earle Bruce was named UNI's head coach on June 29, 1988. Bruce had been fired after the 1987 season as the head coach at Ohio State University where he had been for 9 years. At OSU, Bruce had a record of 81-26-1, with a 57-17 record in Big Ten play. He had won or shared the Big Ten title four times and taken his team to eight bowl games, of which they won 5. Prior to OSU, Bruce had coached for six years at Iowa State, compiling a 36-32 record. A major factor in his decision to come to UNI was that his former colleague at

Ohio State, Eldon Miller, was the head basketball coach at UNI and was one of those who convinced Bruce to come to Cedar Falls.

Even during the recruiting process, some members of the selection committee wondered whether Bruce might be using UNI as a stepping stone back into Division I coaching. When asked about that, Bruce replied, "UNI has a high quality football program, one that is growing and getting better. Anyone who can predict where they are going to be a year from now is crazy. I live for now. Every job I take I look to finish my career there." Less than six months later, after going 5-6, Bruce resigned as UNI's head coach and accepted a position as head coach at Colorado State University.

The Terry Allen Show

On January 5, 1989, at age 32, Terry Allen became the nation's youngest head football coach at the Division I-A or I-AA level. He was also entering his 15th consecutive year at UNI, having been a player, an assistant coach and now the head coach.

Allen first came to UNI in 1975 when he was recruited from Iowa City West High School where he was an all-state quarterback. He took just a few snaps during his freshman year (the last year the team played at Latham Field, culminating in the infamous "Mud Bowl"), but was a starter for the next three years.

At the time of his hiring as head coach, he still held or shared three school records: pass attempts in a season (397), TDs in a game (4) and points scored in a game (24). He was an assistant coach under Stan Sheriff, Darrell Mudra and Earle Bruce. When he was selected as head coach, Allen said, "I'm a UNI guy. It's the goal of every college coach to be able to lead his alma mater. I'm proud to be an alum of this institution, to have been an assistant coach here and to carry on in its tradition."

In an interview conducted shortly after being appointed to his new job, Allen was asked about his goals for his first year squad. He replied, "The biggest

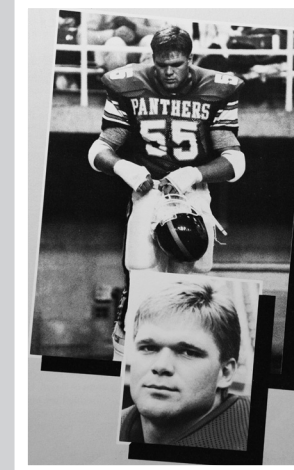


Terry Allen

goal with this group is getting the program back on its feet. The last eight months or so, these players have been on a physical and emotional roller coaster. We need to get the program back on steady ground. Winning is important, of course, but having the players happy and having them feel like they know what direction the program is heading in, that's more important."

Allen's first team had lost 19 seniors to graduation and had just three starters returning on offense. The preseason poll had them picked to finish 5th (of 7 teams) in the Gateway Conference. He did have some returning standouts on defense including Bryce Paup and James Jones, both of whom would later play in the NFL. Paup would go on to become a four-time Pro Bowl selection and in 1995 was named AFC Defensive Player of the Year while playing for the Buffalo Bills. He was most recently listed as one of the top 50 Buffalo Bill players of all-time. James Jones would sign with the Cleveland Browns. And like Paup and Jones, UNI foot-

From the 1990 Old Gold, Bryce talks about his new coach. "The team really turned around when Earle Bruce left. Terry Allen wasn't very hard to adjust to because he's been around for so long. The main reason we were so successful during the season was because Terry said we were going to be. All he had to do was say it, and we did it."



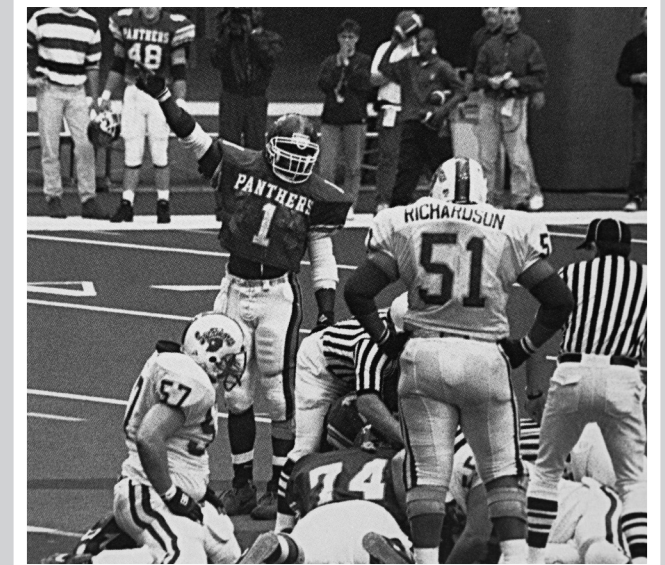
ball has had many of its players find positions with pro-level football.

With those players that he had on his team, Allen set to work, vowing to return UNI to the more wide-open style of offense that he had learned under Sheriff and Mudra. By the end of his first year at the helm, Allen had proved he could indeed "get the program back on its feet" by finishing with an 8-3 record overall and going 4-2 in the conference, which was good enough for a second place tie.

In his second season, Allen led the Panthers to the Gateway Conference title and an automatic bid to the NCAA Division I-AA playoffs. They clinched the



Coach Terry Allen is lifted before a packed house following a 38-21 win over Weber State in the first game of the 1991 post-season playoffs.

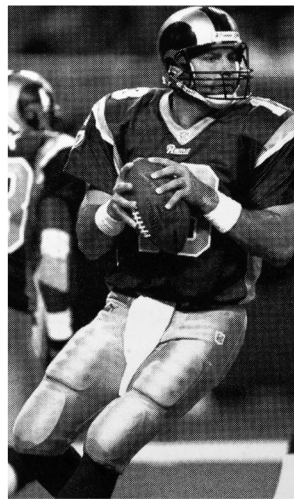


Andre Allen (no. 1) letting the fans know that the fumble was recovered by the Panthers in a game against the Indiana State Sycamores.

conference title in November in the first-ever sellout in the Dome when 16,324 fans shook the building as the Panthers defeated previously second-ranked Southwest Missouri State 20-17.

It was during that 1990 season, Lakeville, Minnesota native sophomore Jay Johnson won a tightly-contested quarterback battle over then an unknown redshirt freshman by the name of Kurt Warner. Johnson would lead the Panthers to a 31-6 record and three I-AA playoff appearances, including a trip to the 1992 semi-finals with Youngstown State while passing for 8,341 yards and 60 touchdowns.

After graduation Kurt Warner signed a free agent contract with the Green Bay Packers. With the Packers loaded at quarterback with Brett Favre, Mark Brunell and Ty Detmer, Warner was released and found himself stocking shelves at the Cedar Falls Hy-Vee for \$5.50 an hour before the Iowa Barnstormers of the Arena Football League came a calling. Warner led the Barnstormers to the AFL championship game in both 1996 and 1997. During the summer of 1998 Warner played for the Amsterdam Admirals in NFL-Europe as an allocated player by the St. Louis Rams and then backed-up Tony Banks and Steve Bono during the 1998 NFL season.



After the Rams released both Banks and Bono prior to the 1999 season and signed Trent Green, it appeared Warner would serve another year as a backup in the NFL. But Green tore his ACL in a pre-season game, and Warner proceeded to lead a team featuring Marshall Faulk, Isaac Bruce and Torry Holt to the 1999 Super Bowl Championship.

All told, Warner led the Rams back to the Super Bowl in 2001 and after many in the NFL thought his career was over, led the once down-trodden Arizona Cardinals to the 2008 Super Bowl where they lost the game in the fourth quarter, 27-23.

Warner led the Cardinals back to the playoffs in 2009, but after a serious concussion in second-round playoff game Warner announced his retirement on January 29, 2010.

Warner garnered many accolades and awards for his leadership and QB accomplishments. To read his complete story is a joy and to know he was once one of the Panthers allows an element of pride for that connection. Because of his success, Warner is considered by some as the best undrafted player to ever grace the NFL.

It was during that stretch, as well, that UNI produced several more NFL players - defensive back Willie Beamon, wide receiver Kenny Shedd as well as

two of the finest defensive players to wear the Purple and Gold, defensive ends William Freeney and Andre Allen.

In 1993, and still an unknown, Warner would take over the quarterback job for the Panthers and lead them to an 8-4 record including a first-round I-AA playoff loss to Boston University in two overtimes 21-27.

As for Terry Allen and UNI, the Panthers reached the playoffs for three more consecutive seasons losing in the quarterfinals 41-24 to Marshall in 1995, and losing to again to the Thundering Herd and Randy Moss in 1996 in the semifinals, 31-14, after having won over Eastern Illinois 21-14 and William & Mary 38-35.

One of the Panthers biggest stars from 1993 to '96 was wide receiver Detric Ward who ranks as the all-time leading receiver with 4,539 career receiving yards. The Cedar Rapids native also ranks first in career touchdown catches with 50. Ward later went on to play in the NFL, first with the New York Jets and later with the Dolphins, Patriots, Ravens and Cowboys.

A big change came after the 1996 season. With all the success Allen had at the helm of the Panther program, he decided to take the head coaching position at the University of Kansas in the Big 12. It was now time for the Mike Dunbar era to begin.

1997-2010: Hunt for the FCS Title

Following the departure of Terry Allen, UNI selected Mike Dunbar to serve as the new head football coach on January 9, 1997. Dunbar came to Cedar Falls from the University of Toledo, where he had been offensive coordinator. A Seattle, Washington native, Dunbar played college ball as a defensive back at Michigan State. Prior to his time at Toledo, he was head coach at Central Washington University, where he compiled a 54-9-1 record over 6 seasons. Leading the team through the 1997-2000 seasons, Dunbar attained a respectable 29-15 record at UNI. Panther fans, however, had grown accustomed to life at the top of the Gateway Conference, and Dunbar failed to secure a conference title or earn the Panthers a shot at post-season play during his four year run. At the end of his four years as the Panther football coach, he stepped away accepting a spot on Northwestern's coaching staff following the 2000 season.

During his tenure, however, Dunbar did coach two of the most prolific offensive players in UNI histo-

ry - quarterback Ryan Helming and wide receiver Mike Furrey. Helming remains first for all-time career passing with 9,089 yards, first in pass attempts (1,093) and first in passing touchdowns (77). Furrey was a favorite target for the quarterbacks and holds down the third position for reception yards (3,544) behind Eddie Berlin (3735) and Detric Ward (4,539). Furry also holds the second spot with his 242 pass receptions behind Eddie Berlin's 249. Following his playing days at UNI, Furrey played in the NFL, primarily with the Detroit Lions and St. Louis Rams.

The Walk-on from Waukon

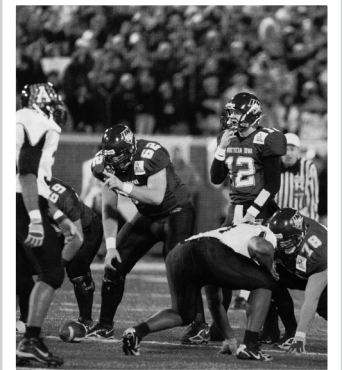
In 2001, UNI looked to one of their own to lead the Panthers back to glory. Mark Farley, affectionately known as the "Walk-on from Waukon," after having served as an assistant under Terry Allen at both UNI and Kansas, jumped at the chance to lead his alma mater. He wasted no time establishing the Panthers as a force to be reckoned with in the Gateway Football Conference once again winning the Panthers first conference title and playoff appearance since 1996, and the Panthers followed with another in 2003 beating Montana State 35-14 before losing to Delaware in the quarter finals in the Dome. The 2004 finished with a 7-4 win-loss record missing out a playoff bid.

Then in 2005, the Panthers posted what is the most memorable season in school history.

Coach Mark Farley takes the helm with the UNI Panthers. He knows football. As an inside linebacker for UNI, Farley earned honorable mention all-American honors twice, was named Gateway Conference co-Defensive Player of the Year and was named a two-time academic all-American. He led the team in tackles three consecutive years.



Eric Sanders calling the play behind center (no. 62 Eric Hoffman). No. 78 is Tyler Rawlins at the guard position and no. 69 Barrett Anderson at the right guard position. Eric Sanders is at the top for career total offense with 9,579 yards.

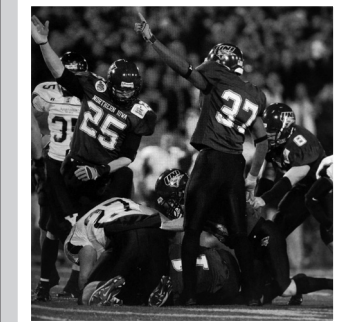


The regular season was one of constant excitement, as the Panthers shocked Western Kentucky in two overtimes and defeated Southern Illinois in dramatic fashion in the regular season finale to secure a share of the Gateway title and a shot at a postseason title. The offense received a spark from Oelwein native Eric Sanders, who took over the reins at quarterback when Tom Petrie sustained a season-ending collarbone injury.

Having established an 8-3 record in the regular season, the drama intensified during the FCS playoffs. In the first round, UNI defeated Eastern Washington at home with a 31-yard field goal by Brian Wingert with 51 seconds remaining to secure a 41-38 win. After securing another tight 24-21 win at New Hampshire the following week, UNI had to travel once again; this time to San Marcos, Texas to square off against Texas State.

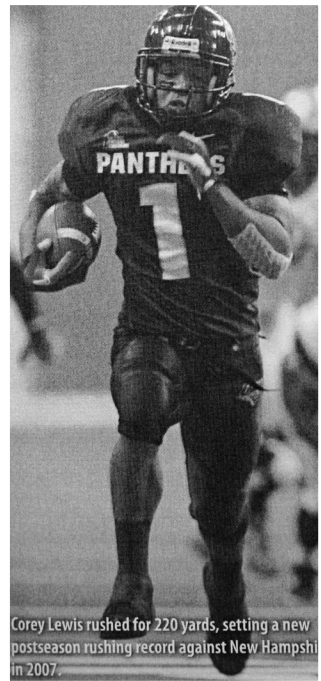
The energy was there and the atmosphere was electrified as Eric Sanders passed for a career-high 417 yards and another fantastic finish, a 40-37 overtime victory.

The semifinal win over Texas State meant the Panthers would travel to Chattanooga, Tennessee to meet Appalachian State Mountaineers out of the Southeast Conference. If the excitement was an indicator of what Panther fans were capable of in the three previous games, it was more-so here as an estimated 10,000 fans found their way to Finley Stadium. A defensive game, the Panthers had the tide turn in the waning minutes



No. 25 free safety Matt Tharp and no. 37 strong safety Clifford Waters signal the Panthers have recovered the fumble.

and their luck simply ran out in the school's first ever appearance in an FCS National Championship game. When the final horn sounded, the UNI Purple and Gold team had to settle for the runner-up position due



No. 1 Corey Lewis provided a lot of the offense during his playing career from 2005-08. He ended his time as a Panther in the number one position for rushing yards (4,003), in fourth position for rushing attempts (704) behind Jeff Stovall (873), Adam Bengé (786) and Terrance Freney (720). Lewis stands in second position for rushing touchdowns (39) behind Jeff Stovall with 46.

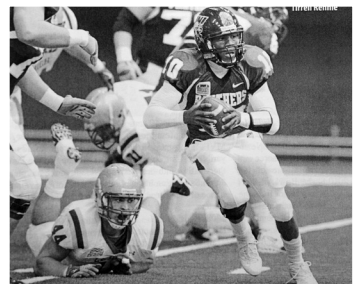
Corey Lewis rushed for 220 yards, setting a new postseason rushing record against New Hampshire in 2007.



L.J. Fort - Second in all of Division I football for total tackles and tackles per game.



Ben Boothby - FCS Defensive Tackle of the Year (College Football Performance Award).



Tirrell Rennie - Runner-up MVFC Offensive Player of the Year for second consecutive season.

to the 21-16 score. Coach Farelly: "This season has been one that will be remembered. It was outstanding to see the number of UNI people that this brought together. It put a little hop in their step because of the pride." He continued, "Appalachian State has a great football team. It's a game of inches and in this one we didn't have the inches fall in our direction."

It wouldn't be long before the Panthers would take fans on another thrill ride. Despite missing the playoffs in 2006, the 2007 squad secured a perfect 11-0 regular season, a feat that had not been performed since Stan Sheriff's Mineral Water Bowl squad of 1960.

The perfect run was made sweeter with a 24-13 win over intra-state rival Iowa State in Ames. Panther fans flocked to the Dome in droves, as UNI twice topped the all-time attendance record that year. The team's victory against Southern Illinois drew 17,074 fans, and still stands as the all-time largest crowd at a UNI home game. Unfortunately for the Panthers, the playoff woes continued. Although UNI secured a gutsy 38-35 win over New Hampshire in the first round, they were outmatched by Delaware the following week by a score of 39-27 and finished the year 12-1.

The 2008 season resulted in another playoff run for UNI. Despite a humbling 41-17 loss to national powerhouse BYU, along with a heartbreaking 27-24 defeat at the hands of conference rival Southern Illinois, UNI finished with a strong 10-2 regular season.



The Panthers emerge from the tunnel led by tight-end Jacob Rathmacher (no. 86), kicker Tyler Sievertsen (no. 38) and offensive lineman Jay Teply (no. 72).

After securing playoff wins against Maine (40-15) and New Hampshire (36-34), Panther fans began dreaming of a repeat trip to Chattanooga for the FCS Championship. Unfortunately, Richmond had other ideas, as the Spiders rallied from a two-touchdown deficit to knock UNI out of the playoffs in a heartbreaking 21-20 decision.

In 2009 UNI went 7-4, and followed up the 2010 season with a 7-5 mark, which included a first-round loss to Lehigh in the FCS playoffs. And with the 2011 season, the Panthers hope to get back to the playoffs with victories through each contest. Armed with a talented quarterback in Tirrell Rennie, and defensive specialists like Ben Boothby and L.J. Fort, the Panthers will test the competition to see if they can once again find their way to a conference championship and a national championship.

The future is yet to be written. The past has many great players that could not be mentioned here, but are not forgotten as their names and accomplishments still reside on the stat sheets and in the record books. With Panther football, "tradition never graduates".

For now, we can all visualize an all too familiar sight seeing the team rushing out from the tunnel with the Voice-of-the-Panthers Bob Justis letting the crowd know, "He-e-e-r-r-re come the Panthers!"

Men's and Women's Golf

Colin McDonough, Alex Miller, Jeannette Marsh, James Kelly

In the Beginning

Golf is one of those older athletic games played on essentially every campus across the country and when it comes to this world-renowned sport, the University of Northern Iowa also has quite the history. Northern Iowa added the men's golf program to its list of sports in 1930 with a Nov. 21 College Eye announcement identifying that a men's golf team would begin next spring. Professor J.W. Charles would direct the players and with the nine-hole college course that existed at the corner of Main Street and University Avenue, the team would be able to host meets.

There were a few takers to be a part of the team. Among those that reported to that first meeting was Ralph Harmon, the runner-up in the Eastern Iowa meet that fall and the past Waterloo Junior Champion; Laverne Williams, a Waterloo tournament past winner; Eckels Hutchison, William Collins and Richard Purdy. It had been reported that Merle Stimson, a prominent golfer in the state was thinking of transferring from Simpson College to Iowa State Teachers College, but no record suggests that transfer ever happened.

When spring rolled around, others had joined the team, and on Apr. 18, 1931 Harmon, Williams, Hutchison and Edwin Bickley, all of Waterloo; Lester Lynch of Waverly; and John Lynch and Purdy of Cedar Falls took to the links with the first-ever golf dual against the University of Iowa linkmen. A return match was selected to be played the following Saturday on the Iowa course. As reported in the College Eye, "The college course is in good condition for the fray considering the earliness of the season, and it is expected that the Iowa City team will find it comparable to their Finkbine course, the scene of the return match." Another College Eye entry offered, "Most students think of the college golf course as a swell place to have a picnic if the ground isn't wet. So let's have some real golf and use the course as it was intended. Let's play Iowa and show the campus what this game is all about."

The ISTC men dropped both matches with Iowa, but as the College Eye reported, "Hutchison played stel-

What, No Golf Team? Why not a golf team at Teachers College?

Several times in the past few years this question has arisen. And naturally. At Teachers College we have a highly efficient athletic department, offering an up-to-date coaching course. Yet the excellent opportunity for golf as an intercollegiate sport has been overlooked. Now at the beginning of the spring term, the question is repeated, "Why not a golf team at Teachers College?"

At both the State University and at Iowa State College, golf is an intercollegiate sport. Also at Grinnell. Yet only one of these three schools has its own college golf course.

The Teachers College golf course is maintained for the use of students as well as faculty members. A golf permit granting use of the course is free to any student enrolled at Teachers College. Yet, provisions for a golf team have not been made.

But why should a golf team be organized? If students are not sufficiently interested to ask for a golf team, can it be supposed that they would support or even furnish the material for one if it were offered to them?

Can backers of Teachers College athletics expect the school to be represented in the golf field? One familiar with golfing privileges given students here would expect it. Yet, the announcement of a golf team by the athletic department would count for little if there were no turnout for places on the team. Our athletic department would be unwise in formulating plans for inaugurating golf as an intercollegiate sport if they expected a cool reception of the move by those who would form the nucleus of the golf squad.

Certainly it is the duty of these few to make it known that they desire a golf team and would support one. The rounding out of the Teachers College athletic program to fit that of the North Central Conference (NCC) depends on them.

The logical answer to one who asks, "Why not a golf team at Teachers College?" is "Well, why not?"

lar golf to win 2-1 after being four down at the 11th hole, but staged a great comeback to take the match." Harmon, playing the no. one position for the Teachers, held A. Roddy, a national amateur champion, to a 1 ½ - 1 ½ tie.

The first golf season finished out on May 21 at the State Intercollegiate Tournament held at the Ames Country Club. Harmon, Williams, Hutchison and Bob Keller represented ISTC and finished in fourth place behind Iowa, Ames, and Drake, but defeated Simpson. Hmm, maybe Stimson should have transferred. The meet was held under the direction of Coaches Otopolik of Ames and Kennett of Iowa. With the consensus of everyone, it was deemed that this tournament would become an annual affair with one in the fall and one in the spring.

J.W. Charles led the inaugural roster for two years, but shortly thereafter the school disbanded the golf program for a few years. No reasons for the cancellation were available to suggest why this happened, but the March 25, 1936 College Eye ran a rather pointed directive to the campus.

The O.M. "Hon" Nordly Era (1937-1953)

So with such a robust position, golf reemerged in the fall of 1937 with a new coach, O.M. "Hon" Nordly. Nordly began getting his team ready for match play with other institutions, but the only match that they would play that next spring was the May 21 conference tournament. As the May 13, 1938 College Eye put it, "This will be the first intercollegiate golf that has ever been played by the Panthers." Well maybe not. The reporter forgot to check the history of golf at ISTC, but maybe he was referring to the fact that those earlier moments were just for the fun of it or that they were known as Tutors then and not Panthers. Whatever!

Six young men played rounds on the college course to see who would represent ISTC in the North Central Conference (NCC) tournament. Jerome Cross, Vic Collard, Lee Parman, Ted Buchwald, Charles Poppenheimer and Kenneth Crowell put their talents to the test. Parman, Cross, Buchwald and Collard would ultimately find a spot on the team to represent ISTC. And so golf began once again.

Scoring used for meets in the earlier days was based on holes won and not strokes played, so the post-



The first photograph found of the men's golf team comes from the 1940 Old Gold. Kneeling are Bill McKeever and Walter Bohling. Dale Gidley, Ted Buchwald, Bill Close and Charles Todd are standing with Coach Nordly.

ing of points is more in line with match play. With this said, let it be known that the Panther team got into its winning ways in its early years and through the early 1940's was besting teams like Cornell 17-1 and 12-6; and Coe 16 ½ - 1 ½, and 15 ½ - 2 ½.

Nordly coached the new team for four years (1937-1941) before the program went under again due to a lack of funding. Then with the emergence of the Second World War, all of the athletic programs at ISTC were impacted. There were transportation problems, limited enrollment of men and an increased demand of the athletic facilities by the Army and Navy. The March 13, 1943 College Eye reported, "The Athletic Department is discontinuing a large part of its competitive spring sports. Baseball, tennis and golf will not be held and track will have a very limited schedule."

Four of the men's coaches were already in the armed services, Nordly being one of them, and the remaining members of the coaching staff were assigned to other duties, i.e., training over 400 Army Air Corps students. The heavy demand for the use of the facilities was for real since ISTC was one of the sites for the training of Navy Waves. With the war effort being supported by everyone and the budget being what it was, it would

be another five years before the golf program would get reignited. And when Nordly returned from his military responsibilities, he was once again tabbed to head up the men's golf program.

While in the midst of coaching basketball as well, Nordly managed to lead the Panthers to six straight golf conference championships from 1946-1952, and also lead the Panther basketball team to five conference championships from 1946-1954.

During Nordly's era, he coached many great golfers. Glenn Reed set a new College course record registering an 18-hole 68 in a qualifying round before the 1949 conference meet. Warren Wood was considered one of TC's greatest golfers even though Bud Blair often led the team with low scores. Jim Kopel and Willie Pollock were consistent players. Leaving the team for a season, Dave McCuskey took over Nordly's 1950



Along with Warren Wood, the 1950 Panthers finished the season with the NCC Golf Championship. Shown with Coach McCuskey are L-R: Warren Wood, Jerry O'Malia, John Chalstrom and Willie Pollock.

Coach Jim Clark with his 1954 men's team. Shown here with their coach from L-R: Ralph Capitani, Bill Darland, Rollie Wiley, Clark, Bud Blair and Dick Lynch.



Panther team that captured the NCC championship by 27 strokes.

Nordly's coaching stint with Panther golf is still recognized for its successes during the early history of golf. He would step away from coaching golf at the end of the spring 1953 season. His tenure as a golf and basketball coach would lead him to be inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame with the charter class of 1985.

It Was Clark (1953-1964) and Then Patten (1964-1971)

When Nordly finished his golf coaching tenure in 1953, James R. Clark picked up the reigns and coached the team from the 1953-54 season until 1964. However, after 1954 the UNI golf records are minimal at best. Not a lot of information exists regarding the golf teams during that time frame. The fact is, much of Dr. Clark's coaching tenure is limited. The College Eye/Northern Iowan and the Old Gold become the best source of information available and both are sketchy at best. We know that Clark taught at ISTC starting in 1949 and coached men's golf for two distinct periods, but the records surrounding his coaching era are simply limited. (Note: He may have taken time away from campus to finish his doctorate as that title does show up in the later literature.) There is no mention of who might have filled in for him while he was gone.

Clark's teams were not without their moments. He had teams that would represent the Panthers well and he had individuals that were very talented golfers. Dick Lynch was a member of one of his teams and he reflects on his time at ISTC and golf.

Dick Lynch Reminisces a Bit About His Days on the Golf Team

"My experience on the Iowa State teachers College golf team is a little foggy to say the least. In 1954 we weren't sure we had a coach until Mr. Jim Clark volunteered. Mr. Clark was great at setting up our meets and making sure we were at the right place at the right time. I remember the long trips in the college van, always driven by Mr. Clark. The six of us and five sets of clubs gave us just enough room to breathe.

"We played on the old College Course. It was on the southeast corner of University Avenue and South Main Street. Now there are two car dealerships, a Country Inn and Suites, Hwy. 58, and a residential housing district behind John Deery Motors. All ISTC students were able to play free on the College Course. Washington Park golf course was the only other golf course in Cedar Falls. The College Course got a lot more play from the town's people due to Washington Park's almost annual soaking. The College Course was a challenging nine-hole course due mainly to a meandering creek that loved to eat golf balls. If I remember correctly, you only had to cross that dang-blasted creek seven times in nine holes. Oh well! I carried my share of water balls.

"How good were we (I'm talking about scores)? I was the only average golfer on the team. Ralph Capitani, from Des Moines, and quarterback on the ISTC football team; Bud Blair, a fellow Cedar Falls native; Bill Darland, from Waterloo, and Rollie Wiley, a transfer from Boone Jr. College, were all fine golfers and played the first four places on the team. I did some research in the 1954 and 1955 Old Gold annuals, when I played, to rev up my memory. I find our record was outstanding! In 1954 we didn't lose a dual meet and came in second in our only triangular meet. ISTC won the conference title for the seventh straight year with Rollie Wiley winning the medalist honors.

"In 1955 we lost Bud Blair and Ralph Capitani to graduation. Dean Cramer and Ken Morgensen rounded

out our quintet. We had a respectable 4-2 dual record with one tie. Unfortunately, we came in second in our conference meet losing to North Dakota at Fargo, N.D. The one bright spot was Rollie Wiley, again reigning as medalist with a 111 for 27 holes. The top four scores counted for our team score, so if someone was having a bad day it took the pressure off a bit. Coach Clark was very philosophical (thank goodness) when it came to analyzing our individual and team scores.

"All golfers should have a course in anger management before getting too involved in the sport. One of our better players, Bill Darland, had a putter that sometimes he didn't like very much. In one of our practice rounds he missed a short putt. He picked up his ball, walked over to a small, but sturdy tree and proceeded to wrap his putter around it. Now I've been known to throw a putter almost out-of-sight and pound the earth almost to death with my driver, but to actually break a club in half - never. That was my course in 'Anger Management.' I vowed then and there to apply the Golden Rule to my clubs. Thanks Bill. I hope you found a putter that was worthy of a long life.

"As a music major and biology minor, I didn't exactly run in the same circles with the athletes. I remember being inducted into the Letterman's Club. What an honor! I received a lettermen's jacket and a purple lettermen's blanket with my name on it. These were prized possessions. However, over the years they seem to have disappeared. I probably gave them to one or more of my grandkids thinking they would bow down to them every other day. In reality, I would purchase them back if I ever find them at a goodwill store.

"I still play a few rounds of golf, thanks to the carts that get me around the course. I tell my sons and grandsons, who get me out on the course occasionally that one of my goals is to shoot my age. All I've got to do is live to 100 and be able to swing a little."

One of Clark's golfers during the early '60s was Chuck Patten, who also was a member of the wrestling team. With Clark stepping aside from coaching at the end of the 1963-64 season, it was Patten who was hired to take over his coaching responsibilities. He coached golf until 1971, but then gave it up to focus only on coaching the wrestling team.

But mention of the 1968-69 athletic season must be addressed here. This was a great year for Panther athletics and golf was a part of that excitement. The spring Panther teams had the potential to take four league titles. The Panther teams had won the five winter campaigns and with the spring sports coming up, they



Coach Clark with his 1961 team. Front L-R: Chuck Patten, Bill Westphal, Mike Thornburgh. Back L-R: Coach Clark, Jerry Davis, Jim Daman. Patten led the team with a 3-0 record. Westphal and Daman each posted a 4-1 mark.

could end with an unprecedented nine titles of the 11 conference sports. So what happened in the spring?

That is where the information becomes real "iffy" once again. Those final conference championships were played in late May. The Northern Iowan did not report any information since it went into its summer mode prior to those contests and no information appears in the first summer issues. The 1969 Old Gold was the last yearbook for the next 10 years before it got reinstated, and the 1969 book is just a book of pictures with no words, so it offered no help whatsoever. So the question still remains, "What happened?"

We found information telling us that Patten had been having success during the spring golf season. With Tom Blong, Dave DeHaven, Don DeHaven and Doug Coen swinging away, his golfers had come in second behind Iowa State at the Northern Iowa Invitational Golf Tournament, but bested the St. Ambrose, Simpson, Augustana, Wartburg, Upper Iowa and Luther teams. Blong, who had been having a great golf season continued to lead the Panthers throughout the spring capturing the medalist honors against Mankato State. Bill Baptist became a golfer who showed consistent play for the team and entered into the mix as to who got to



The 1968 team wins the NCAA Midwest Regional title. Shown here with Coach Patten are: Front L-R: D. DeHaven, J. Johansen, D. DeHaven. Back Row L-R: Patten, R. Turner, T. Blong, G. Snyder. Said Coach Patten of Tom Blong, "He played as well as anyone at UNI has ever played."

play for the ISTC team. It was obvious that the team was a contender whenever and wherever it played.

But, as for the 1968-69 season, did the Panthers finish with four additional championships? Did the golf team meet its responsibility of becoming the NCC champion? The baseball team was ranked 17th nationally. Did it meet the conference mark with a win? Jack Jennett's track team was always a contender and Pete Mazula's tennis team had winning ways. So did they [the Panthers] do what was to be the unprecedented? It didn't happen, but they came close.

The Dr. Ken Green Era (1971-1995)

With Patten stepping aside from coaching golf, Dr. Ken Green took over the coaching reigns. Green graduated with his Associative Arts degree from Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa in 1958. He then moved to Iowa State University where he attained his Bachelor of Science degree in 1960. Five years later he came to UNI where he would get his Master of Arts degree and

later a Doctorate of Education from the University of Arkansas in 1972 while he was coaching golf at UNI.

Green took over as the men's head coach when the Panthers were a member of the NCC and at the Division II level. He inherited a strong roster from Patten and continued developing a golfing powerhouse throughout the remainder of UNI's time in Division II golf. In 1973, Green led UNI to the conference championship and the first ever entry into the NCAA Division II National Championship meet where it would eventually finish in 22nd. Green was selected National Collegiate District Five Coach of the Year.



Coach Ken Green

Three years later the Panthers gave a repeat performance, but this time the team finished in eighth place at the NCAA tournament, the highest the University had ever finished, and the highest for any team in the 100-year history of the NCC. That team was made up of Rich Lyons, Steve Shubert, Gary Nelson, Craig Cool and Mel Meredith. The 1977 team finished in 14th position and the 1978 team finished in 12th place at the NCAA tournaments.

Coach Green was blessed with so many fine young men who came to UNI to play the game. Too many to try to mention, but there was Terry Tomke, Rod Olsen, Kim Kehe, Bernie Yohe and D.J. Ellis for example. Craig Cool, a young freshman from Waterloo, Iowa, showed up with clubs in hand and started to prove he deserved a place on the team. Playing on the NCAA tournament teams during his time with the Panthers, he would eventually (1977) be recognized as a third-team all-American.

During the 1974 fall season, another freshman showed up on Green's roster and began making his mark. "Rich Lyons," said Green after winning the La Crosse (Wis.) Invitational, "he is a very capable player, which has been shown by his scores, and I feel he performed very well against his first competition."

Did Lyons continue to live up to Green's prognostication? During the 1975 spring season, Lyons was the medalist in every meet UNI entered. Hampered by

wind, snow and cold, Iowa's apparent spring weather pattern, the '75 spring season seemed much rougher weather-wise, but Lyons was "hot" so the saying goes. For his play, he received the Douglas Gaudes Memorial Golf Scholarship, which is presented in memory of Doug Gaudes, who played for the Panthers in the 1950s and served as the golf pro at Beaver Hills Country Club from 1970-73.

Boasting a 3.8 GPA at the time with sound golf play, Lyons met the criteria for the award. Said Green of this distinction given to Lyons, "He is a fine upstanding young man who is dedicated to the game of golf and is most deserving of this fine award." Lyons was later awarded honorable mention all-American status in 1976.

Green's teams continued to meet the ever-present challenges they faced. The 1978 spring season was one for remembrance. Chris Vandell, Gary Nelson, Dennis Rommann, Peter Hagen and others beat the Hawkeyes twice, won the eight-team Grinnell Tournament, the UNI-Wartburg Invitational, placed 16th at the Purdue Invitational and sixth at the Drake Relays Invitational. Vandell seemed to be the one consistent leader during this season and Rommann would eventually be awarded the Douglas Gaudes Memorial Scholarship. Vandell and Rommann both achieved honorable

There Were Training Aids in Those Days Too

You see different training aids to improve your golf game today on television. In fact you see many infomercials regarding one training aid after another. But did they have them in the '70s and before? You bet! Green was not without his help. Training aids are a part of any athletic team and Green introduced the Graph-Check Sequence camera to his team. It is basically a "glorified Polaroid" that "allows you to take pictures in sequence as fast as you want," said Green. "It goes from eight pictures in four seconds to eight shots in 1/10 of a second. It will stop the golf ball right on the club head." Did it help? "I've seen three or four golfers having problems with their swing, but what I told them didn't register until they saw the pictures. It helps the athlete see the good things as well as the things they need to work on."

mention all-American status in 1978 and 1980 respectively.

During Green's time as coach he established dominance in Division II golf. His players represented the University's program with elegance and style. Nevertheless, with other Panther teams moving to the Division I level, it was time for golf to also move to a tougher level of play. With that being said, the Panthers became a member of the Association of Mid-Continent Universities (AMCU) conference.

The challenge to become a Division I level contender was tough for the UNI program due to the fact it was under-funded. Nowadays if you win the conference championship you automatically get a bid to the national tournament, but in the '80s that was not the case. It was all about your head-to-head record against tougher opponents and the team's strength of schedule. Being a Division I program with no grant-in-aid scholarships was difficult for UNI to be as competitive as it was just years before.

But as daunting as the challenge might seem, Green and his teams would persevere and in 1986, they won their first Division I conference title. One of his players at that time was Dave Melms. He had been conference medalist in the spring 1986 tournament.

Dave Melms Speaks Out

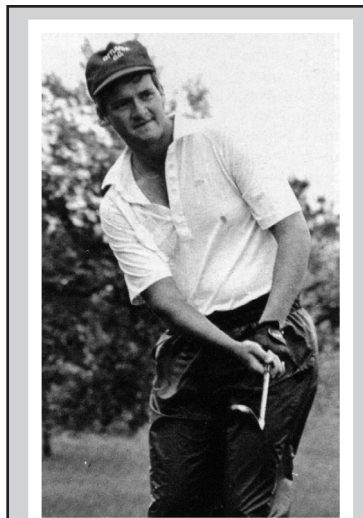
"It was mid-October in 1986 and the conference golf tourney was being held just outside of Chicago at Cog Hill Country Club. Our team was having a practice round the day before the tourney started and I was playing with teammate Monte Meyer.

"We were on the 7th hole and Monte had hit his drive left into the woods. He found his ball and decided to try and hit the green from about 225 yards away. I was standing about 20 yards in front and 20 yards right of where he was aiming. Monte hit a 2-iron and the ball hit a tree and ricocheted hitting me in the left eye. I never saw the ball coming and the next thing I knew I was on the ground bleeding.

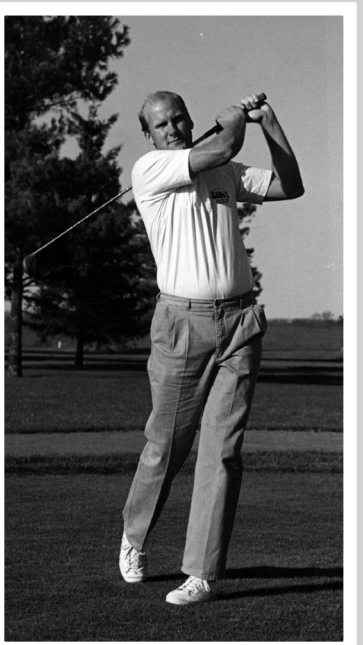
"I was assisted to the emergency room where I was given eight stitches just below the left eye. The problem I had was the eye had swollen shut. I had iced it all night so that I could try to play in the tournament, but by the time I got to the first tee my eye remained swollen shut. I decided to play anyway. I played well

Green discussed their hopes for a second conference championship in the Northern Iowan. "We wanted to win it like we did last year. We felt like we had a good chance going into the final round. We just didn't get good play out of our last three. You can't comprehend how tough that golf course is [Cog Hill] until you go out and play it." Monte Meyer, Todd Gosden and Mike Sawyer rounded out the team; Melms did finish as medalist for the second straight conference tournament.

Melms and Gosden graduated leaving Green with options, but what he needed was someone else to step into the leadership role. Meyer became one of those players who did just that, becoming the stroke leader



Monte Meyer led the team at the AMCU Conference Tournament placing sixth overall.



Dave Melms

for having only one eye and trailed the leader by only six strokes after 36-holes.

"The next day, we only had to play just 18-holes and I was able to see out of my left eye. It was a cold and rainy day, but I was able to come back and win the conference tournament. That was my second conference title and also the last tournament I played at UNI for I graduated that December."

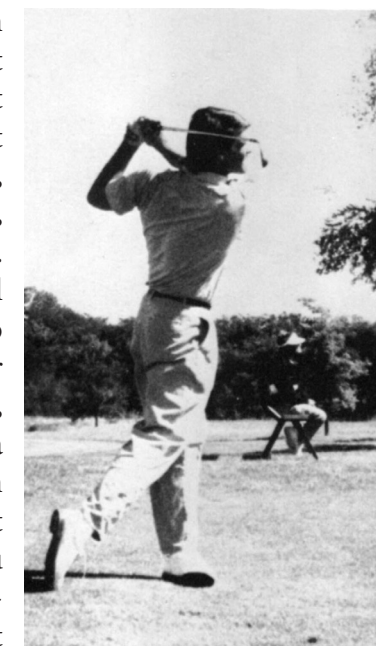
his junior year with a 78.7 average for 18 holes. An all-conference golfer, Meyer was medalist at the Big Four Meet in the spring of '87. Meyer did not compete with the Panthers during his senior year, leaving the team to pursue a professional golfing career.

Green was all about players having a competitive spirit. "It's important to have someone pushing you, someone who wants your job." And another one of those players that provided that competitive spirit was D. Trent Eddy, another of Green's standout players. A native of Rockwell, Iowa, Eddy attended Iowa Lakes Community College and qualified for the Junior College National Golf Meet in Odessa, Tex. He missed the cut by four strokes, but liked the Texas scene and planned on playing football at West Texas State. He went there with the intent to stay, but left after a couple of weeks stating, "I'd rather be playing golf." UNI had what he was looking for: a respectable business school close to home and a golf team that would accept him.

A mix up in eligibility meant that Eddy did not get a chance to play until the spring 1990 golf season, but once he started playing he became the low stroke average leader and made contributions to the team.

A transfer from the University of Iowa at this same time was Curt Berggren. With tryout scores of 72, 77 and 76, said Green of Berggren, "He's an impact player. He has the potential to be the best player to ever play at UNI." Never having had a golf lesson, Berggren notes in a Sept. 18, 1992, Northern Iowan interview, "I just learned by doing. You can't get better at something if you don't put time and effort into it."

His coach was aware of the fact that he would spend hours on and around the practice green every day and that he didn't find reasons to miss a practice session. Having moved into the Missouri Valley Conference, it was important that the teams be ready for an even higher level of conference competition.



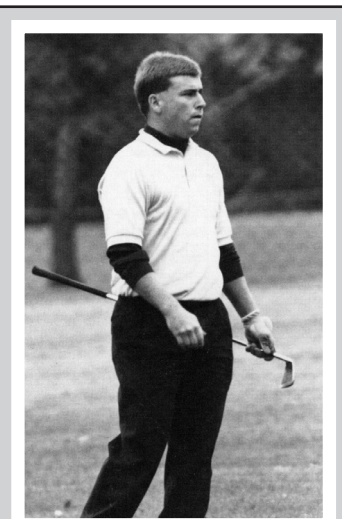
Trent Eddy

As a senior, Berggren was a contender for medalist in the Missouri Valley tournament. His seven over par 220 medalist performance at Gibson Woods Country Club led UNI to a victory over Western Illinois BEU Classic besting Bradley by nine strokes and Western Illinois and Marquette by more. Said Berggren of his play, "I played pretty well. My short game was a little rusty, but well enough to win." (April 12, 1994 Northern Iowan) Named to the 1994 MVC All-Academic team, Berggren finished his final MVC meet with a record 74-stroke average.

Berggren played with teammates Eddy, Matt Klenske, Mike Green, Mark Sawyer, Doug Boysen and others throughout his time as a Panther. During this time, the Panthers were always in contention to win whomever their opponents.

So, did Coach Green prove his place with the UNI program? Throughout his career as the golf coach at the University of Northern Iowa, Coach Green earned the District V (DII) Coach of the Year in 1973, was a three-time North Central Conference Coach of the Year (1973, 1976 and 1977), and was the AMCU Coach of the Year in 1986. His teams won conference championships and his players distinguished themselves with his teaching and mentoring.

As one might reflect on what Coach Green did for the UNI golf program, aside from making each and every athlete who came to the university a better person, he created the Northern Iowa Golf Classic, a tournament that was held every year from 1974-1993. Current PGA Tour pro Steve Stricker was a three-time champion of that tournament while playing for the University of Illinois. Green was also solely responsible for creating the Big Four Match-Play Golf Tournament between Iowa, Iowa State, Drake and UNI. With over 20



In the 1993 fall season, Curt Berggren set a school record with a 74.5 stroke average and placed in the top 10 in all five tournaments.

years of coaching at UNI, Green built a golf legacy that was supportive of the positive tenor of athletics on the campus. He was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame with the class of 2011.

The John Bermel Era (1995 – Present)

Following Green's lengthy career as head coach, John Bermel stepped in to fill his shoes in 1995. A graduate of Central College in Pella, Iowa, in 1984, Bermel brought almost 30 years of golf experience to UNI. While at Central, Bermel was a three-time Division III All-American and a four-year letter winner. After graduating, Bermel tested his skills at a variety of competitions around the country. From 1990 until 1995, Bermel competed in an array of competitions ranging from two of the last four State PGA Championships, which he won in 1990 and 1993; three National Club Professional Tournaments; four Nike/Hogan tour events; and four PGA tour events. In July 2009 he was recognized as the "Best Teacher" of golf in the state of Iowa by Golf Digest.



Coach John Bermel

His beginning season with the Panthers was not the kindest, but a new coach has to get himself established and his team has to find its stride with its coach's coaching style. This is a time when the bonding has to form and it did. Nate Lubs commented on the coaching change. "Coach Bermel has a lot of new ideas and new training methods. I thought it was a good first year for him." John Panek, who was medalist in four of the five meets the Panthers entered was looking forward to the next year. "I think we will be alright," said Panek. "We'll be a lot stronger next year."

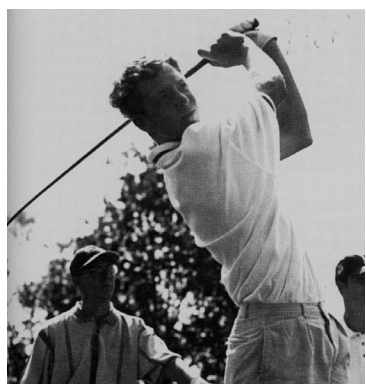
Speaking about the future of the upcoming 1997 season, Bermel notes, "Our expectations for '97 are high. With Nate Lubs back from a redshirt season, our top three guys are solid. We have lofty goals to meet." With the '97 season underway, UNI took part in the annual Big Four Golf Classic in Des Moines. Iowa and Iowa State are always tough, but it was Drake who had just won the 1996 MVC title. The Panthers played with poise and steadfastness. A missed Bulldog putt gave the Panthers a first win of the season. "To beat a team like Drake on their home course is quite a tribute to our kids," noted Bermel.

Matt Lowe took medalist honors for the Classic, with two brilliant rounds of two-under par 70. "Wow! It was an unbelievable performance by Matt. To shoot that low of a score on that golf course [Glen Oaks] is amazing," said Bermel. The others did their fair share.

Story-time with Panek

When John Panek was asked to reflect on his golf experiences at UNI, he favored us with this story. "My freshman season with the Northern Iowa golf team was one that was incredibly entertaining. My favorite story from that season was our spring trip to Columbus, Ga. There was a total of eight of us who hopped in a 15-passenger van including first-year head coach John Bermel. We left on a Friday afternoon in mid-March and drove through the night. I am pretty sure between Matt Lowe, Coach Bermel and myself; we had three large boxes of Hot Tamales to keep us awake. Once we arrived in Columbus we checked into our hotel and we only had two rooms with two queen beds. So that meant two guys per bed and four guys to a shower. I ended up drawing the short straw and had to bunk up with

Panek led the team with a 76.7 stroke average, 19 sub-80 rounds and the third lowest single round of 72.



Coach! The reason I tell this story is to describe how far the program has come in the last 15 years under John Bermel's leadership."

Lubs, who captured the 1996 Waterloo Open and finished sixth for the title of Iowa's 1997 Amateur Player of the Year Award was happy with his 151 score and noted he was hoping for continued consistency. Panek, who finished in eighth place for the Amateur Player of the Year Award, finished with a 150. Coach Bermel was very much aware that Lowe, Lubs and Panek will be successful "meet in and meet out." He noted, "Now for the other two to step up to the plate." The Big Four Golf Classic was behind them in a most wonderful way.

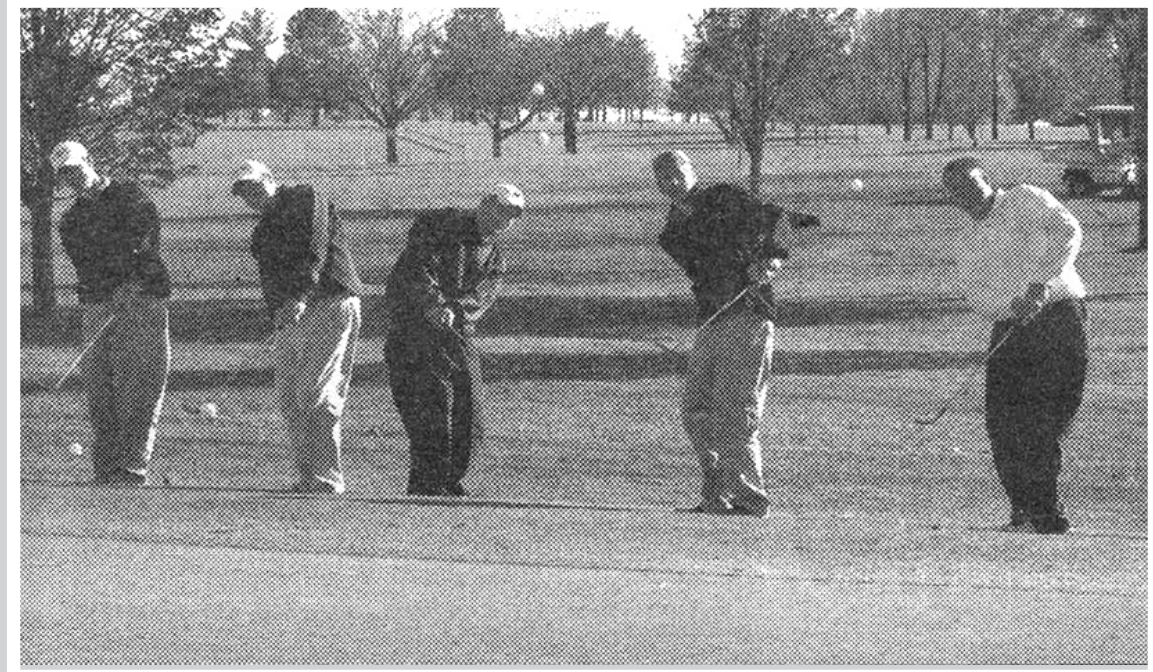
They say, "Build it and they will come," or maybe it should be said, "I need you to play, and they will show you their playability." The Panthers continued their winning ways at Illinois State and again over a 13-team tournament at Marion, Iowa. This time it was Cal Jacobson who rose to the challenge shooting a 70, 76, 74 – 220. "I played within myself this weekend and was real pleased with my performance", said Jacobson. Lubs, who finished first at the D.A. Weibring Intercollegiate Tournament at Normal, Ill., the previous week, pulled to within two strokes of Jacobson. Panek, Lowe and Brent Steele rounded out the team.

The next couple of years were competitive with the teams placing in the middle of the pack. Golf is a team sport made up of individual performances. Each

person on the squad faces a different course under different weather conditions and the end result is what it is for each individual. Golf is a sport, like any other, where continued practice simply improves the player's ability.

The summer play of 2000 would indicate this would be true and that the team should be ready for the fall season to begin. Three of the Panther squad had tied for third in the Iowa Amateur Open while Mike Lewis finished second. "Lewis had a great summer," said Bermel. Alex Bair of Mason City and Josh Bevins from Pocahontas should add to the potential scoring. Bair had the best average of any Panther for the spring 2000 season with a 76.6 stroke average. Says sophomore Bryan Nicholson of this year's team, "We're much deeper this year and our overall talent has gotten a lot better." So the summer of 2000 led to the fall of 2000, to the spring of 2001 and then the fall of 2001.

If the Panthers had a good fall 2000 season, they had an even better fall 2001 season. As reported in the Nov. 2, 2001, Northern Iowan, "Of the 46 men's golf teams UNI played against this fall season, only two fared better than the Panthers." Bermel's team of Mike Lewis, Bryan Nicholson, Reeve Krikke, Marc Cahalan and Bair led the team to the best Division I finish in



L-R: Mike Lewis, Bryan Nicholson, Reeve Krikke, Marc Cahalan and Alex Bair have led the Panther golf team to three titles and an overall 33-1 record.

men's golf history. They finished the 2001 fall season with a 33-1 record with top place finishes at the Butler Fall Creek Invitational (Bair medalist), the Wisconsin-Green Bay Invite (Lewis medalist) and the Bradley Fall Classic (Lewis medalist). The upcoming Southwest Missouri Invitational at Rivercut Golf Course would be the final test of the season.

Said Cahalan in an Eric Braley Northern Iowan interview, "So far this season has gone exactly how we expected it to go, except for the Big 4 meet [the only loss before the SMS Invitational], where we expected to come away with a victory."

Lewis and Bair both expressed their sentiments about the importance of a good fall season. Lewis: "Fall sets up the spring for what tournaments we play and positions ourselves for a regional bid." Bair: "We want to continue playing well in the spring so that we can accomplish our main goal of winning the conference tournament and going on to the regionals."

They had beaten 46 other teams during the fall 2001 season and lost to only two other teams by a couple of strokes. While the spring season didn't allow them to continue their avalanche of wins, it was nonetheless a successful year for UNI golf. And to put it in perspective, all of this was accomplished with non-scholarship players. They came to play and play they did.

Lewis reflects on the lack of scholarships in an October 2002 Northern Iowan interview. "I'm kind of glad Panther golf doesn't have scholarships," said Lewis. "Everyone came to UNI without scholarships and we beat some of the golfers from other teams that are on scholarships. Coach Bermel has done a good job of getting talented players here without scholarships."

Bermel's plan has always been about supporting his golfers in any way he can and help them to develop their skills as a golfer both physically and mentally. He is always monitoring their off-season escapades as these are the moments that help players develop. Lewis, for example, won three amateur titles during the 2002 summer season and became a contender for Iowa's Player of the Year. Said Lewis about the summer season, "This summer has been a blast because I've been playing well."

But talent graduates and new talent must enter into the mix. Such was the case of the 2004 team where it was made up of five freshmen, sophomore Travis Marting and lone senior Sam Schill. Young is OK, because

they will get older and they grow with the program with each tournament they enter. Nick Eilertson was one of the new ones that began to show his skills. Ben Hanson was another. The Waterloo native led in conference play with the team finishing sixth. Blake Hibben was another freshman who helped the team finish in eighth position at the Murray State Invitational and the team's best showing in the fall 2005 season. Enter an up and coming Jordan Weber who also started to show his promise.

And then enter Derek Bohlen who grabbed medalist honors at the 2006 Arkansas State Indian Classic. Beginning the final round in fifth place, Bohlen shoots a one-under par for the win. Said Bermel of Derek's tournament, "Derek had a great tournament. He had his best week of practice since he's been at UNI. We all knew he is a very good player, and with the way he is working at it, he will have a legitimate chance to win the MVC Tournament."

Bermel continues, "As a team we have hardly beaten anybody this spring, so this tournament really helped all of us. Four of the top five teams in the MVC were at the meet and we beat three of them. This tournament has changed the mindset of our entire team." Bohlen was named Panther Player of the Week. Bohlen and Weber led the way in conference play, but the 2006 team fell to seventh place.

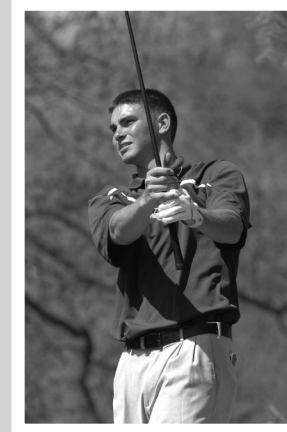
Weber had a great 2007, winning the Dallio Memorial and helping the team to finish in second place. "Jordan has been playing really well. It's always a great achievement to win a tournament," said Coach Bermel.

As the team progressed, it was Weber and Andy White that took the 2008 lead to guide the Panthers to a third-place tie behind Illinois and Southern Illinois at the Fighting Illini Invitational. White was the senior that was having a great year. Senior Kyle Bermel and Brook Maher finished out the team and it was this combination that went on to finish third in the MVC tournament. Once again, White was playing some of his best golf. He was in second place looking for the medalist honor, but he slipped to fourth place after the final round. "We really thought he had a chance to win it all," said Bermel of his senior player.

When asked to contribute to this chapter, Kyle Bermel wrote about the fun the team had traveling together from tournament to tournament. He said, "The best part of our team was how close we were; sort of

Jordan Weber Speaks About His Coach

"We had a tournament in Texas one year. I think it was San Antonio. We always drove a 15-passenger van so that we could fit all of our equipment along with six of us. I was usually the one that rode in the passenger seat to help navigate. So I was sitting up front, not really paying attention, when we come up to a stop light. It was red, but Coach



Jordan Weber

Bermel never slowed down. He drove right through it! I looked at him to see if he was paying attention. He was acting completely normal. So, I was thinking maybe I saw the light wrong or something. I knew we weren't in any hurry, so there was no reason for him to drive straight through a red light. Well, we kept driving and pretty soon we came up to another light. It was also red. Once again Coach Bermel was not slowing down one bit. Finally, I had to say something. 'Berm, are you going to stop at this red light?' He quickly looked at me, then back at the light, and slammed on the brakes. We came to a screeching halt just short of the red light. Then it clicked for me. The stop lights in Texas are horizontal, not vertical like they are here in Iowa, and Coach is color blind. He was seeing green lights. We made the rest of the trip just fine. To be perfectly honest, I'd ride shotgun with Coach Bermel anytime. He's always been riding shotgun with each of us through all of our practices and meets."

like a family. We knew each other so well and were best friends with each other. Being able to travel around the country and play golf with your best friend and compete is a great opportunity and experience. Our spring break trips were always a great time because we would play two tournaments in a row and be able to practice all day long when we weren't playing in a tournament. Being able to grow in skill and watch each other succeed on and off the course is very fulfilling and rewarding as a teammate."

During the fall of 2002, Coach Bermel took over the women's golf team with the departure of Coach Kevin Kane. In 2009, he was coaching his nephew Kyle. An all-around athlete from Keota High School, Kyle came to UNI to play golf for his uncle. "Kyle came in with a great athletic resume in high school but didn't really have that strong of a golf resume. Through his time at UNI, Kyle has really developed his game and become a great team leader, and this past summer he went on to win three big tournaments in the Waterloo Open, Riverboat Days and the Southeast Iowa Amateur," said Bermel in a November 2009 Northern Iowan interview.



Kyle Bermel

And then the family connection gets even bigger. Bermel's daughter, Abby, decided to attend UNI and play for her dad rather than go to a different institution. Dad says, "It's a special feeling coaching Abby and being able to do it together and do it for each other because it means so much to both of us." Abby says, "I enjoy playing for my dad, but there is a good amount of pressure, especially from outside spectators who think I should perform great every time out since my dad is the coach."

Bermel continues to coach both men and women as UNI closes out its spring 2012 season with a third-place finish in the Missouri Valley Conference Championship meet, which seems a fitting way to end the season especially since last year the team finished in last place. Oh, the trials and tribulations of golf.



Ryan Horner, MVC Scholar-Athlete with a 3.80 GPA in Accounting.

One member of the team is Ryan Horner who has been honored as a 2011-12 first-team member of the Missouri Valley Conference Scholar-Athlete squad.

When considering the future of UNI Panther golf, the men's group is once again young, but it will gain experience just as the others have before it with a coach that cares very much for them. It takes time to develop a game and all the shots that must be made. The skill level for any one shot is in constant refinement, but with Golf Digest's 2009-10 Best Teacher Award for the State, the men's team is in good hands and will find many successes.

Women's Golf

UNI started golf in 1974. Dr. Virginia Ramsey, a physical education instructor at the time, took the responsibility of working with the first golf team. In essence, there wasn't a team. The team was recruited on campus with signs put up the first day of school. In the end, this enabled six players to be recruited in which only Donna Mathias seemed to have had much experience.

The team only competed in the fall and could only practice five weeks, which was held on the old College Course. Not having an outside regulatory agency at that time, the team was managed by the regulations developed by the Women's Physical Education Department. With this first team, six golfers would travel to the meets taking the best four of the six scores.

The first tournament the UNI team faced was the Iowa State 4th Annual Tournament. The new team would meet up with the likes of Michigan State, Kansas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Stephens College, Mississippi, Illinois State, Wisconsin-La Crosse, Mankato State and Central College. Of the 14 teams represented, the UNI squad finished 10th, a very respectable beginning. Mathias was the one low scorer for the Panthers, but that seemed to be the case with many of the other teams; they had one very good player and the rest sort of finished wherever.

The newly formed team only played in two tournaments that year. Its second tournament was the Iowa State Championship between ISU, UNI and Briar Cliff. ISU won the tournament with a 357 total score. UNI finished ahead of Briar Cliff 403 to 453.

Jeannette Marsh Era (1975-1988)

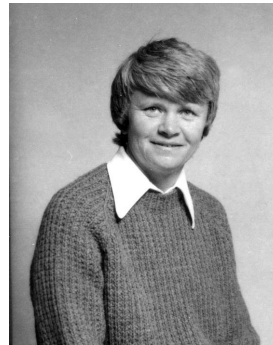
Jeannette Marsh took over the women's golf program in the fall of 1975 and coached until the spring of 1988. As was the case with the first team, Marsh recruited from posters placed around campus. Practices were limited to five weeks in the fall and three weeks in the spring.

In 1974, golf was started as a one-season sport, but with much prodding by Marsh, it was allowed to become a two-season sport. The Women's Physical Education Department had numerous meetings discussing the possibility of extending golf into the spring season and in the end, golf became a two-season sport and the regulations governing the two-season sport was still the Women's Physical Education Department, and with that said, practice was now allowed two hours per night.

Tryouts for the second year's team were held at the College Course and later at both the College Course and the newly established Pheasant Ridge. The latter became the home course. For Marsh's first team, 11 women turned out for the team, but only nine finished the season.

The team traveled to tournaments in two UNI vans with Carol Phillips, an instructor in the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department driving one and Marsh the other. Students would meet at the horseshoe next to the Commons late in the afternoon the day before the meet. All golfers loaded into the vans with luggage, golf clubs and their bag lunch for supper. The team did not leave early enough to play practice rounds. Individuals were given \$4.00 per day on which to eat. On the day of the tournaments, the golfers generally did not stop between "nine" to eat so they were able to have a nicer supper. Some would stop for pop and a candy bar, but that was about it. The teams slept four to a room, with two per bed.

UNI played its first meet under Coach Marsh at Central College. Iowa was present and so were two golfers from William Penn College. Iowa won the tournament and UNI bested the others. The team was ready



Coach Jeannette Marsh

for more action and the individuals were feeling good about themselves and their coach. When asked about their experiences, they all wrote that they enjoyed the competition, but really enjoyed the time together as a team.

The second tournament of the season was being held at Iowa State, but it was really three tournaments combined: the Fifth Annual Iowa State Invitational, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) Region VI Golf Championship and the State of Iowa Golf Tournament. ISU and UNI both had extra players on their teams. So with nine players, more golfers were given a chance to compete, even though their scores would not count in the end.

Of the 17 teams at these combined meets, the Panthers finished in 13th place with a combined score of 785 for the ISU Invitational part. Tulsa shot a 651 for first place, but what impressed the players the most about this particular part of these combined tournaments? Marsh would tell you the players played the games well and enjoyed their time at this multi-tournament tournament, but it was Tulsa's no. one player that caught the eye of every golfer that participated. Who was it? Nancy Lopez.

Lopez was well known by all the golfers at this tournament. Many players spent a lot of time watching her, talking about how good she was and hoping that they did not have to play with her. Lopez shot a 154 over the two-day period. Julie Olson, UNI's low scorer, shot a 162. Not bad Julie, just eight strokes more than Lopez.

The Panthers finished eighth of 12 that competed in the AIAW Region VI Tournament portion of the combined tournament and third in the State of Iowa Tournament behind ISU and Iowa, but ahead of Central and Briar Cliff.

UNI's golf program was considered a small college program when compared to the likes of Iowa, Missouri and Kansas, but the UNI women had no fear of this moniker and loved to go to the Missouri University Invitational. In this second invitational setting for the team, the MUI was hosted at Stephens College and UNI placed ninth of 13 teams. The players were placed in three flights, based on their scores, and the UNI golfers had five members finish in the second flight with Donna Mathias in fourth place. The four other golfers finished in the last flight and were non-counters.

Coach Marsh reflects about those trips to the Missouri Tournament and what it was like after the first day. "We would eat at Shoneys, an all-you-can-eat restaurant. The golfers loved to eat. Then we'd head back to the motel and if we were lucky we would have a TV to watch. We stayed in the cheapest motels we could find, which didn't always have TV. Sometimes we would have to pay for a TV hookup." Talk about conducting athletic business on a near-nothing budget!

The last fall 1975 meet was at Iowa's Finkbine with four teams competing. Iowa won it, as was expected, but only by six strokes. Darlene Lavacek and Mathias tied for fifth in the tournament each shooting 90 for the 18-hole competition.

While the team was allowed to have a spring season, there was only one tournament played during the 1976 spring season. Iowa, the host institution, finished first and UNI second ahead of Central, Mankato State and Southwest Missouri State. Coach Marsh would finish her first year.

Marsh was happy with her first year of coaching the women's golf team, but she knew that if her team was to improve, it was because they could become consistent players shooting in the 80's. "Our mental part of the game is much better," said Marsh as she began to review where her team was at. "We've always had good swings and other techniques, but our mental game always broke down in a meet. Now we are starting to handle that and it's improving our game."



The 1977 women's golf team. Front l-r: Coach Jeannette Marsh, Mary Ann Greteman, Darlene Lavacek, Barb Ahrens, Laurie Speltz. Back l-r: Lisa Miller, Rae Starr, Polly Burns, Carole Shlapkohl, Deb Burg

With the coming of spring 1978, the women got their expanded season from three weeks to five weeks. Always the optimist, Marsh was pleased with this. "The five weeks will allow for more conditioning and practice time. Secondly, the players have an attitude of wanting to work very hard on their game." With only Lavacek, Miller and Burns returning seniors, Marsh continues, "We've got a young team, but our young players are doing an excellent job of keeping up with the best golfers in the region." (April 21, 1978 Northern Iowan)

What becomes clear as one researches the women's early years of golf is that they played the game quite well, always placing high in the tournaments and against some very good teams from some very big schools, many of which were Division I schools. Marsh always kept her coaching transparent with her athletes asking them if they would prefer to play Division III teams or Division I teams since they knew they would meet up with Division II teams within their conference meets. Her golfers always preferred to go against the bigger schools. In addition to such team involvement, Marsh also told her players that all would play, and as a result, UNI was one of the few institutions that fielded golf teams that always would enter a second team into the mix knowing that its scores did not count. However, what the players knew was that they would get a chance for competitive golf and an opportunity to make the first unit. As a result, Marsh did a great job of getting talented players to come to UNI all the while maintaining a positive posture for getting them to play at the top of their game while playing with some of the best she could schedule.

Let's look at some examples of this to show what we know to be true. The team finished third in the May 1979 Iowa Invitational behind Minnesota (655), Iowa (662), but ahead of Southwest Missouri State (713), Western Illinois (734) and UNI II (754). It was third at the 1978 Iowa Invitational with Lavacek and Miller leading the way. It also was third at the 1979 Missouri Invitational with Miller, Mary Ann Greteman, Carole Shlapkohl and Candy Block stating their case. At the UNI Invitational at Beaver Hills Country Club, Laurie Speltz was the Division II medalist and the UNI team finished third overall behind ISU and Iowa. Candy Block and Kim Mann provided extra punch to the team scoring.

In Marsh's first year she had the privilege to coach an up and coming young lady by the name of Lisa Miller. Miller was slightly older than her teammates and she and Coach Marsh were part of a group that approached President Kamerick requesting that the women's athletes get scholarship money, the same as the men athletes. The Women's Athletic Department was not really in favor of scholarships for its athletes, but there was a need and the push to have them persevered. President Kamerick did eventually concede in this matter, not only for golf, but for all of the athletes that made up women's athletics. While the cash value accrued from this request was limited at best, it was a bit of a coup and Miller became the first female golfer to ever be granted an athletic scholarship. Miller would eventually go on to become the first woman to earn her Class A membership in the Iowa Section of the PGA, which led to her becoming a PGA Master Professional in 2005.



Mary Ann Greteman lines up the putt that more than likely gave her that par she needed to bring in a low score once more.

In May 1980, UNI took fourth place at the Iowa Invitational losing only to Division I teams Nebraska, Minnesota and Iowa. Coach Phillips was sitting in for Marsh who was working on her doctorate. Phillips commented on the team in this particular tournament. "We improved our team score and did a nice job. This is the first time we've shot under 700." With Greteman carding a 171 for the team, Phillips commented, "Mary Ann played very consistent golf and played very well."

During the fall 1980 season, the women continued to improve. They dropped their team total by 26

strokes in the regional Division II tournament. That is quite an impressive piece of data. Unfortunately, South Dakota improved its team total from the year before by 88 strokes to claim first place over the Panthers. But Marsh, now back on the job, was pleased with her team's performance. Kim Mann led the Panthers with a 170

and Greteman with a 171. Captain Mann said, "We all set a goal of shooting under 85 for the second day and everyone went out and did just that." That's tenacity and dedication at its finest.

During the fall 1981 season, the Panthers went up against Big 10 and Big 8 teams at the ISU Invitation-

UNI Hosts AIAW Tournament

It's June 12, 1981. The University of Northern Iowa will host its first AIAW Division II National Golf Championship to be played at Beaver Hills Country Club. The year before, this tournament was an all-inclusive one, but now has been separated into three separate classes and UNI was selected to host the Division II Championship.

As stated in the program that cost 50 cents, "The words 'first time around' are very applicable to the field in the first AIAW Division II National Golf Championship and everyone in that talented group is hoping that the first time will be a charm. The 1981 event signifies the maiden effort in AIAW national competition for nearly all of the 44 competitors and 11 squads swinging for top honors at the Beaver Hills Country Club. With no tradition to follow from last year's tournament and the chance to start a new one for future championships, several schools figure to be in high gear in their quest for the crown.

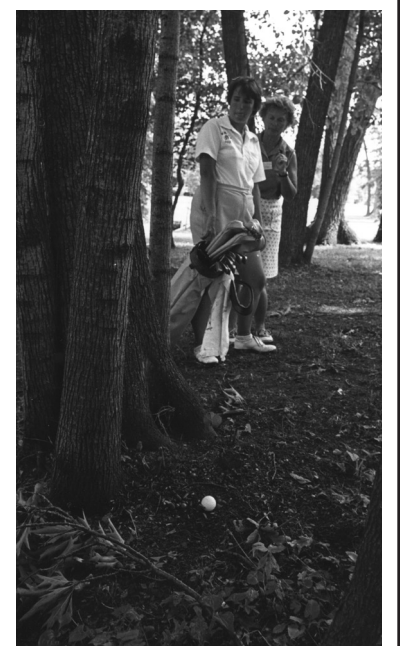
Colorado State's Susan Knox is the only performer in the 1981 Division II meet who participated in the 1980 all-division championship held at Albuquerque, N.M. She fired a 309 en route to a 48th-place finish, 20 strokes behind national champion Patty Sheehan of San Jose State. Knox captured the Region 7 title and is a good bet to take medalist honors at Beaver Hills. She has anything but a stranglehold on the title however, with outstanding competition from a host of competitors. William and Mary's Mary Wilkinson, Longwood College's Robin Andrews and South Dakota's Coralee Jorgensen head a strong core of challengers with some impressive credentials.

The University of South Dakota and William and Mary appear to be the front-runners in the team race, but will get some strong competition from Northern Iowa and Longwood College. William and Mary boast the lowest regional championship total (661) of all the schools, while South Dakota is fielding the top three

finishers in Region 6. Mankato State, Northern Colorado and Colorado State have shown improvement throughout the year and could also vie for top honors with some outstanding performances. Other schools, not already mentioned in this tournament include: Massachusetts, North Dakota, and the Air Force Academy."

UNI's team was made up of freshman Jill Ditsworth, sophomores Deb Grote, Mann and Sutherland, junior Ann Koppen, and senior Greteman. At the end of the second day, the Panthers found themselves in second place, 10 strokes behind William and Mary. Sutherland and Greteman were leading the team with two-round placements of fifth and ninth respectively. The team shot a 349 on the second day, seven strokes more than the first day, which had placed them in third position behind William and Mary and Longwood. In the end, the Panther women finished the first ever AIAW Division II Tournament in third place, 19 strokes behind the ultimate William and Mary champion and two strokes behind Longwood College. The fourth player could not get out of the trees on the 18th hole.

After visiting with a rules official, it was determined that Ann Koppen could cut down only one of the trees.



al. UNI and Stephens College were the only small institutions represented.

For UNI, it was Pauline Kelly landing a third spot in the tournament. "This is a great achievement for Kelly," said Marsh in a Lori Pepper NI interview, "because we were competing against Big 10 and Big 8 schools." And should Marsh expect more from Kelly? She would eventually take medalist honors during the fall 1983 season in the UNI Invitational and at the ISU Invitational.

During the fall 1983 season, Kelly and Panther squad teammates Margo Gillespie, Kelly McCormick, Jill Fjelstul, and JoAnn Lee claimed a third-place finish in the Gateway Conference Tournament. Gillespie had the low score this time carding an 84-84-83 over the three-day tournament. They followed this up with another third in 1984.



Front l-r: Kim Mann, Kim Lucinger, Pauline Kelly. Back l-r: Coach Marsh, Jill Fjelstul, Meg Roushar, Jeanne Sutherland

Marsh Found Players North of the Border

Pauline Kelly was recruited from Mississauga, Ontario. She was one of Canada's top women golfers in junior competition. During the summer following her freshman year at UNI, Kelly returned to Canada where she remained in junior competition. She was ranked sixth in the nation and third in her province. Her summer play always assisted her with her UNI game. Being focused on golf, she strove always to be her very best. "Whenever she has 30 minutes to spare, she is hitting golf balls on the driving range," said Coach Marsh. "She's willing to get up and play golf on her own at the crack of dawn. She has a good mental attitude and believes in herself. She talks to people and reads books to improve her game. It's refreshing to work with her because of her excel-



Pauline Kelly made a real impact on the team while she was at UNI. Shown here as a senior. Teammate Jill Fjelstul is in the background.

lent initiative and self-drive." (Scott Bonner, UNI Sports Information)

Kelly is only one of the Canadians that made up a part of Marsh's teams. In 1986, Marsh recruited two other Canadians in Margot Gillespie and Kelly McCormick. Kelly definitely played a role in these two deciding to attend her home away from home campus. Gillespie commented in a Mark Ullestad NI interview. "I wanted to come to the states, and UNI offered me a scholarship." McCormick felt the same and neither person felt that they had made a mistake in their respective decision. Said Marsh about her two new Canadian recruits after the fall 1987 season came to a close, "I've got two golfers right now who could play just about any place. As far as skill goes, Margot Gillespie and Kelly McCormick could play golf just about anywhere. They are always close when the final score is tallied. I expect to see this continue through our spring schedule."



Margot Gillespie and Kelly McCormick

At the end of the spring 1988 season, Coach Marsh stepped away from the coaching end of her tenure. If she was to grow academically, the coaching side would have to come to an end. "I love the game and I love the athletes. I'm ready for a new side of my career to begin", claimed Marsh. With that, she finished the spring season knowing that she had made great strides in developing the UNI program.

The Jill Fjelstul Era (1988-1991)

Jill Fjelstul is the new women's golf coach. Her father, uncle, brother and great uncle all attended Luther College and the three elder members of the family are in the Luther Sports Hall of Fame. Jill's brother is the Norsemen's golf coach. But for Jill, she chose to follow her mother and both grandmothers and attend UNI on a golf scholarship.

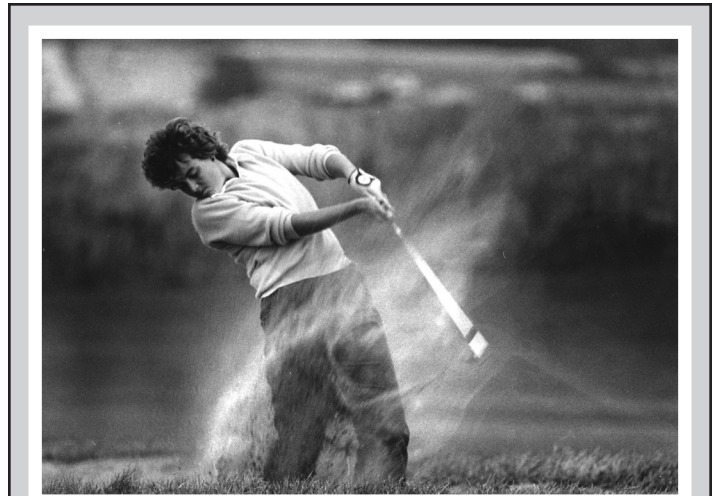
While at UNI and playing for the golf team, Fjelstul lettered all four years of eligibility and was the captain of the team for two years. At the time she was playing golf, she held the school record for the lowest 18-hole round, twice recording a 72.

Fjelstul finished her bachelor degree and her master's degree at UNI and during the latter degree, she was a volunteer assistant with the golf team. She worked as an assistant greens-keeper during summers in Decorah, so one might suggest she knows golf from the ground up. She knew, as did Marsh, golf teams can't always be viewed as winning or losing since they enter meets with more than one team that doesn't simply win or lose. It's the individuals' shot-making, scoring ability, score improvement, putting skills and a whole raft of variables that enter into the mix of things when trying to decide answers about a golfing round.

During Fjelstul's first year, her only senior, Sue Lahr, showed her true abilities claiming the runner-up spot to medalist honors four times and taking medalist honors in the conference meet. Fjelstul commented, "What more could you ask from her. Sue's average was

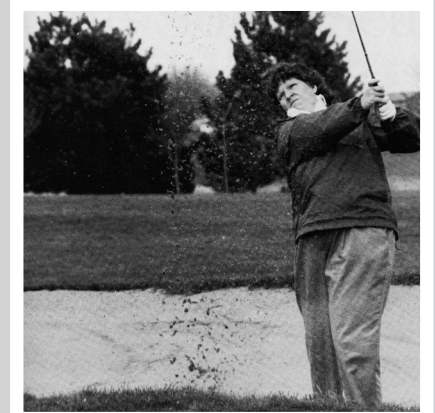


Jill Fjelstul



Jill Fjelstul taking a shot out of a bunker during her playing days at UNI.

Sue Lahr showing her version of a bunker shot; maybe the same bunker her coach is shown hitting out of the photo above.



about 10 strokes above the team. It was nice to have her finish her career here [UNI] being conference champ."

Amy Smith talks about the 1990 season in the Old Gold. Only one senior was on the team the year before, so the young team was at least one year wiser. She comments, "We started off the season kind of slow, and we weren't really sure how well we were going to do because we were so small. But we were going to be tough, that was for sure, and we were going to give any team a run for their money. Toward the end of the season, we started playing better individually, which helped improve our scores, but we never quit giving it our all. We may have been small, but we weren't going to give anyone an easy game." The team did capture the Bradley Invitational during the season.

Jill Fjelstul stepped away from the UNI Panthers at the end of the '91 spring season and the athletic department was able to have Deb Vangellow, the

Shull Hall Residence Coordinator, step in for the 1991-92 season. That young team that existed several years ago was now grown up and had a respectable season winning its own Panther Invitational and the Mankato State Tournament. It also placed in the runner-up spot at the Briar Cliff Invitational. Captain Marty Johnson can be quoted about the season. "We had team unity. We could pick one another up when we were down, and all of us supported one another at all times."

In times of need, these are good points that assist all athletic teams. The year was thought to be a survival year, but it turned out to be better than that. The Panthers represented themselves with competitive distinction. Vangelo was only on board for the one season. It is now time to enter the Kathy Konigsmark era.

The Kathy Konigsmark Era (1992-1994)

A new coach takes over the team. Weather takes over the ability to practice on the course, but the end result of Konigsmark's first year was not all that bad. Captain Johnson felt the team was actually quite successful, but she said about the weather, "It was discouraging not being able to get as much practice as we wanted, but none the less, we had a good year." The host of runner-up finishes would attest to the success the team felt about the season and the championship at the Mankato State Tournament again helped the team feel the accomplishment. The conference finish would attest to not being able to do all that they would have liked. The seventh-place finish was not what the team had in mind.

Konigsmark would lead the team one more season and then step aside. The team had not really progressed much. Konigsmark put it this way. "At the Missouri Valley Conference, the girls shot to their capability. They had an excellent attitude and truly worked hard. They were against good teams and were a bit intimidated." The move to the Missouri Valley simply meant the team had moved up to a different level of competition. Konigsmark's tenure was short lived also. She stepped away from the coaching position and during the summer of 1994. Kevin Kane was hired to take over the women's golf team.

The Kevin Kane Era (1994-2002)

Kevin Kane was hired to take over the golf team during the summer of 1994 so his first season was that fall. He took over the players that were in place, but they had come through one of the worst seasons in golf history. He knew that if he was to build a team that would be able to compete at the Division I level, he had to have golfers that could step up to the competition level and play the game accordingly. So, in his words, "I pretty much cleaned house, except for one sophomore, Kelly Cottington. I could tell Kelly really wanted to do well and work at it and was committed, so I named her the team captain and then the rest were freshmen that first year."

Kane put his first team together and they started to learn a lot about a lot of things together. Were they any better than the year before? During the 1994-95 season the no. 12 seemed to loom forever in the record book for the most times in golf history. The third place finish at the Lady Braves Invitational was the only glowing moment for the season. As Kane put it, "We were much better than the previous year, but we still weren't very good." The team finished last in the Valley, but only by 25 shots versus the 120 the year before.

Kane: "I guess it hit me how much those kids had come to mean to me when the conference meet was over and everyone else had left and it was pretty much just me and the team. I sat them down to talk with them about the tournament and to just have a year-end talk and, all of a sudden, I got real emotional and could barely get the words out."

The second year the team began to make great strides. It was the same team, but it was older and wiser. The yardstick that seemed to be the measure of growth and success was the stroke count for the Valley Conference Tournament. The team may have improved last year because UNI hosted it at Beaver Hills CC, so the home team should have had a bit of an advantage, but then again, the team really didn't practice at Beaver



Kevin Kane



Coach Kane's first team. Front row l-r: Jenny Voss, Kelly Cottington, Stephanie Roth, Kori Kayser. Back row l-r: Coach Kane, Sheila Conger, Julie Knudsen, Amy Morenz, Amy Thorson, Sarah Murray.

Hills, so the home advantage might have given the girls a bit of an advantage, but then not so much. So how did they do this year then on a different course? Well, they moved up a couple of spots and only 19 strokes out of second place. Kane: "Our core was pretty much made up of Cottington and two sophomores who had come as freshmen the previous year - Sheila Conger and Kori Kayser. Team unity and cohesion were reasons for some of the success." Kayser put it this way, "The team bonded really well. We clicked."

Kayser established herself as the no. 1 player, and two of the top three golfers for the fall were freshmen. Jennie Bickel and Betsy Hoffman averaged 82.5 and 84.8 stroke averages during the 1996 fall season. The team finished the fall season with a win in the University of Missouri-Kansas City Lady 'Roos Classic.



Jenny Voss showed a lot of improvement in her game dropping her stroke average by eight strokes from the year before.

The team moved up another spot in the '97 conference meet, finishing fifth. It would have liked to have had a better finish because it thought it was better than the fifth-place finish. For Kane, it was time to lose a senior who had helped steer his ship with her leadership. Cottington was a senior and would graduate.

Work hard and keep a great attitude about what you are doing and you can accomplish a lot. Coach Marsh always felt that way and it was for certain Coach Kane had some of the same philosophy. The 1998 Missouri Valley Conference was upon the team, the yardstick to measure growth by, and after 36 holes, the UNI Panthers were in first place. It was a shocker to everyone, considering how far they had come in just a few years, but it was true. Maybe having to defend a lead is too much to bear because in the end, the team slipped to fourth place, right where it was picked to be. Kane: "I felt we really made the rest of the league take notice of us."

The 1999 squad saw its first-ever picks to the MVC Scholar-Athlete team in Laura Larson and Bickel. Bickel then added the MVC Scholar-Athlete team honor again in 2000.

The team was building momentum. It was becoming a team to contend with and it knew how to represent the university. In the early spring 2000, the Panthers finished 23rd of 26 teams at the Carolina Collegiate Classic in North Carolina. Not the best finish, but these were all very good teams. It shifted to the Snowbird Invitational in Tampa, Fla. and eventually finished 10th of 20 teams. Better! But in this meet, Kane saw his team begin to take shape. On the second day, Stephanie Ceravelo, Kate Johnson, Bickel (seven strokes behind the medalist), Julie Hary (knocked off nine strokes from her first day round) and this week's MVC Scholar-Athlete of the Week Karla Schuldt shot a second-day round of 309, the best 18-hole performance since 1989. The team "was stoked" so they say, just knowing what it had done.

Schuldt was becoming a spearhead player helping to lead the team toward prominence. In the fall 2000 Marilyn Smith Sunflower Invitational at Manhattan, Kan., she had played three very contrasting rounds to finish third overall. She opened the tournament with a 74, then jumped to an 81 on the second day putting her in 11th place, and then charged to a one-under par 71 on the third day to end the tournament just five strokes

Coach Kane Speaks About a 2000 Road Trip

"I think it was the 2000 season that we took a trip I'll always remember. We were scheduled to play a tournament at Bradley in Peoria for our last one of the fall in October. The coach at the time, who is still a good friend of mine, called Tuesday before the tournament and said he was cancelling the tournament – not enough teams. Well, I wasn't ready to be done yet that fall and neither were my kids, so I got on the phone and found a tournament at Eastern Kentucky that we could get in. So I called my kids Tuesday afternoon and asked if they could be ready to leave after class the next day. On Wednesday afternoon, we jumped in the van and drove as far as Indianapolis and spent the night there. We drove the rest of the way to Richmond, Ky. the next morning – 11 hours of driving. We played our practice round that afternoon and after two tournament days we left for the drive home Sunday with the first-place trophy. It was quite an experience!"

behind Missouri's medalist, Amelia Moses. While the team didn't win the MVC conference tournament, it did finish third, its highest finish ever and with all of the signs of a future contender. The Panthers had really "turned the corner."

The fall 2001 season found the team ready to play golf. The women finished third at the 10-team Missouri-Kansas City Kenneth Smith Classic. "We improved a lot this fall," noted senior team member Schuldt, who had just come off an impressive summer showing at the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Tournament in Long Grove, Ill. "I think we will be really strong going into the spring." Fellow senior member Hary and sophomore Gigi Marting agreed with Schuldt about the upcoming spring.

Is golf a game of change? Kane's team of Schudt, Heinz and Hary averaged 80.7 strokes at the April 2001 Payne Stewart Memorial Tournament, and placed second in an impressive field. However, at the Hawkeye Invitational the following week, his top guns averaged 79.2 strokes and finished 10th of 12 teams. "Karla's been in the zone for quite a while now," seventh-year Coach Kane said. "I can't say enough good things about her.

Right now she's playing the best golf of any player I've had. She's very consistent.

"Karla Schuldt has been so consistent," said Kane in an NI article. "But she missed a lot of opportunities and needs to work on her putting." But this was not just a one-person problem. "All weekend, we were really poor around the greens," added Kane. "We need to work on our putting."

Coach Kane noted that the team had a great chance to win the Valley. The tournament was played at Quarry Oaks in Nebraska and the Panthers held a 36-hole lead going into the final round. Again, the team had issues the final day of the tournament and slipped to fourth place. Schuldt earned the second of her three all-conference awards that year and became the only three-time all-Valley pick in school history.

Kane felt his 2001-02 team had had lots of experience and would challenge for the Valley title, always the measure of success; the other meets were always leading to this one and while not less important, it was the conference meet that everyone wanted to win. "The team came up a bit short at the Illinois State-hosted event, but Bradley was lights out and ended up beating us," Kane noted. "Yet, we finished second, still the best in school history, and we're the only team in the league in that four-year span from 1998-2002 to finish in the top four each of those years." Kane was named the 2002 MVC Women's Golf Coach of the Year.

Coach Kane left UNI after the 2001-02 season. His comments reflect his feelings about his tenure at UNI. "We put the program back on the map and brought it from terrible the first year to a good, solid Division I program by the time I left. Leaving UNI was one of the hardest things I've ever done, but I left with a lot of pride and good memories in what we'd accomplished and the type of people we had in our program."

The John Bermel Era (2002–Present)

With the departure of Kane, the university negotiated with John Bermel, the men's golf coach, to take over the women's program as well. He did and has been at the helm since. This part of the chapter brings us to the last paragraphs of the men's golf chapter as the two teams merge with one coach.

Bermel inherited a good women's team from Kane. They had proven themselves to be contend-

Karla Schuldt Shares Some Great Memories

Karla (Schuldt) Bredlow was asked to share some of her memories while a member of the UNI family. Here's what she had to say.

"I will be the first to admit that I was a little unsure of going to UNI and playing golf. I got the call from Coach Kevin Kane that he was interested in recruiting me to play golf and I went down for an official visit. Once I arrived on campus and met Coach Kane and the girls on the team I knew this was the right fit for me. I had never in a million years thought I would end up in the middle of Iowa playing golf for the Panthers. Looking back on that decision it was one of the best ones I have made in my life. I have people that I met through golf at UNI that are still some of my closest friends and I also met my husband while at UNI.

"Once I got on campus at the beginning of my freshman year I was immediately welcomed by all of the girls on the team. For the next four years these girls became my best friends. We all shared so many memories together over the years, some good and some bad. Through it all Coach Kane was always there for us. I always said if I got into trouble he would be my first call. Still to this day keep in contact with him. I will always remember the time the summer before my senior year at UNI. I was playing in the U.S. Women's Public Links out in Chicago. I had played really well in the stroke play qualifying part of the event and I won my first two matches in match play. I had talked to Coach Kane that night and he said there was no way he was going to miss the next day's matches and he was going to drive

all the way out to Chicago. He had something the day before so he drove out to Chicago during the night and made it for my first match at 7 a.m.! How awesome is it that, your college golf coach would drive through the night to come and support you in a tournament outside of college.

"Another memory I have would be the last day of the Missouri Valley Conference Championships my senior year. We had played really well the first two days and we were just behind Bradley heading into the third round. We fought hard, but didn't have enough to overtake them on the last day. I knew with a few holes left that we were going to fall short of winning. Those last two holes were the toughest holes of my life. Realizing that my college golf career was over and that I wouldn't be able to play anymore and get to travel and hang out with my team was heart-breaking. Coach met me on the 18th tee and he practically had to drag me down the fairway to the green. I was so emotional that I could barely hit a shot. Holing out that last putt was so bittersweet for me. To conclude that four-year run was unbelievably emotional and I will never forget all my teammates coming over for one last group hug."



Karla Schuldt

ers, great ambassadors for UNI, and a great group of student-athletes in the classrooms. Their dispositions gelled well with his so the merger was not a difficult one. The logistics of two teams going in different directions might pose a bit of a problem for the coach, but not from the stand point of the athletes, they are ready to play golf.

The winter climate was sticking around a bit for Bermel's first spring season with his combined team. Bermel's first trip in March 2003 with his new women's team was to the Lady Mocs Invitational in Lakeland, Fla. There were 21 teams entered into that tournament and the Panthers took off where they had left off with Kane, finishing in eighth place. One of the

young budding players was freshman Dana Moening from Cold Springs, Minn. With a 233 in this tournament, Moening finished in eighth place. Juniors Marting and Heinz finished the tournament in 23rd and 34th positions respectively. Heinz addresses this tournament in a Brian Noble Northern Iowan interview. "We have a lot of motivation this spring. The way we played last fall brought on an attitude. We know we can continue to do better." With the MVC tournament the team feels they have an



Coach John Bermel

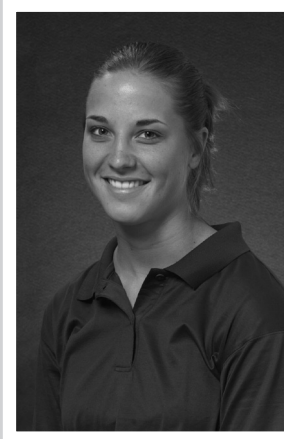
Mikkell Korver Finds One of Those Relief Moments

"When I was asked to write a story about an experience during my years playing golf at UNI, the first thing that came to my mind was a funny, but scary event that happened at our conference meet in 2004. We were playing our practice round at the Southern Illinois golf course. Our coach, John Bermel, came driving up on his golf cart to the tee where we were standing. He parked, got out to talk to us, and as we were walking off the tee box, we noticed a snake slither its way under the tires of Coach Bermel's golf cart. I had always thought of Bermel as a tough, brave man, but that day I found out that he is deathly afraid of snakes.

"My dad, who was following us that day, is also deathly afraid of snakes. He never saw the snake crawl under the cart, but after he heard all of us screaming about it, he sprinted in the other direction. After we had calmed down a little bit, we decided we had to find a way to get that snake out from being wrapped around the inside of one of the front tires. Our first attempt was for me to grab a club from my bag and start hitting the cart right above where the snake was, hoping that would make it come down. And thankfully that didn't work, because then we got to witness (and take

pictures) of Coach Bermel standing on the back of the cart where the clubs normally go, lean over the seat, and push down on the gas with a golf club getting the cart to go forward about 10 yards. The snake still did not come out! So with his other hand, he started steering the cart in all different directions until about a minute later that nasty little snake finally came down and slithered away."

How big was this snake, and do we know what kind? Well, accordingly, it was a bull snake that was approximately six feet in length. They can get pretty big and that's enough size to shake anyone. Coach Bermel tried to have someone bring a different cart and just leave that one alone for a while, but there was laughter at the other end of the line so he had to do what a coach had to do.



Mikkell Korver

advantage to win. Heinz: "We just need to do the little things right, like mechanics and the things that come so natural to us."

The tournaments that are played along the way are the tune-ups for the conference meet. To win the conference is the goal that seems to play in the psyche of every athlete and coach; it is the benchmark of the season. Such a goal is played out in all of the sports and with all involved. Heinz said this team has been working toward the goal of winning the conference all year. "We're a young team," said Heinz. "Since day one, our goal has been to win conference. We've looked at every poor performance this year as a learning opportunity. Conference is the one we've had in our mind all year." (April 2003 Northern Iowan)

With the conference tournament at hand, the team played the game improving its position each day from sixth, to fourth to third. Heinz led the way with seven strokes off the medalist from Illinois State. Moening was three strokes behind Heinz and Mikkell Korver, from Orange City, finished just five strokes from the top

10. For Bermel, his first women's team gave him two third-place finishes with the best one being the Valley tournament. A new season was just around the corner.

The headlines might have read, "Led by one, but lost by one." The fall season took the Panthers to an invitational with Notre Dame and others. The Panthers pushed through the tournament finding themselves in the lead going into the final day. Did they win it? Just about, but close only counts in horseshoes. Heinz talks about the ending in a Nick Alden Northern Iowan interview. "When you lose by one stroke, it's impossible not to look back and think, well what if I had just sunk this putt, or shaved one stroke somewhere, we could have won. You want to win – not lose by one stroke."

If anything, the team learned that it is capable of playing at this level, at the top. Heinz: "Once you get that confidence in your game, and your teammates' games, you don't look back. You just go all out and that's when great things can happen." So what about the conference then?

Jennie Heinz Shares a Few of Her Memories

"For many, golf is just a four-letter word. The word game may come to mind for some, and for others it may be a curse word. For me, it's a little bit different, it's life. To me golf is not a game that is meant to be played against others or even against the course, it is a game that challenges me personally and has shaped me into the person I am today. It has taught me many life lessons such as the importance of decision-making and trusting the decisions that I make, the integrity behind those decisions, and in some cases, the teamwork it takes to accomplish the goals.

"To this day, strolling down the fairways still adorned with dew during an early morning round and glancing back at my trail of footprints is a mental image that will stay with me forever. This reminds me that each day is a new day. One more day that I get to appreciate the opportunities I have had, and cherish the memories I hold close. It also reminds me that I have the ability to leave a footprint, just like UNI athletics has done in my heart.

"Here are a few of the most vivid memories that I will hold with me forever from being a part of such a great experience at UNI.

"The abundance of nerves I had as a freshman at my very first qualifier. I wanted to be a part of the traveling team so badly and never felt so much pressure over each shot. It was my job to prove myself to not only teammates, but myself. Once I knew I had made it, I was so proud to get my UNI golf bag and other gear that made my dream of playing collegiate golf finally feel real.

"Being on a female sports team and together for the better part of each and every day the entire school year; you can imagine that there was plenty of drama and excitement, but at the end of the day, we were always teammates and friends above everything else...like sisters. To this day, we all have formed a special bond that cannot be broken.

"The rigorous weightlifting sessions we had during the off season. Many people thought that we were 'just golfers' and that we weren't really serious athletes. The strength and conditioning coaches at the WRC treated us the same way as they did the football players, pushing us to reach our potential and growing

physically through a specific set of workouts. If we missed our scheduled sessions...the golf teams make-up time slot was 5:30 a.m., so needless to say, that was an unspoken incentive in itself.

"When we came in second at the MVC championship in 2002 to Bradley and all of the mixed emotions we all had. It was the best finish to date, and still is for UNI women's golf. However, it was so close to being ours that the runner-up trophy was bittersweet.

"Our infamous sink-or-swim putting game after each round and at the end of each practice. We would choose two holes on the practice green that were about 10 feet apart. Those are the putts that can make or break a good round. We would form lines on both sides and two people would face off on each putt in sort of a match play format. Basically, you had to make your putt to stay in the competition and knock your competitors out. We invented it my sophomore year and by my senior year, we actually had other teams in our conference eager to join our game at each meet. It was a great way to practice a crucial element of our games in a fun way – and boy did it get entertaining – and competitive.

"The mental toughness we all had for each golf meet. Rain or shine we played a practice round followed by a 36-hole first day of competition and then an 18-hole final round. Many times we had to jump in the van immediately following play to return back to campus in the middle of the night just so we could go to class the next day.

"Finally, let me talk about the parents who would walk the fairways with us and the support they gave throughout the season. At each and every golf meet there were at least two or three sets of parents there to follow us throughout the tournaments. All of our parents had as much dedication to the program as supporters as we did as student-athletes."



Jennie Heinz

Throughout the 2003-04 season, the Panther women had been in tournaments where they played against the past year's champion Bradley Braves and in each contest, the Panthers beat the Braves. The team had finished no lower than fourth place in all of the tournaments they were in and won the Arkansas State Invitational. The team had confidence in its playmanship and confidence in each other. Heinz and Korver are senior leaders and according to Bermel, "It is key that Jenny and Mikkel have a season like we think they are going to. When those two are playing well, we are an awfully good team." "Coach Bermel has really helped us come together as a core," commented Carla Iverson.

In preparation for the Valley tournament, the Panthers were in Springfield, Mo. for the Payne Stewart Memorial Tournament. Heinz won medalist honors with a pair of 75's and Moening finished in the runner-up spot. Korver tied for eighth, but the strength of play by these three left the team out of the win by two strokes finishing behind Southwest Missouri State. Next up is the MVC Championship at Hickory Ridge Golf Club in Carbondale, Ill.

The Panthers were in second place after day two of play, just one stroke back of Illinois State. But during the third day of play, the team slipped to fourth place. Moening led the way, finishing just three strokes off the co-medalists from Southern Illinois and Illinois State. She was named to the first-team all-conference roster. Heinz and Korver will end their careers at UNI.

As the team continued with the fall 2004, Moening continued to lead the way, but she had a very good support cast in Jill Franz, Amanda Paa and Erin Westensee, all of whom took their turn picking up a lead or scrambling to better their respective stroke averages. Moening was named to the 2005 MVC Women's Golf Scholar-Athlete team. The biology major was boasting great golf and a great 3.79 GPA in the classroom. In fact, Moening is the Panthers' only three-time selection to the MVC Scholar-Athlete team. Moening earned the academic honor in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

A fourth-place finish in the 2006 Valley conference meet was nearly an impossibility since previous meets weren't generating that much success, at least from the players' position. But the conference meet is the one to go after and Moening and Stef Nelson put on a charge that propelled the team ultimately, both finishing in fourth place individually, just two strokes



Dana Moening had a very low stroke average. Putting is one of the reasons for this. It's on the green where you can win and lose the game.

from the medalist honors. From Bermel's position, he commented about Moening being the best player ever to play at UNI and Nelson showing the caliber of player that she could become. Paa finished with a great tournament ending up 21st and Emily Heseman was right behind her in 22nd position.

This meet marked the end for Moening and Paa as they would be graduating. Bermel in a Neal Heston NI interview: "We are really going to miss both seniors. They will be difficult to replace." But he also felt his team would be okay if Nelson and Easterling and Heseman could keep up the leadership for the core team and with help from the incoming freshmen.

As the team played the tournaments, it found its highs and lows. Having just beaten four of the Valley teams during the spring of 2007, the golfers were ready for that important conference meet. From Bermel's take on that, he said, "We finished ahead of all four other Missouri Valley conference teams who were competing in the event, even Missouri State on their home course. This is a great accomplishment, especially heading into the Missouri Valley Championship. It gives us a little push and momentum." One of Bermel's strong freshman players, Molly Schemm, concurs. "We're riding a huge wave of momentum," said Schemm.

The Panthers would finish the MVC Championship in fifth place where they were picked to finish. Schemm finished in 23rd place, but her play garnered her Newcomer of the Year honors and a spot on the MVC All-Conference Team, an award that has rarely been given to a freshman.

The fall 2007 season was to begin. Once the spring season ends, the team has to look forward to what is coming up next. Summer is an off-season that can help the golfer refine specific parts of the game and as the fall season gets under way, the payoff comes in high place finishes in tournaments. Such was the case for Schemm, and Ann Arnason at the DePaul Invitational in Chicago. They tied for second place in the tournament with identical scores of 152. However, the rest of the team has to bring their respective games so the team can be considered for the win. Bermel commented on this part of the game in a Frank Tarasi NI interview. "These last three girls are the ones we're going to start leaning on more toward the end of the season. These are valuable rounds for them right now and hopefully more of them will start to step up and help round out our team."

Strength of play leads teams to their place in tournaments and as has been stated before, the conference tournament is the one that is considered the "sacred cow." So did the bottom three find their game during the season? Schemm did her part as did Arnason. Schemm was once again the leader and only one of two golfers to shoot sub-80 scores in each round of the tournament. Bermel was ecstatic about her game as having been outstanding. She finished in the runner-up spot when the tournament came to a close. Arnason followed in 15th place, but it was freshman Sabrina Danielson that caught his attention finishing in 19th place. Being picked to finish sixth at the tournament, the third place finish was most gratifying.

Coach Bermel comments on Ann Arnason. "Ann is probably one of the most athletic golfers that ever played the game at UNI."



The Panthers capture the Creighton Golf Classic with a 12-stroke margin. It was their first title for the 2009-10 season and the first win since the win at the '09 Butler Invitational. Sophomore Blair Bonner led the pack with her third-place finish, which turned out to be her highest to date. Senior Arnason and redshirt Abby Bermel tied for fifth and sophomore Brittany Atterbury and Katie Tabbert ended with an eighth and 11th-place finish, respectively. Each player was making the contribution that the coach kept talking about. It takes everyone to help the team win.

The up and down season, however, resulted in the team being selected to finish seventh in the MVC Championship. On the final day, the Panthers found themselves in a battle with Indiana State and Missouri State for the third, fourth and fifth places. Maybe all the talk was paying off, because Bonner and Atterbury took Bermel's words to heart and finished tied in eighth place and the Panthers finished the tournament in third place.

The lady golfers have continued to have their highs and their lows; Atterbury has continued to provide one success after another. The women finished the 2012 MVC Golf Championship once again in third place having been in the lead following each of the first two rounds. Atterbury finished in fourth place with a 224 score. Bonner, Tabbert and Sarah Boss finished tied for 13th with a 231 score each. In the first round, Bonner had shot a low-round of 72. Alex Zenor rounded out the scoring with a 240, tied for 30th.

For her play, Atterbury was named to the Missouri Valley All-Conference Team. She had been earlier given a place on the MVC Scholar-Athlete squad, and then she was named the Missouri Valley Player of the Year; a fitting honor for the graduating senior who led the team in so many ways. Atterbury became the first Panther women's golfer to earn the MVC Golfer of the Year Award.

So we are back to the last paragraphs of the men's golf chapter where Coach Bermel has now completed his 10th season with both teams. He has thought about being the coach of both the women's and men's golf teams and he sums it up this way. "I was working with Amanda Paa about specific shots at a tournament. When we've played this course with the men, they all knew to hit just short of a sand trap on the 12th fairway, because that left them with a 180-yard shot to the green,

Abby Bermel Talks About Family

In the men's chapter, there is a mention of the family connection between Coach Bermel and Kyle and Abby. In this chapter, that family inducement takes on a different approach. Here's what Abby has to say.

"UNI golf! When I think about this phrase, I think family. Literally for me family. John Bermel, the head coach, is my dad. Not only is it literally family for me, but it is also 'family'. Let me carry this thought a bit further.

"Everyone cares for each other on a golf team. We are all together so much that it has to be this way. One example specifically that comes to mind is the 2010 MVC Conference Championship my sophomore year. We were playing at Evansville's home course in Indiana. We had a team of one senior and four sophomores, two of which were transfers. This doesn't really sound like family to me or anyone else who hears it. The age difference, the school differences; none of us had been together for very long; two years at best.



Abby Bermel

However, when we got to conference, things were different.

"At the conference meets, the coaches have to pick where they think teams will end up after three rounds of play. We were picked to get seventh. A young team, with not much chemistry; there was no way we would end up any higher than seventh. We thought differently. We wanted to get first. We didn't care what people thought.

"During this tournament every single person on our team counted for our team score at least one of the three days we played. After the rounds we would all be out on the practice range or putting green always helping each other out. And, this is where my definition of family comes in to play. We were acting like a family. Everyone was out there for each other. All of us wanted to play well for each other, not just ourselves. We ended up getting third place. Wow were people surprised. We weren't however, we were disappointed. We wanted to do better, but as a family we headed home with 'our dad' driving, knowing next year we would do better.

"Sharing my dad has never been something I am good at, but in the case of UNI Golf, he is 'dad' to everyone in the family. And as for family, well family is what we are and family is what we will always be."

which is a given iron shot for them. Trying to lay up the sand trap takes a possible mistake out of the equation should they end up in one of the other hazards. So I told her where she would want to hit on this particular hole. She said to me, 'Coach, if I do that, I won't get to the green in two as I don't have that given 180-yard shot.' It dawned on me then that coaching the women required an entirely different mindset because they have to manage their games in a different manner than the men. I needed to remind myself to coach and teach the men accordingly and the same with the women golfers. What the guys do is not necessarily what the women should do. It keeps me on my 'thinking toes'".

Coach Bermel was selected to receive the state's "best teaching" award in 1995. Golf Digest designated him with such an honor for the 2009-10 season and he finished in third place the following year. His golfers are in very competent hands and the future is just around the corner for more history to be written.

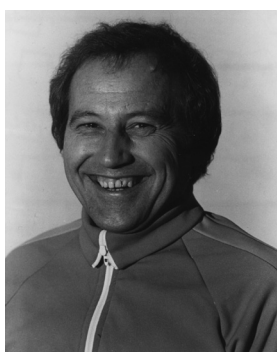


Brittany Atterbury was named the 2011-12 MVC Player of the Year.

The History of Intercollegiate Men's and Women's Gymnastics at the University of Northern Iowa

Rip Marston

From the fall of 1966 to the spring of 1981, the name of Garf Stych was synonymous with UNI gymnastics. To some he is known as "Garf" and others affectionately refer to him simply as "Stych." During his coaching reign at SCI and eventually UNI, his teams reflected his hard working, fun loving, focused dedication personality.



Coach Stych

A native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Godfrey Stych competed in gymnastics for the University of Iowa, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1958 and a Master of Science degree in 1960. He taught high school physical education and coached gymnastics prior to being hired as the men's head gymnastics coach for SCI in 1965. Stych was the only men's gymnastics coach during the modern era of UNI athletics. In his first 12 years at the men's gymnastics helm, UNI was a member of the North Central Conference. During this time, his teams won three North Central Conference Championships, came in second seven times and his teams or selected gymnasts from the team qualified to compete in the NCAA National Division II Championships six times. When UNI ended its affiliation with the NCC and joined the Mid-Continent Conference in 1978, Stych's teams achieved a third- and a fifth-place finish in the M-CC championships before the sport was eliminated in 1981.

The growth of high school gymnastics in Iowa during the late 1960's to the early 1980's was a direct result of Stych's untiring effort, passion and advocacy for his sport. He held countless workshops for high school coaches while he and his gymnasts traveled to an array of K-12 schools to promote the gymnastic venues. Stych served as an excellent ambassador not only for the sport of gymnastics but for the University's athletic

program as well. It is indeed an honor to dedicate the men's gymnastics portion to Godfrey "Garf" Stych.

Men's Gymnastics

"Competition in gymnastics is superior in many ways to the many forms of athletic competition common to our colleges today. It requires and places the premium on accuracy and precision of bodily control to a greater extent, and has a like physiological value without any opportunity for unfairness, as each contestant is stimulated to do his own individual best, and that best counts for his team as well as for himself." - R.F. Seymour, Normal's men's gymnastics coach, 1910.

Humble Beginnings

Although the 1905 Old Gold year book displays a photo of an eight-man tumbling class, with teacher, there is no mention of any intercollegiate gymnastics competition on the Normal campus until the year of 1907. It was then that the men's intercollegiate gymnastics program at the University of Northern Iowa was born. R.F. Seymour, the Director of Physical Training at Normal, arranged a dual meet with Director C.E. Fisher of Grinnell a dual meet. Mention is made in *The Normal Eye* of the "clever maneuvers and gymnastic exercises that the boys who perform between halves at the basket ball games. One would conclude that Normal has some clever men in a few of these events." (Jan. 23, 1907 *The Normal Eye*) This event was perceived as a good avenue through which to stimulate interest in gymnasium work and set a premium on excellence. Professor Seymour thought the event was a good idea, as long as it could be safely financed. In addition to the gymnastics exercises, he also wanted to include a basket ball game to be played by the same five men who composed the gymnastics team. The March 27th, 1907 edition of

The rules for the first gymnastics meet:

1. Each team consisted of five men
2. Three men were required to perform on the horse, parallel bars, flying rings, horizontal bar and tumbling. Maximum team score in each event was 60 points.
3. 60 points were awarded for the 30 yard dash (1st place = 30, 2nd= 15, 3rd=10 and 4th = 5).
4. The basket ball* game points were awarded the same as the final basket ball game score.

* Original spelling of the sport.



Members of the first gymnastics team were: John Kays, Alexander Mouritsen, Irwin Martin, Owen Maricle and Vernon Orr with Coach R.F. Seymour

The Normal Eyte reported that this college gymnastics meet, the first ever held in Iowa, occurred at Grinnell College on a sunny March 23rd Saturday afternoon. The gymnasts from Grinnell were victorious over their rivals from the Normal school, primarily due to their superiority in running the 30 yard dash and "basket ball" skills!

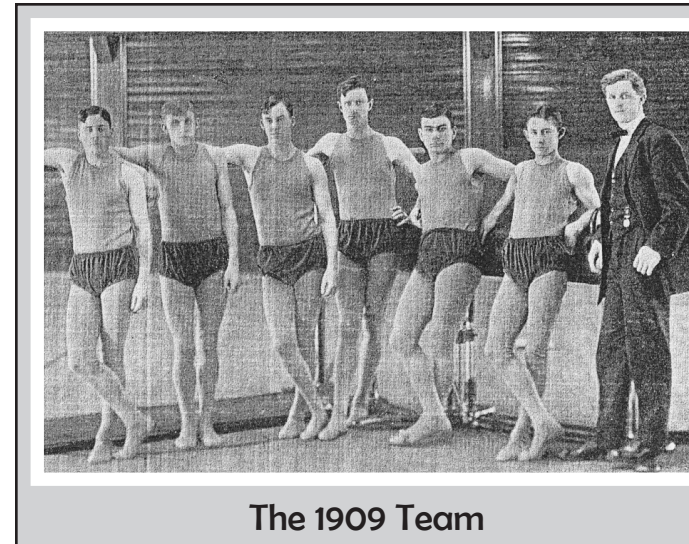
The Normal gymnasts scored a close second in the gymnastics exercises but lost decisively in the 30 yard dash (highest finisher was 3rd) and lost the basket ball game by a score of 31-14. Final meet score was Grinnell 350.1 and Normal 267.1. A return meet was scheduled for the following winter, to be held in Cedar Falls where the Normal gymnasts expected to be victorious.

The return meet evolved into a State Meet in Gymnastics. Representatives from Luther, Coe and

Normal met during the first week of December, 1908 to determine the events for the competition. Representatives from Grinnell and Iowa were also to have participated but didn't attend. It was decided to hold the meet in Cedar Falls, the first ever to be held in the Normal's gymnasium, with the events being the parallel bars, horizontal bar, horse, flying rings and tumbling. It was decided that the winning team would be deemed the State Champion. Normal was chosen to host the meet for three reasons: 1) Cedar Falls was centrally located, 2) Normal had the best equipped gymnasium in the state and 3) the meet organizers wanted to increase the Normal students' and faculty's knowledge of gymnastics as a means of bodily training and exercise. (Dec. 16, 1908 The Normal Eyte) The meet was scheduled to be held in February of that academic year (1908-09).

Teams for this first State Championship, to be held Feb. 13, 1909, were limited to five men. Three from each team entered each event with each team member required to enter at least two events. All exercises were judged on a scale of 10 points, giving one point for approach, two for retreat, three for doing the exercise correctly and four for form. It was decided to give a banner to the winning team, emblematic of the state championship, and to make this an annual contest.

The meet found Luther College winning the contest with the Normal gymnasts coming in second and Iowa wrapping up third place. Grinnell College and Coe both withdrew shortly before the meet began. The reporting by The Normal Eyte (Feb. 17th, 1909) mentions that "the purple tights of the Normal squad rivaled in colorfulness the green suits of the Luther team. The locals acquitted themselves admirably and at no time were at any disadvantage in comparison with their rivals." The reporter also stated that the set exercises were "prettily executed" and stunts "abounded in classy features". Two Normal gymnasts (Bennett Putnam and Earl Crossan) "elicited great applause" in their duet exercise. The members of this Normal team who participated in the state's first gymnastics championship were: Paul Bennett, Crossan, Putnam, Irwin Martin, L. Tonssen and Lloyd Barnes. Martin won the individual honors with Crossan placing second. Unfortunately their outstanding performances weren't enough to win the meet for Normal. The final scores were Luther = 256, Normal = 234 and Iowa = 47.6.

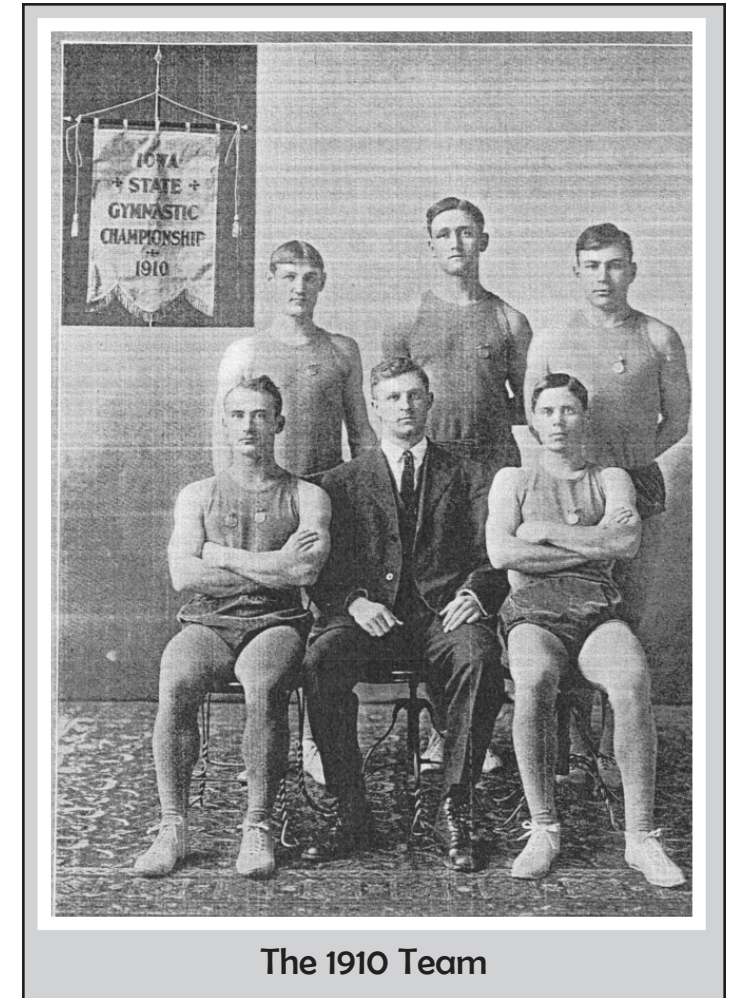


The 1909 Team

The Normal squad was not content with second place and focused its sights on winning the 1910 championship. The team, which at that time consisted of nine members, practiced twice weekly to prepare for the next annual intercollegiate gymnastics meet. The team also displayed its talents during half time of the basketball games. The Feb. 9, 1910 edition of The Normal Eyte reported that the spectators at the basketball games, "have marveled at the 'stunts' performed between halves by five or six embryo circus gymnasts led by Professor Seymour." These performances, in conjunction with the two-a-week practices, allowed the men in the purple tights to meet their goal.

On Saturday March 5, 1910, the Normal gymnastics team won the State Gymnastics Championship. Events consisted of the horse, high bar, parallel bars, flying rings and mats. Final meet scores were: Normal 260, Luther 244.5, and Iowa 224.25. A picture of the 1910 champions was taken and hung in the Men's Gym, along with a blue championship banner. Members of this team were: Bennett, Howard Boltz, Melville Sheffield, Putman and Barnum. Sheffield received the gold medal for the highest individual average score.

The third State Gymnastics Meet was held in late February of 1911. The meet was held in conjunction with the annual exhibition of the men's Physical Training classes. The ISTC teachers are said to have dominated the meet, with first place in each event being won by an ISTC gymnast. The two high individual scores went to ISTC gymnasts Sheffield and Boltz. Final team scores were ISTC 270.29 and Luther 262.62. Members of this team, still under the guidance of Professor Seymour,



The 1910 Team

were Sheffield, Boltz, Aura Miller, Neil Magee, and Tom Anderson. A Normal Eyte article draws attention to a difficulty in ISTC getting a team together for this year. It was hoped that these consecutive victories would increase the interest of the ISTC men to join the team for next year to keep the victory streak alive (March 1, 1911 The Normal Eyte).

The June 15th, 1911 edition of The Normal Eyte praised the gymnastics team for its championship and told the student body that the team was worthy of the loyal support of every student. The article mentioned that it was Coach Seymour's task to develop or discover men of championship caliber, "... a task by no means easy from the material on hand. It is feared that our Lutheran friends from the North will descend upon us in force and return with all the honors as they are reported stronger this year than ever." Unfortunately, the plea for increased interest in the team fell on deaf ears. Several members of the 1911 championship team did not return and few new recruits were obtained. A

final solicitation for team members was placed in the Jan. 24th, 1912 edition of the College Eye.

The outlook for ISTC was foreseen as bleak as two of the strongest members of the previous year's team were absent (Sheffield and Boltz). It was predicted that ISTC would have to present the strongest team ever assembled in order to have a chance at the State Championship. The Championship meet was to have been held on March 2 but was postponed until the 9th of March due to Iowa's inability to get its team ready. The meet was held in conjunction with the Exhibition of the Department of Physical Education. Teams expected to participate in the meet were Iowa, Drake, Luther, and ISTC. However, Drake could not field a team and Iowa withdrew due to a lack of funds. The ISTC was not without its own setbacks. The best gymnast from previous seasons, Sheffield, became the Director of the Charles City Y.M.C.A. and left school. Another gymnast of high ability had to return home due to sickness in the family, while yet another had taken ill three days before the meet. The ISTC men gave it their all. As the 1912 Old Gold year book reports, "Every man arose to the situation and fairly out-did himself in form and execution, and when the battle was over 3 ½ points were all that separated us from our two years' title of State Champions." Final scores were Luther 267.175 and I.S.T.C 263.6.



Members of the team were M.W. Sheffield, Roy Abbott, Kramer, George Grosz and Herbert Hottman.

ISTC's outstanding gymnast, Sheffield, returned for the 1913 season and with a group of new talent, Professor Seymour developed a team that the March 6th, 1913 College Eye describes as, "one of the best Gymnastics teams that Cedar Falls has had in years". This statement proved to be prophetic as the ISTC team did win the 1913 State Gymnastics Championship over a very good Iowa squad. Meet scores were: ISTC 243.40 and Iowa 241.85. Sheffield, the captain of the team, again won the gold medal for individual honors. Roy Abbott was selected as the captain for the 1914 campaign. In addition to being one of the ISTC debaters, he is described as "a natural athlete, a good student, and a happy young lad." (College Eye, March 27, 1913)

The following year saw Captain Abbott lead his team to a second-place finish at the State Gymnastics meet on March 7, 1914 in Iowa City. Final meet results were: Iowa 280.6, ISTC 269.6, Ames 257.6, and Luther 254.6. It was reported that the high scores of the meet reflected the increased quality of the gymnasts and the progression of intercollegiate gymnastics within the state. Approximately a month after the State Meet (April), Coach Seymour hosted a banquet to honor the team at his home. It was reported that during the banquet, "The season's up and downs were gone over in the toasts that followed, and the boys decided to go after the state championship honors next year." (April 9, 1914 The College Eye) The team consisted of Abbott, George Grosz, Herbert Hottman, Hoff Good and Rex Haight.

It should also be mentioned that prior to the start of the 1914 State Gymnastics meet, a business meeting was held on March 7 in which a permanent Iowa State Gymnastics association was formed and officers elected. E.G. Shroeder of Iowa was elected president and Seymour of ISTC was elected secretary. It was also decided to hold the next State Gymnastics meet in Ames on March 6, 1915.

Grosz was selected captain for the 1914-1915 ISTC team and the outlook for the gymnasts was a positive one. Almost everyone was back from the previous year's team (except Good) and there was a good crop of new recruits vying for the fifth position on the team. The men were hard workers, practiced diligently and had the goal to "bring the championship back to where it belongs." (Dec. 10, 1914 College Eye) The team honed its routines by performing at half times of basketball games and offering to compete again teams from local

neighborhoods. Members of the team were Captain Grosz, Abbott, Hottman, Roger Kingsbury and Haight. The meet in Ames was predicted to be one of the hardest contested meets in the history of Iowa gymnastics, with Iowa and ISTC going neck to neck down to the wire. A new and more complicated scoring system was used in order to more accurately assess the ability of the gymnast and the quality of the work performed. The meet was close with Iowa beating the ISTC squad. Final meet results were: Iowa 375.1, ISTC 367.4, Luther 264.1, and Ames 220.2. It was determined that the next year's meet would be held in Decorah.

The college paper congratulated the gymnasts on their second-place finish and Professor Seymour was again praised for his untiring efforts to produce a quality gymnastics team. As last year, Professor Seymour treated his team to an end of season banquet. However, rather than hosting the banquet at his house, Coach Seymour held the banquet at the newly built Blackhawk Hotel in downtown Cedar Falls. During the banquet, Kingsbury was unanimously selected as captain of the 1916 squad. This may have been a dubious honor as Kingsbury was the only gymnast from the 1915 squad returning the next year. The College Eye did note, however that "several promising men are in line for the coming year and one grand effort will be made to 'beat Iowa.'" (April 8, 1915).

The Gymnastics Mystery

Reporting of intercollegiate gymnastics meets or events of the gymnastics team mysteriously disappear after the spring of 1915. There are no recordings of the 1916 state championship or any intercollegiate gymnastics events in the College Eye, in the Old Gold yearbook or any other archived materials reviewed. The next mention of any gymnastics related activity isn't seen until 1966 when the university announces the reinstatement of the men's gymnastics team. What happened to the ISTC gymnastics team? Several theories have been offered. One theory is that the war in Europe (WWI) drew many of the American men into the military service. Could the men's gymnastics team have been a victim of the attrition of available athletes to compete at the collegiate level? One weakness in this theory is that in 1916, World War I was still a year or

two away from having its biggest impact on America's involvement.

Another theory is that the team lost its coach, who was the impetus of the sport at the institution from its very inception. However, Professor Seymour was a professor at this institution until at least 1917, when he took a leave of absence. He served in the capacity as the head of the Physical Education department from 1909 to 1917. Could something have happened to Professor Seymour's ability to coach the team and without his leadership the team dissolved? We may never really know the exact cause of this gap in men's gymnastics at the University of Northern Iowa. It is intriguing how a sport, whose athletes won three of the six state championships and were the runners up in the other three, could totally disappear from the sports scene without a trace.

The Modern Era

Men's gymnastics returned to the Northern Iowa campus during the 1966-67 academic year. Stych was hired as the coach. Stych, a native of Cedar Rapids, was a skilled performer for the University of Iowa. Previously to coming to SCI, Stych was a high school Physical Education teacher and gymnastic coach at Eau Claire, Wis. An article in the Nov. 11, 1966 edition of The College Eye erroneously states that this would be the first gymnastic team on campus since 1911 (as we now know, it was really 1915). The article also erroneously stated that gymnastics was here to stay, but then our current hindsight is 20/20. Stych began the season with three men who had some gymnastics experience (James Monahan, Dennis Runion, and Tom Mickelson). They quickly recruited three additional members (Daryll Banning, Tom Moreland and Tom Griffin). These six men comprised the nucleus of the team. However, it wasn't long before there were 22 men gymnasts practicing in the men's gymnasium. Five meets were scheduled, four away and one at home. The team performed exhibition routines and stunts at the college's football games and at half time during the basketball games (some things never change).

By the time the first meet of the season came around at Morningside College, the team had whittled down to a traveling squad of 15 members. The co-captains of this first SCI team were Monahan of

Waverly and Dick Smittle of Ogden. Others competing were Griffin, Tom Egan, Banning, Roger McBride, David Clark, Clyde Hovick, Harvey Hop, Duane Spidle, Tom Moreland, Keith Hicklin, Steve Rutz, Russ Telecky, and Matt Nutt. This wasn't so much of a gymnastics meet as it was a gymnastics clinic to raise interest in their sport and provide the gymnasts with an opportunity to be judged doing their routines. The College Eye reported the team to be enthusiastic and looking forward to competing (Dec. 9, 1966).

The first actual intercollegiate gymnastics meet occurred in January of 1967 at Mankato State. SCI lost the dual meet 173.4 to 71.8. Coach Stych considered the meet a "\$500 Education in the sport. We had only six men competing and none of them had ever been up against another team before" (Jan. 13, 1967 College Eye). Despite the loss, Stych was proud of the team members and felt the future was bright. The members of the team who participated in this first official competitive dual meet were: Monaghan, Nutt, Griffin, Banning, Telecky and Egan. The events for the first meet were: floor exercise, side horse, trampoline, rings, long horse vaulting, parallel bars, horizontal bar and all-around.

Unfortunately, Stych's bright future soon turned bleak. SCI lost the next two duals to the University of Chicago and Illinois State. The only home meet of the season had to be postponed because Minnesota had eight inches of snow which kept Gustavus Adolphus from traveling to Cedar Falls. Then the real bad luck hit. Out of the original team of 22 men, only four remained by mid-February. Injuries, health issues and academic probations all took their toll. One gymnast received a cracked vertebra in a car accident. Another had to quit due to an asthma condition, and the list goes on and on. Due to this lack of depth, the SCI gymnasts lost the last two meets of the season and ended with a 0-5 record. The "iron men" who finished the season were: Monaghan, Keith Hicklin, Steve Hansen, and Telecky.

The 1967-68 squad showed steady improvement in skill and a full slate of gymnasts. After beginning the season at 0-5, the team won its first dual meet over Wisconsin-River Falls and followed it up with a win over Superior State in a double dual at Wisconsin-River Falls. The team then proceeded to lose three home dual meets, although the team's scores did improve over previous meets. The men continued to work hard and there was optimism in that only one man would be lost

to graduation and in anticipation of having some skillful freshmen joining the squad. In its second year of competition, the team posted a 2-9 record going into the first North Central Conference (NCC) gymnastics meet at Brookings, S.D. UNI had a surprising second-place finish in the inaugural NCC gymnastics meet. South Dakota State won the meet. However, the meet was "unofficial" with no trophies or medals awarded. Five of the seven conference members entered teams in the meet, with Augustana and Morningside not entering teams. UNI's top gymnast (Hicklin) broke his hand prior to the meet and was able to only enter one event (long horse vaulting). He won the event, broken hand and all.

The surprising second-place finish at the conference meet ended the season on a high note. Another high note was that Hicklin was the first UNI gymnast to qualify for a national gymnastics meet by receiving a score of 9.35 in vaulting. These high notes carried the enthusiasm over into the next season, which saw 16 gymnasts competing in a 16-meet season. As the gymnasts' skills improved, so did the team records and the number of fans who would attend the home meets in the Men's Gym. Freshmen were also arriving on campus



1967-68 Men's Gymnastics Team:

First Row L-R: Dennis Holland, Steve Speth, Steve Lamansky, Duane Spidle. Second Row: Coach Stych, Russ Telecky, Steve Rutz, Harvey Hop, Keith Hicklin, Clyde Hovick, Bill Stein

with more knowledge and skills due to the inclusion of gymnastics in the community schools and local clubs.

The end of the 1968-69 season (5-6 meet record) saw the men capture the unofficial NCC Gymnastics Meet in Brookings. The Panthers swept all seven events. South Dakota State was second, North Dakota University third, South Dakota University fourth, North Dakota State fifth, Morningside sixth and Augustana seventh.

Dennis Weidenman was selected to captain the squad for the fourth season that had five returning lettermen and several exciting freshmen. Among the freshmen was Dennis Gable from Cedar Rapids. Gable was the first recruit to join the UNI gymnastics program who was a state high school gymnastics all-around champion. During the first competitive year, the team's record was 0-5; the second year's record was 2-9 while the third year's record was 5-6. The 1969-70 team's goal was to break the .500 win mark. Unfortunately, this was not to be as the team went 5-8 during the season. However, all was not lost. The UNI team did have two gymnasts, Wiedenmann and Steve Speth, compete in the NCAA national gymnastics meet. These were the first UNI gymnasts to do so.

During the early 1970's the men's gymnastics program saw improvements in the quality of the performances and the quantity of the gymnastics. More competitive teams were scheduled and the UNI squad continued to struggle to get past the .500 season record mark. Inexperience also plagued the team in that most of the gymnasts had little, if any, high school gymnastics work. The season's won-loss records were: 1970-71 3-9; 1971-72 7-8; and 1972-73 10-7 (the highest winning percentage since the sport was revived in 1966).

UNI hosted the 1971 North Central Conference meet in March. All seven schools within the conference sent teams. Mankato State ran away with the team title. UNI came in second. The UNI squad again hosted the NCC meet in 1973 due to a scheduling conflict at the University of North Dakota, which was supposed to host the meet. Mankato continued its championship streak for a fourth time while UNI finished in second place, also for the fourth time in a row.

The 1973-74 season saw a much improved team. Many individual and team records were set during the season by the "Sensational Seven" as Coach Stych called his team members. However, the final team record was an unimpressive 8-8 going into the NCC champion-

ship meet. DejaVu? Mankato was first and UNI came in second once again. The 1973 team did qualify for the NCAA Division II national championships. The UNI gymnasts redeemed themselves somewhat by finishing ninth of 24 teams, one place ahead of Mankato. The 1974-75 team accomplished a 5-7 regular season record but surprised everyone by winning the NCC championship, by one tenth of one point over South Dakota State University. Mankato State finished the meet in third place. The team also qualified again for the NCAA Division II Gymnastics Championships, where it finished in 11th place.

The 1975-76 season was heralded as the best group of underclassmen that Coach Stych had ever had. The team was looking forward to a very competitive schedule, culminating in hosting the NCAA Division II National Gymnastics Championships in the UNI-Dome. The 1975-76 squad posted a 4-8 dual record but was optimistic going into the NCC championships because it had defeated the top three teams in the NCC during the regular season and had qualified for the national championships. The optimism faded at the NCC championships as too many mistakes on vault and bars resulted in UNI placing second behind Mankato State.

Next up would be the NCAA Division II championship in the UNI-Dome, where 170 athletes from 23 Division II schools would be competing in the three-day event. The 1976 championships were unique because for the first time since the Division II championships began in 1968, all six events would be going on at the same time and all the equipment would be free standing because no floor mounts were allowed in the Dome's floor. UNI finished 10th in the team competition with a team score of 274.35.

The 1976-77 team was hailed by Coach Stych as potentially to be one of the best teams ever. Returning lettermen and good freshmen recruits made up the squad. However, injuries riddled the team and it could only achieve a 4-7 dual meet season. UNI hosted the NCC gymnastics championships in the Men's Gym on March 19. UNI finished second again but this time to conference champion South Dakota State. However, UNI did qualify to compete at the NCAA Division II national meet and placed 11th, with a score of 248.80. Mark DeVolder was the standout UNI gymnast with a 14th-place finish in the horizontal bar, the highest

Meet the Panthers

Members of the 1974-1975 North Central Conference Championship team

finish ever for a UNI gymnast in a national competition. The NCC champion, South Dakota State University, finished in 12th place. Coach Stych declared the season a success.

The 1977-78 season was a repeat of the 1976-77 one with the UNI squad posting a 5-6 season record. The highlight of the season was capturing the NCC championships held in Brookings. The championship title provided the impetus for the team's performance at the NCAA Division II National Championship, which saw the Panther gymnasts finishing in eighth place. This was the highest placement for any UNI gymnastics team. Jesus Vazquez placed ninth on the floor exercise, which was the highest ever for a UNI gymnast in

a national meet, erasing the record set by DeVolder the previous year.

The optimism carried over to the next season. The 1978-79 team rose above the .500 mark by posting a 7-5 won-lost record. In March, the team again hosted the NCAA Division II National Championships in the UNI-Dome. People from the Cedar Valley were provided the opportunity to watch over 100 gymnasts from across the country perform Olympic compulsory routines on the six pieces of apparatus. UNI had one national qualifier, Vazquez, who was ranked 13th in the floor exercise event. Vazquez had broken two school records in the floor exercise and the rings during the regular season. Vazquez finished 14th at the national meet. Except for senior captain, Jim Gates, it was anticipated that the 1980 team would have everyone returning.

The 1979-80 team got off to a slow start due to its practice facility being relocated. The team lost two weeks of practice time when, in mid-October, all of the gymnastics equipment was moved from the West Gym to the East Gym and all the spotting equipment had to be dismantled and reassembled

on the top floor of the East Gym. The team never fully recovered from the practice delay and ended up placing fifth in the new Mid-Continent Conference Championship at season's end. However, two senior members of the team, Steve Hangartner and Vazquez did qualify to compete in the AAU National Gymnastics Meet. Vazquez became the University's first all-American gymnast.

The 1980-81 season saw injuries to several key gymnasts that kept the squad from reaching the .500 mark. However, team records were set in the pommel horse and the parallel bars. This was to be the last competitive season for the men's gymnastics team. In April, the University's Athletic Policy Advisory Coun-

cil approved a proposal to cut the men's and women's gymnastics teams as a cost saving measure.

The intercollegiate gymnastics program at the University of Northern Iowa was a victim of the weakened economy of the early 1980's. Farm foreclosures and bankruptcies were abundant. Budget reductions were expected in all aspects of the University community, including the athletic programs. During the spring of 1981, several unique economic factors merged to seal the fate of the men's and women's gymnastics programs at UNI. A grievance against UNI was filed under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which required colleges to fund men and women's athletics equally. As a result of the grievance, UNI President John Kamerick requested that a large infusion of money be made to the athletic program, primarily to be used for women's scholarships. The women's coaching staffs were also to be enhanced and the workloads of men's and women's coaches were to be equalized. This required a substantial financial commitment by an athletic department because, at the same time, the department was being required to cut the budget by five percent due to the economy. In the end the decision was made to eliminate the men's and women's gymnastics programs. (See the Women's Gymnastics Team History section for a more detailed account of the elimination of intercollegiate gymnastics at UNI.)

To recap the history of the men's gymnastics program at the University of Northern Iowa, it can be said to have had a humble beginning in 1907, a mysterious five-decade gap, and a controversial ending due to the budget cuts of the early 1980's. During the years that Normal, ISTC, SCI and UNI did field competitive men's gymnastics teams, it can be said the men represented their collegiate institution proudly and with distinction.

Name	Class	Hometown
Jim Gates**	Jr.	Waverly, Ia.
Steve Hangartner*	Soph.	Cedar Rapids, Ia.
Ray Hittenmiller	Soph.	Dyersville, Ia.
Dean Jedlicka**	Sr.	Tipton, Ia.
Gary Keenan**	Jr.	Grinnell, Ia.
Don Klingler	Fr.	Marion, Ia.
Jerry Mohon	Soph.	Marshalltown, Ia.
Nick Octaviani	Sr.	Bayamon, Puerto Rico
Mark Royer***	Sr.	Council Bluffs, Ia.
Mike Theisen	Fr.	Bettendorf, Ia.
Jesus Vazquez*	Soph.	Omaha, Neb.
Jeff Wright	Soph.	Newton, Ia.

*Indicates Letters won

Members of the 1977-1978 North Central Conference Championship team

State titles or conference championships were won in each era.

Reflections

(The following comments were obtained from past gymnasts and coaches and are being shared as they were received with minimal editing.)

"My career as a collegiate gymnast did not begin with a coach coming to my high school meets, sending me recruiting letters, or inviting me to campus for a visit. My introduction to both gymnastics and collegiate athletics began with a notice in the campus newspaper that UNI was beginning a men's gymnastics program

and those interested should contact the head coach, Garf Stych. I remember going into his office to inquire about the sport and my opportunity to be a member of the team.

"As I look back, that day in Coach's office totally changed my college experience and my life. As every man or woman who has had an opportunity to compete at the college level knows, it is a life-changing event. I went from a small town Iowa farm boy to a person competing with some of the nation's top gymnasts in just three short years.

"We began the program in 1966, my sophomore year. Our first season was a real learning experience. Only one person had any real gymnastic experience. The rest of us were long on enthusiasm but short on skill. As I recall, the other conference schools were also beginning gymnastics programs. Our first meet was more like a clinic than a meet. Many of the conference schools were there. What surprised us the most was that we were at the same level of development as most of our conference rivals. The rest of the first season was a blur. We attacked our daily workouts and focused on learning the basic skills. By the end of the first year, we had made a lot of personal gains but were still far behind Iowa and Iowa State in terms of competitive ability.

"Jim Monaghan was our team leader in 1966-67. He was our only all around competitor. Russ Telecky worked the pommel horse and parallel bars; Steve Hansen competed in floor, parallel bars, and rings. I competed in vaulting and high bar. The most notable comment of our first season is the number of teammates who quit or who were forced off the team for medical reasons. We started out with 21 on the team and ended with only four.

"1967-68 saw an increase in our numbers. We began to feel like we were on the way. Russ and I were the only returning letter winners. We filled our ranks with Steve Speth and Clyde Hovick from the track team. Harvey Hop, an ex-marine, joined us as well as Dennis Holland, Steve Rutz, Steve Lamansky, Bill Stein, and Duane Spidle. For the first time we had enough gymnasts to cover each event. We had reached the level where we had at least one person on every event that could challenge for first place during our meets. The quality of our depth was getting better as well. Of special note, Steve Lamansky competed in floor and trampoline. His trampoline skills were very good. Steve

became our first eight-point-plus scorer on the trampoline. Harvey and Russ were the team captains in '67-68. I also learned about budgets during this season. I had become an all-around gymnast but had the most success in vaulting. During the meet with Northern Illinois I scored a 9.35 in vaulting. By the end of the season I had earned a chance to compete in the NCAA Division II National Championships in California. I remember Coach coming to me to say that he had to make a decision whether to take me to California or buy a new pommel horse. We got the new horse.

"Our third year and we were poised to become real contenders. Barry Sweet, an all-around athlete from Cedar Rapids, instantly give us a scoring leader. Dennis Wiedenman transferred in from Gustavus Adolphus. Jeff Connor and Don Niewoehner joined Steve Speth, Steve Lamansky, Dennis Holland, Steve Rutz, and me to form the competition team for the season. We ended the season with a 5-6 dual record and first place in the conference tournament. At the conference meet we won first and second place in the floor exercise, parallel bars, and all-around. We captured the top four spots in the vault and rings. Steve Lamansky won the trampoline, Dennis Wiedenman won the pommel horse, and Barry Sweet won the horizontal bar. In all we had the top place on all seven events and won the meet by over 16 points.

"By the time I rejoined the team in 1974-75 as a graduate assistant for Coach Stych, the talent on the team had improved greatly. The depth at all events, including all around, was such that on a given night, any of four individuals could lead the team. No longer could an Iowa farm boy with no experience make the team. You had to have prior experience to make the team.

"On a sad note I close with the thought of Coach Stych as he continues to deal with his health issues. He is a coach, mentor, and great friend to my wife and me. I also wish to remember Jerry Hamilton. Jerry was a member of the '74-75 team. He died shortly after his graduation. Jerry was a fierce competitor and fine young man."

Keith Hicklin, member 1966-69; Assistant coach 1974-75

"I was lucky enough to have a high school gymnastics team at Waverly-Shell Rock schools. I started taking summer classes at UNI with Coach Stych when I was in junior high. Bob Ritson was the high

school coach and he would drive us down in his Volkswagen bug. UNI practiced in what was the north room of the Men's Gym (now called the West Gym). I remember all of the equipment being so close together that if you fell too far off one event, you could land on another. UNI gymnasts frequently came to our high school meets as judges. At one time in the state of Iowa, almost all of the judges and all of the coaches were UNI grads. Iowa and Iowa State had men's programs, too, but they very seldom recruited Iowa students and their gymnasts never judged or coached in Iowa. We were very proud of this at UNI. While not nationally ranked, we did our part to keep gymnastics alive in the state.

"During my first years at UNI, we practiced in the north room of the Men's Gym. For our meets, we moved all the equip into the main gym then back the next day. What a pain in the rear. We were issued practice clothes by an equipment manager named Hoppe. We could turn these in and get clean ones, along with towels. This was big time stuff to an Iowa farm boy. I really thought I belonged to the big leagues. The showers also had a steam valve so we sometimes sat in the shower trying to steam out our aches and pains. In the beginning of the year, we had to run a six-minute mile to prove we had some conditioning. As a distance runner in high school, I thought it was easy but some had to run it multiple times and some never did make it.

"The two events I did were the pommel horse and high bar. I liked pommel horse the best. I wasn't very big but I had a lot of upper body strength. I think I actually placed second one year at our conference meet. I liked high bar but didn't like to let go. My dismount was always pretty weak. From these two events came two of a gymnast's worst injuries. The pommel horse gave me forearm splints, which are like shin splints only in your forearms from pounding the heel of your hand on the pommels. Sometimes they hurt so bad I couldn't even hold a pencil or pen, which really didn't affect my school work much anyway. High bar gave you rippers. They were quarter size or larger blisters on your hands. They hurt and had to be wrapped and taped all the time. Being a farm boy, my hands were a lot tougher than most, especially at the beginning of the season. You carefully conditioned your hands and wore hand guards to gradually build up the calluses.

"We used to travel to away meets in those Dodge cars. Stych usually drove one and the grad assistant

usually drove the other. Stych never seemed to mind the speed limits and those old cars could fly. Whoever rode shotgun was called the spotter and looked out for the cops. One of the unwritten rules was if you got into trouble you were on your own. During one trip to North Dakota, Dave Eppert lost control on the ice and we watched him do several donuts then ditch it on the interstate. They managed to push themselves out but Stych's car never stopped. They caught up to us later. Steve Speth also was an assistant and I think he ditched his car on our way to South Dakota. Most of the time we had motel rooms but once in North Dakota we actually stayed one night with the other team's gymnasts. We slept in the dorms once in Wisconsin. Stych always knew the best steak houses in whatever town we were in. We always ate well, especially after the meet. All this motel living and free food was a real treat to me

"One year we qualified for nationals in California. It took a lot of persuading on Stych's part but we finally got the ok to go. That was my first plane flight. I don't remember the name of the college. We went in March and it wasn't ideal weather but we still went to Malibu Beach and Universal Studios, just to say we had been there. On the flight home we had a layover in Denver, Colo. so we went outside and slept on a grassy hill next to the airport. We didn't figure in the altitude so we got a little sunburned. When we got back we told everyone we got it in California.

"I remember going to Iowa and Iowa State for meets. They just killed us but we got to watch a lot of really good gymnastics. ISU was national champs in the early '70s and we saw some top notch performers. The ISU meet was set up in Hilton Coliseum on the hockey rink. They put down insulation and the basketball floor for the equipment. We sat on chairs on the insulation and wore our coats and mittens trying to keep our hands warm.

"Division II nationals were the first big event in the UNI-Dome. The first year we competed as the host school, however, for both years we were the setup crew. Nissen out of Cedar Rapids sent up brand new equipment we had to assemble and setup. Then we took it all down and shipped it back. I became an expert on Nissen equipment which came in handy when I graduated and went into coaching. I think we had nationals there again but we didn't compete, just set up and moved equipment. I remember making t-shirts with the

NCAA logo and the UNI-Dome and selling them at the meet. Probably would be sued today if you did that.

"I really am proud of having been a UNI gymnast and I wouldn't change that experience for the world. I still had my old uniform and letter jacket and a lot of score sheets and pictures but lost it all in the flood of 2008. However, I will treasure the memories forever."

Jim Gates, member 1975-79

"Since I was involved near the very beginning of UNI gymnastics, I have a good memory of how it all began. Aside from a couple of kids from Cedar Rapids who had some high school competition behind them, Stych would recruit just about anybody who could work up a routine, including kids who took his general education gymnastics class. In my case I was at UNI because of track. I was a pole vaulter. A track buddy had taken Stych's gymnastic class and he talked me into going to a few of his gymnastics practice sessions. Stych was terrific and got me hooked on gymnastics. The team was very close and we sort of matched Coach Stych's attitude: we worked our butts off but always had a blast doing it. I've been on few teams that got along as well as we did. Stych was a good coach; he knew he had to 'teach' us gymnastics, and fast. He kept it all in perspective too. We measured ourselves against our own progress, knowing that the wins, both individually and as a team, would eventually come around, and they did. Since most of the schools in the conference were just starting out like we were (and not all of the schools in the old NCC had teams) we were able to hold our own—even dominate—against the other schools. We won the conference title in 1969-70 but we sort of expected to. We had beaten those teams pretty regularly (the two South Dakota schools were fairly good as I recall). Our toughest competition in those days, aside from an occasional meet with Iowa and Iowa State, was with schools like St. Cloud and Mankato State—as they had well established teams. Each year, while I was there, we got a little stronger against those teams.

"All of the gymnasts will tell you, if you bring it up, that one of the strongest memories we have probably has to do with all of the exhibitions we did at schools. We used to joke that if there was some obscure high school or junior high school that nobody had ever heard of and we hadn't been to yet, Stych would have us there the next season. We travelled all over the state—

mostly to really small schools! Stych felt the need to have us be ambassadors for the sport if it was to survive. He would contact some out of the way place and they'd assure us that yes, 'they had a real good set of equipment!'. We'd get there and find out that the parallel bars were for elementary kids or the trampoline was so small that Steve Lamansky would actually hit the floor in the middle of a trick. Or the ceiling was so low that you had to bend your knees when you did a giant swing on the high bar to keep from touching it. And yes, we did more than one floor exercise routine on a bare wood floor with no mats. Stych was a natural showman, however, and our exhibitions ALWAYS went over well. We worked up a few comedy routines as part of the show and loved doing it all, even though it was rather time consuming. Stych was young enough in those days to do a comedy routine on the P-Bars himself.

"During the 1969-70 season Denny Weidenmann and I achieved qualifying scores to compete at nationals. Denny and I were also among the first UNI gymnasts to compete in the Midwest Open, which was one of the premier events in the United States at the time. Coach Stych was determined that if the program was to thrive, we needed to get to as many meets with the top teams as possible. Iowa high schools at the time had boys gymnastics teams—but only at a very few schools. So between a few high school competitors (like Barry Sweet later) and a few kids with club backgrounds, Stych figured he could build a decent program.

"During my years at UNI, the most prominent member of the team was Keith Hicklin. He was team captain and sort of our anchor. In just about every event we had someone as a specialist who led the team—me on floor, Denny on Pommel Horse, Lamansky on Tramp, Harvey Hop on Rings and so on. That is something that has changed over the years, with much greater emphasis on All-Around competitors today. Even the nationals, in those days, would be won by specialists in each event, not all-around competitors.

"While I was at UNI as a grad assistant, we hosted the NCAA nationals for Division II at the Dome. I guess in a sense that was the high point in UNI gymnastics history. A greater legacy, however, probably is in the number of UNI grads that went on to coaching gymnastics or staying involved indirectly."

Steve Speth, member 1966-70; Assistant coach 1978-79

"Men's gymnastics in the modern era at UNI (then SCI) began in the fall of 1966. I first became aware of this when a picture of those who were to be on the first team was shown in the student newspaper. One of the six or seven guys in the picture was in my house in the residence hall. I mentioned this to him, basically in just trying to get to know him. Apparently, I showed too much interest because he invited me to come to watch practice that day. He introduced me to Coach Stych and the next thing I realized, I was walking to the student health center to get a physical to come out for the team. That first team was quite an eclectic group --- comprised of a couple of guys who had tumbled a little, one or two who had a trampoline in the backyard, and some, like me, who knew nothing at all about the sport.

"I gravitated to the pommel horse --- largely perhaps because no one else wanted to work it and maybe because some of the other events seemed too hard or too scary. In looking back, I am amazed at the patience and humility that Coach Stych demonstrated to build a team from basically nothing. He was teaching new skills daily on seven events (including trampoline) and doing all of the spotting. He also had to field a team of beginners who needed to compete against some pretty good colleges. The results were predictable --- as we lost by scores like 140 to 40. Still, he persisted and through the years as he was able to recruit athletes with actual gymnastics background, he built the program into one that competed well against nationally ranked teams.

"From my two years on the team, I have many varied remembrances. Our first road trip (if my memory serves me right) was to a clinic at Morningside College. We traveled often with the swim team. Our breakfast was a small box of cereal and milk and our dinner was a brownbag lunch from the school cafeteria. Still, we were college athletes and Coach always encouraged us and never treated us as though we were anything less. It must have been very difficult for him to have such a group at our level of performance represent him and our school. After all, he had been an outstanding member of nationally ranked teams when he had competed for the University of Iowa. Coach was the best friend the state of Iowa had for gymnastics. He would go anywhere to promote the sport, with a clinic or demonstration or halftime show. He was active in encouraging high school gymnastics. He annually hosted the UNI Invi-

tational for boys high school teams and was a judge for high school meets as well. He was also available to give the benefit of his knowledge and background to local gymnastic clubs.

"As the first of Coach Stych's gymnasts to graduate, he helped me to get my first coaching job at Cedar Rapids Washington High School and I would often call or visit him as a resource on how to teach an unfamiliar skill, how to handle a difficult situation, or just to express my gratitude for all he had done for me. In over 40 years of coaching gymnastics now, I have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of boys and girls. None of this would have happened if it were not for Coach Garf Stych and UNI gymnastics. I know that I am only one of many, many for whom this is true. I owe Coach Stych and UNI more than I can ever repay. I am eternally grateful for what he has done for me. This is his legacy. Because of UNI gymnastics and Coach Stych and the athletes like me that he invested his life in, probably thousands of lives have been touched. It would be my joy to see UNI fittingly induct Coach Garf Stych into its athletic hall of fame."

Russ Telecky, member 1966-68

Women's Gymnastics

"There will be an organizational meeting for all women interested in being on the intercollegiate gymnastics team on Monday, Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. in W. Gym 214. This is a new sport offered for women this year and no experience is necessary."

(Dec. 6, 1974 Northern Iowan)

Thus began the history of women's gymnastics at the University of Northern Iowa. Women's gymnastics has the distinction of being the shortest lived intercollegiate sport in the history of the University. Its collegiate career only lasted from the fall of 1974 to the spring of 1981. A mere six and a half years. Its termination as a collegiate sport was also housed in controversy due, in part, as a causality of a federal law that ironically was passed to help assist women intercollegiate athletics.

The intercollegiate sport of women's gymnastics was first introduced to the UNI student body during the fall semester of 1974. It was one of four new sports to be added to the women's athletic program that year. The other three were volleyball, golf and track and field. The

first organizational meeting was held in December of that same semester. This announcement in the Northern Iowan provided the date and time of this meeting and also stated that four meets had tentatively been scheduled. However, these four meets were eventually reduced to two meets, one in Ames and one in Iowa City. Given the current status of women's intercollegiate athletics at UNI, it does seem odd that an individual at that time could become a member of an intercollegiate athletic team with no previous experience in that sport.

Sharon Huddleston was hired as the first women's gymnastics coach and it is interesting to note that she was also hired at the same time as UNI's first intercollegiate women's volleyball and women's track and field coach. This occurred at a time when intercollegiate coaches for women's sports were given very little, if any, release time for their coaching responsibilities. Coach Huddleston was obviously a very busy person! In regards to women's gymnastics, Coach Huddleston's first team (1975 season) consisted of 11 members (See Box 1 for the team roster), five of which had some high school experience. The first meet in Ames was described as "a learning experience" by Coach Huddleston (Feb. 11, 1975 Northern Iowan). Only four gymnasts made the trip and only two, Barb Beckett (on uneven parallel bars and floor exercise) and Lynn Danielson (on vaulting), participated in any of the events. However, the second meet in Iowa City saw eight UNI gymnasts making the trip with three competing in one or more of the four events. The three gymnasts and their events were Beckett in all-around; Connie Jensen in the uneven parallel bars, floor exercise and vault; and Kathy Thayer in uneven parallel bars and floor exercise. The first year was deemed a success and everyone looked forward to the second season.

Unfortunately, the second season (1975-1976) did not live up to its expectations. The 1976 competitive season consisted of only one intercollegiate meet, a triangular meet in Iowa City against the University of Iowa and Drake. The Panthers had at least four meets scheduled when practice started but the women gymnasts had to withdraw from the first meet due to a lack of practice time. Then Iowa State moved up the date of its invitational meet and again it was too early for the Panthers to compete. The Iowa Intercollegiate Athletics for Women Gymnastics Championship was

Roster of UNI's First Officially Recorded Women's Intercollegiate Gymnastic Team

Barb Becket, Patty Cimmarusti, Lynn Danielson, Linda Hill, Connie Jensen, Jo Ann Junttila, Sue Monahan, Jeanne Patterson, Sandy Sullivan, Kathie Thayer and Jan Thyne

cancelled at the end of the season, which left the UNI gymnasts with only the single meet.

Lack of depth and experience of the gymnasts, in addition to an inability to hold any home meets, were seen as the biggest hurdles to the future of the program. It should be noted that up to this point, team members consisted mainly of women solicited from the University's gymnastics physical activity class, which was a part of the General Education component of the liberal arts degree. Posters were placed in Maucker Union, the women's gyms and the women's dormitories encouraging interested women to try out for the team. Due to the infancy of the program, no high school recruitment was conducted. Hence, the most "experienced" gymnasts usually only had one or two years of any competitive experience. Practice schedules varied from month to month because the women's basketball, volleyball and gymnastics teams all needed to use the same facility. In addition, practice schedules were not always made with the best interest of the students in mind, but needed to be done due to the limited space available. See box below for an example of the practice schedule for the 1976-1977 gymnastics team.

Sample Practice Schedule for 1976-1977 Season

From Oct. 25-29th the team practiced on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4-5 p.m. in the Women's Gym 114 and then moved to the Women's Gym 214 from 5-6 p.m. From Nov. 1st to Dec. 15th, the team practiced from 6-8 p.m. in Gym 214 on Mondays and Wednesdays and from 4-6 pm. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Then from Jan. 8th to Feb. 17th, the team practiced on Mondays from 4-5:30 p.m. in the Men's Gym; from 4-6 p.m. in the Women's Gym 214 on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and from 6-8 p.m. in 214 on Wednesdays. There were no Friday practices, as specified by the Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Council.



Members of UNI's First Women's Gymnastics State Tournament Team 1976-77

Diane Blake, Juli Harmon, Sarah Elliott, Lynn Danielson, Denise Cameron, Kim Peter, Patty Cimmarusti, Coach Rip Marston (not shown: Kathy Lasell)

The third season (1976-1977) saw the hiring of Rip Marston as the new head coach, thus allowing Coach Huddleston to focus her coaching time on volleyball and track and field. Marston's first team was comprised of three returning gymnasts and seven newcomers. The season consisted of five meets, concluding with a fifth-place (of six teams) finish at the Iowa Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women Gymnastics State Tournament in Iowa City. This team was the first women's team to compete in the state tournament. UNI had three gymnasts: Denise Cameron (floor exercise), Kim Peter (floor exercise and vault) and Kathy Lasell (balance beam) qualify to compete in the meet.

The next two seasons (1978 & 1979) under Marston's guidance saw the program grow in both quality and quantity. More meets were added to the schedule, including several home meets. The scores of the gymnasts' routines and total team scores continued to improve and culminated with the Panthers winning their last home quadrangular meet against Northwestern (Illinois), Augustana, and St. Ambrose.

This period of time also saw high school recruitment being initiated and the 1978 team had its first gymnasts (Donna Bauman and Maureen Doud) on partial athletic scholarships. The 1979 team was described by Coach Marston as "the best women's gymnastics team ever assembled at UNI" (Feb. 2, 1979

Northern Iowan). The lady gymnasts lived up to their coach's expectations by setting both individual and team records during the season. The season culminated with a fourth-place (out of five) finish behind the University of Iowa, Iowa State University and Grand View College at the state meet. Coach Marston was pleased with his team's performance against these well established, much older programs. This was the last state meet held in women's college gymnastics due to a lack of participating teams. Upon the completion of the 1978-1979 season Coach Marston submitted his resignation, citing a need to pursue requirements contingent on tenure and promotion at the University as the rationale for the resignation.

For the 1979-1980 season, the actual day to day coaching duties for the women's team was handed to Carrie Regier, a graduate assistant from the University of Nebraska. The competitive schedule increased to 12 meets. The team was composed of two juniors, five sophomores and four freshmen and the quality of the routines continued to improve with each meet.

An event of note was that the dividing wall in the East Gym was knocked down over semester break to make more room for the gymnastics teams to practice. All of the gymnastics equipment was moved from the West Gym to the East Gym during the previous fall semester and both the men's and the women's gymnastics teams continued to practice together. Home meets were also scheduled to be held in the East Gym.

Prior to knocking down the wall, there were two gyms on the second level of the East (formerly the Women's) Gym. Knocking down the dividing wall created some controversy, as it meant a loss of a teaching area for the physical education classes. This move also forced the volleyball team to move its practices and home games to the West Gym, which had a lower ceiling than the East Gym. However, the move did enhance the quality of the practice area for gymnastics. The women took advantage of the extra practice space and qualified for the regional competition, the first UNI women's team to do so (See Box 4). It placed a very respectful ninth of 14 teams. UNI was ranked 41st nationally out of 170 Division II teams.

There were no seniors on this qualifying team, therefore both Coach Regier and the gymnasts were all looking optimistically toward what the 1980-1981 season would bring.



Members of the 1979-1980 Regional Qualifying Team

Front row (l-r) Jo Carstenson, Candy Welbes, Sara Wright, Kathy Keefe, Mary Danielson.

Back row (l-r) Jill Dollar, Jenny Ball, Mary Breibach, Rochel Ritters, Maureen Doud, Cindy Cook.

Women's gymnastics continued to flourish with Coach Regier (whose official title was now that of head coach) during the 1981 season with harder routines and stiffer competition. Although the season was plagued with many injuries, the team recovered sufficiently enough to set most individual and team records and have a surprising fifth-place finish at the AIAW Regional Championships. An unusual event occurred in February when UNI had to cancel a dual meet with Wisconsin-Platteville because all of the judges were at an invitational meet at the University of Iowa. However, all was not lost as UNI just joined that meet and finished a surprising third out of the six teams. Another event of note was that the 1981 season saw the first lady gymnast qualify for the NCAA Division II national meet, or at least they thought so.

So the 1981 season was filled with many highlights provided by an exciting, viable gymnastics squad. However, this excitement turned into despair as the spring semester started to draw to a close. The farm crisis of the 1980's was beginning to rear its head across Iowa. The public universities were not immune to this crisis and were feeling the effects of the weakened economy. Budget reductions were expected in all aspects of the University community, including the athletic programs. During the spring of 1981, several unique factors merged with a rather unfortunate timing to seal the fate of the women's gymnastics program at UNI. It

SO CLOSE!

During the 1980-1981 AIAW Regional VI Championships in Topeka, Kan., UNI gymnast Penny Wilson qualified for the finals in the all-around competition. During the finals competition, Wilson placed fifth, the highest ever for a UNI gymnast. Although she had qualifying scores in each of the events, she ended up in a five-way tie for 24th place. NCAA rules at the time stated that the top 24 gymnasts in the nation, in each event, would qualify for the national meet. To break the tie, the officials allowed the gymnasts to add another one of their season's all-around scores to the average competition score. Due to a foot injury earlier in the season, Wilson's additional score wasn't high enough to earn her the 24th-place ranking. So close- yet so far away! The March 13th edition of the Northern Iowan ran a feature article on Wilson's accomplishments, entitled "Gymnast tumbles to Virginia for national meet." Three weeks later, a short article appeared explaining her plight (April 3, 1981 Northern Iowan).

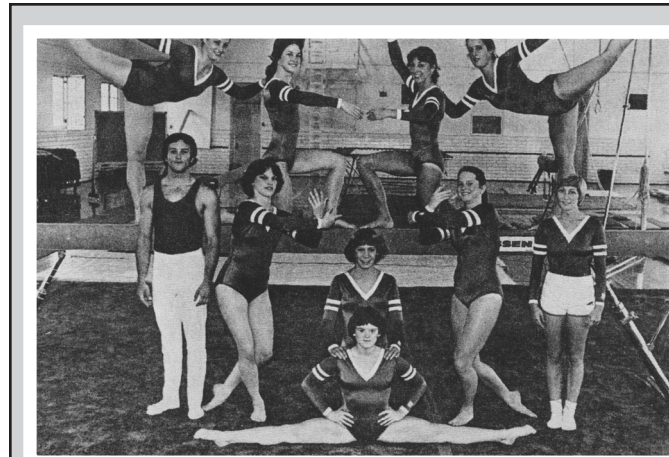


Penny Wilson

could be considered the "perfect storm" in regards to the demise of UNI gymnastics. Following is the reported circumstances that led to the elimination of intercollegiate women's gymnastics:

In the spring of 1980 two members of the women's field hockey team filed a grievance against UNI under Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 which required colleges to fund men's and women's athletics equally. A committee was formed to investigate the charges and upon reviewing the data, recommended that UNI correct the areas of scholarships and coaching. The committee recommended that scholarship dollars be increased to meet the Title IX requirements related to proportionality and that coaching personnel for women's sports be evaluated and adjusted where needed.

UNI President John Kamerick stated that in response to the committee's recommendation, a large



1980-1981 Fifth Place Regional Team

(Last Women's Intercollegiate Team)

infusion of money would be made to the athletic program, much of which would go for women's scholarships. Kamerick also stated that efforts would be made to equalize workloads of coaches, men and women, and to equalize attention given to men's and women's athletics. Kamerick called for the head of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (Dr. Bill Thrall) and the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics (Stan Sheriff) to submit a report within 90 days concerning the resolutions of these matters. These men did so on Jan. 30, 1981. They recommended hiring more full time coaches, and reducing the teaching load of some coaches.

Since there were not enough funds in the budget to do these things, they felt that the funds had to be found elsewhere. The problem arose as to how to obtain the funding to meet these mandates within an economic environment requiring a five percent reduction in the budget. A group of administrators then met and came up with the proposal to cut several sports. Sheriff proposed to cut men's and women's gymnastics, women's field hockey and to seriously look at men's baseball. The rationale for cutting these sports were related to: 1) staffing problems, 2) budget problems, 3) scheduling problems, 4) the limited number of other institutions in Iowa offering the sports and 5) if the teams belonged to a conference. (April 24, 1981 Northern Iowan) The administrators held a public forum to explain their proposal, at which time coaches and students spoke on behalf of each of the teams. The Administration's position was that the University was facing fiscal realities

and some reductions had to be made, including in the athletic budget.

The administrators' proposal was then sent to the University's Athletic Policy Advisory Council for approval. This council approved the proposal and recommended to the President's Cabinet that UNI's men's and women's gymnastics programs be dropped in order to compensate for a five percent cut in the athletic department's budget. Women's field hockey and men's baseball were spared for the time being.

Several meetings, requested by students and faculty, were held with the President and the Vice Presidents during the following days to attempt to change the decision. This proved to be to no avail. Students were reported as being frustrated as it became apparent their views were not being considered seriously. (April 28, 1981 Northern Iowan) In mid-May the President's Cabinet voted to discontinue men's and women's intercollegiate gymnastics in accordance with the recommendation of the Council, in order to deal with reductions in the athletic budget. The decision was also made to continue baseball and field hockey in the final budget. President Kamerick said the final Cabinet decision was arrived at with reluctance and he said the cuts might not be permanent if state support returns. As of this writing in the spring semester of 2011, women's gymnastics has not been re-established.

With all that has been said, the short, but exciting tenure of intercollegiate women's gymnastics at the University of Northern Iowa came to an end. Ironically, during the years since the spring of 1981, we have seen the elimination of both field hockey and baseball from the University's athletic program due to budget cuts.

Reflections

(The following comments were obtained from past gymnasts and coaches and are being shared as they were received with minimal editing.)

"Besides all the 'fun' at team practices, best memories were road trips to various meets/invitationals. The anticipation and excitement were so exhilarating. It was fun to travel with the team- like having a mini-family away from home. We all got along so well. Everyone was dedicated and we were cohesive as a team. We worked hard and played hard. Good times!

Women's Gymnastics Timeline

1974	Women's intercollegiate gymnastics established at UNI; Sharon Huddleston is selected as coach
1975	UNI women gymnasts compete in their first collegiate meet; competition is held in Ames on the ISU campus
1976	Rip Marston hired as coach
1977	Gymnasts compete in their first state gymnastics championships; place fifth of six teams. Meet held in Iowa City on the U of I campus
1978	First women's gymnastics partial scholarship awarded
1979	Carrie Regier hired as coach
1980	UNI gymnasts qualify for regional competition; first team to do so. Place 9th out of 14 teams
1981	Penny Wilson places fifth at the AIAW Regional IV Championships. Highest finish for any UNI woman gymnast. Receives national ranking (Tie for 24th)
1981	President's Policy Cabinet votes to dissolve women's gymnastics as an intercollegiate competitive sport

I remember often venturing to the gym late (midnight) on Friday or Saturday just to practice floor exercise/tumbling in the dark gym-no lights on and so peaceful." *Patty Cimmarusti, member 1974-77*

"I believe the season in 1975 was only about two months long (January-February). We practiced on the equipment that the women's program had only about three to four nights a week for about two hours. We practiced in the Women's Gym. We had one set of uneven bars, one balance beam (both dangerously old), one lower practice beam, a few foldable mats we slid around for dismounts and a horse for vault. I competed on bars and the beam. I wasn't good at all but in those days the poor coach had to go with whomever showed up. I do have a memory of our one meet of the year. It was held in the U of I field house in Iowa City. Our small team felt pretty intimidated being at a meet with other schools with more established women's teams. But the big surprise to our team was when UNI came up with warm up suits for us at the last minute before our big meet! We were pretty proud of that!" *Connie (Jensen) Funk, team member 1974-76*

"I remember that I was grateful to be accepted as part of the team since my gymnastic experiences were only from my high school P.E. classes without competition. With great fondness I remember the old golden-wood gym where we practiced and especially the rich aroma which I wish I could describe. I believe our competitive leotards were a very bold purple and very snug. We spent hours stretching and learned very good strengthening exercises like the 'gymnastics sit up' which is more of a pull down with a partner." *Sue Monahan Blair, member 1974-76*

"What I do remember was it was a fantastic experience, challenging and embarrassing all at the same time. We worked hard, ate a lot when traveling... (I believed the coach was always impressed, and maybe concerned about the amount of food we were able to consume at Perkins). I also remember how hard I worked on my back summersault, just never quite got there, yet I almost made it to regionals with my floor routine. Coach had the patience of a saint as I look back. He took a lot of rookies from the beginning/intermediate gymnastic classes and tried to make a team. We knew coach had his challenges ahead of him but with his encouragement, we became determined to do our best. We were a small team but we seemed to have a good mix of talent to cover the different events. Life has had many twists and turns, but I know the life experiences have made me a strong person. I am sure the challenges of gymnastics in college had a part in developing a character that doesn't give up easily on anything." *Denise (Cameron) Hesseltine, member 1976-77*

"During the three years that I participated we grew from a team of about seven women to 10 women then to having some women get cut so that we had a team of 12 women. During the first year we had only one home meet. We put up handmade flyers around the campus and had a surprisingly large turnout. One of my most vivid memories is one of camaraderie. In my first year I had a very solid dismount from the beam that I never missed but during the only home meet I missed my take off and landed awkwardly wrenching my ankle. It was maddening and embarrassing. Sara and Ro came to the landing mat and helped me walk out of the gym to get some ice on it and calm me. I'll never forget what

that meant to me and whenever I see someone in my predicament, I try to be there for them. Our facilities changed over the years. My first year we were in the Men's Gym. It was a little intimidating to walk in. It had lots of bleachers but not many windows. My second and third years we were in the Women's Gym with lots of very large windows. It was a beautiful gym with high gloss wood floors and I thought I was going to an Ivy League school when I entered that gym. My physical ability changed substantially during those three years. Coach Marston started us lifting weights in 1978 which was thought of as being kind of weird back then. Now it is standard protocol for women's fitness. Coach Regier started us running. We had to run a 10-minute mile to not be cut my third year. This was also something that people thought was weird. Now my 12 year old daughter just ran an eight-minute mile for PE class and that's not considered a big deal. Carrie had us doing lots of conditioning which made it easier to learn new skills. She also taught us to care about our bodies and to eat healthy.

"I would like to share with you how being part of the team influenced my life. During my third year I was given the position of representing all female athletes on campus at the Board of Directors meetings. This honor helped me stand out to companies that were hiring my senior year. I was the first woman hired out of all business majors and third overall. My quick start into the business world helped me move through the ranks and netted me a good paying career. My husband was a gymnast during high school. This common interest helped me to be 2,000 miles away from home and meet a 'nice boy' who would become my life partner. Gymnastics taught me that if you work hard at something you can get it and someone will notice and care. It taught me to repeat something to perfection and get up in front of a crowd and do it flawlessly. These skills translate to the work force in the practicing of medical sales presentations and not being afraid to go before a doctor or pharmacist and present it. Gymnastics taught me to respect and care for my body, and to know how to stretch and strengthen it to its best ability." *Maureen (Doud) Bolton, member 1977-1980*

"Reflecting back, I have to say that I was thrilled to be a part of the gymnastics team! I had no formal training---just a love for gymnastics! If my memory is

correct, the coach 'discovered' (used loosely) me when I took one of his PE classes. I couldn't believe it when he suggested that I might join the team. I never really thought I could ever be on a college team, especially since I had never been on a gymnastics team anywhere. I had been involved in gymnastics in junior high and high school classes, but that was it. I appreciated his patience with me. I'm sure I had very little confidence and an 'I can't do it' attitude. He kept pushing me to improve. I enjoyed being part of such a great team (group of girls)! I admired the talent that surrounded me. We all worked well together as a team. We had our successes and defeats, but we supported each other through it all. We practiced hard and gave our best effort! All the ripped up hands and the bruised hips were worth it! Sticking our routine was the ultimate high. We were doing what we loved!! I was proud to be a part of the team and appreciated the caring attitude that surrounded it. Gymnastics built my character and my confidence!!" *Donna (Bauman) Rickers, member 1977-79*

"As I think back on my time as a gymnast at UNI, it is with a sense of gratitude for the many lessons I learned. My first year at UNI was spent in gymnastics, but strangely, by my choice I did not practice with the women's team in the East Gym, but instead with the men's team in the West Gym. When in my second year the women's team began to practice in the West Gym with the men's team, it was a comfortable transition to join the women and compete as a team member. While practicing together, both teams had the advantage of having three coaches available to us; each an expert from which we could learn a great deal. Garf Stych offered a no-nonsense direction from years of knowledge. He was a great hand-stand talent for which I gained my interest in also maintaining an inverted position. I continue to spend time upside down when the mood strikes. Steve Speth, our graduate assistant, extended a warm heart with a knack for drawing the best out of each of us. Ripley Marston offered a fatherly nature to his girls. He guided us gently as he steered us toward our potential. Coach Rip, in his gentle way, would somehow convince me to get out there and compete even when my nerves left me feeling completely ill.

"Our next year brought a new coach and a whole new program. Coach Carrie Regier was tough and focused. She had us running and conditioning in

many ways and she also monitored our body composition. Standing in front of those skin fold calipers in our leotards may have been more nerve racking than any floor exercise. Coach Carrie demanded perfection and got it. My ability to achieve the highest level of performance and to seek that from the students under my tutelage comes in part from Coach Carrie's guidance. It seemed unfortunate at the time, but was very serendipitous as it turned out, that I got to know Coach Carrie's husband and the other staff athletic trainers that year. A repeated ankle injury had me spending a great deal of time in treatment and rehabilitation. My time with the athletic trainers certainly influenced my career choice. My next 30 years have been spent working as an athletic trainer and I was recently inducted into the Illinois Athletic Trainers Association Hall of Fame. I am filled with gratitude for that injury, and the assistance of such a caring group of professionals, though I would not have said that back then.

"Through much time spent sitting on the mat in various stretching positions, riding in vans, and sleeping in hotel rooms, our team grew together, both competitively and socially. Many of my fondest memories were times spent with our team, and especially with 'Mo' (Maureen Doud) and Sara (Wright). I continue to have a warm place in my heart for each of the women I grew so close to throughout those years. My gratitude to all the ladies of UNI gymnastics is heartfelt as I gained an understanding of the feminine bond and was blessed by a wonderful circle of friends."

Rochel "Ro" Rittgers, member 1978-80

"My sharpest memory of UNI is that when I walked into that team meeting. I thought that there was a head gymnastics coach and an assistant coach, and that I was being introduced as the third coach, the graduate assistant. I was more than a little surprised that there was no other 'adult' in the room, and I was the only coach for the team that year; and this was my meeting to run. I was shocked! The girls worked really hard to raise the skill level of the team, and we set several school scoring records that first year. When we traveled to away competitions in our UNI van, my husband was both the driver and athletic trainer for the team. During my second year, I was asked to become the 'real' head coach for the team. We moved from the Men's Gym to the top floor of the Women's Gym where we could have

the equipment set up all the time. The girls improved tremendously and they qualified for the regional championships for the first time in school history. I truly enjoyed my years of coaching at UNI. The girls were great. I hope they have the great memories that I do."

Carrie Regier, coach 1979-81

"My memories of coaching the team spans the spectrum from utter delight to extreme frustration. Delight while watching a gymnast hit a new move in a competitive meet for the very first time; frustration in watching a gymnast miss a move in a meet that she had not missed in practice the previous week. Overall, I have very fond memories of my years as the coach. I remember driving in snow storms to either get to, or to return home from, meets. I remember traveling to one meet where the gym floor was so warped that my vaulters had to run uphill to get to the springboard. We certainly had our growing pains. Since we were a beginning program, we tried to schedule meets with other beginning programs. This usually meant that the judges were also beginning, which led to some frustrations with the inconsistencies, at times, with the home town judges. I remember one year the University bought the gymnasts leotards for the meets but they were so low budget and basic, I went out to a fabric store, got some 'trim' and one of the gymnast's mothers sewed it on the uniforms. My fondest reflection of the teams is the concept of team. We were a team. We shared in the successes and the failures. The gymnasts cheered each other on in practice and the meets, while offering comfort during the bad times. I feel fortunate to have been able to interact with so many wonderful, dedicated young women."

Rip Marston, Coach 1976-79

Women's Soccer

Panthers' Newest Sport Debuts in 2000

Nancy Justis

Women's soccer has the distinct honor of being the Panthers' newest sport, debuting in the 2000-01 season. Following many years of budget cuts and discussions weighing Title IX and gender equity issues, the University determined women's soccer would be the most logical female sport to be added to the department's program offerings.

"An additional women's sport was necessary to add in order to reduce the gender equity gap between men's and women's participation numbers," said former Director of Athletics Rick Hartzell. "Women's soccer had followed the process and was a successful club sport (on campus), they applied in a formal way and we moved forward to add the sport.

"Not complicated reasons, easy and the right thing to do, given the climate and the numbers. Plus, the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union formally added (girls) soccer as a championship sport and one of the ways we defended ourselves for equity purposes was to offer all sports the IGHSAU sponsored."

Hartzell noted there were numerous challenges in getting the new competitive program up and running. Recruiting Division I players instead of using club participants, securing the budget and competition site, hiring the coaching staff and developing the schedule were just a few of the steps that needed to be completed.

Getting Started – The Whitehead Years (2000-2004)



Linda Whitehead served as the Panthers' first coach until her resignation following the 2004 campaign.

Whitehead had experience starting a team from scratch at the collegiate level, having served as the initial head coach at Tennessee-Chattanooga for four seasons while also serving a couple years as the head

girls' state coach for the Tennessee Olympic Development Program.

Prior to her time at UT-C, she served three years as head women's soccer coach at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She also was head coach at the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia, and at the University of Western Ontario, her alma mater. She served as the assistant coach for the Canadian National women's team in 1993.

A native Canadian, she played two years at Western Ontario and was a member of the four-time winner of the Ontario Championship, the London Concorde women's team.

"I had a history of starting new programs and each time I did it, I used lessons learned and improved on how I accomplished it," Whitehead said. "Upon visiting UNI, I immediately liked the school and campus, plus I was very impressed with the coaching staff in the athletics department and thought it would be a comfortable and fun place to be.

"At UNI, you can set goals of competing nationally, like other Panther sports have done, and our program is no different," she once said (UNI web site). "We still have a long road ahead of us, but with the growing talent pool for girls' soccer in Iowa, it can be a reality.

"By the time the athletes leave UNI, I want them to be able to think for themselves, be strong decision makers, and to have self-confidence."

Obviously, there were challenges involved in getting a new program up and running.

"The first and foremost was that soccer was a relatively new sport to the state of Iowa, so the local recruiting base was small," Whitehead said. "Both Iowa and Iowa State were starting programs around the same time and Drake the following year, so the player base was very thin. Lack of facilities was also a challenge as we basically upgraded an intramural field (west of the UNI-Dome) for our practice and game field."

The field barely met NCAA standards, “but when you start a new program you come in knowing that facilities take time,” Whitehead said.

Whitehead’s first assistants were Catherine “Cat” Broshears, who volunteered the first season before being promoted to full-time status in 2001, and Kathy “Kat” Kakoyianni (Bering).

“Cat’ was a godsend for me,” Whitehead said. “She approached me shortly after I was hired and offered to help out in any way she could. She was a brand new mom but that did not deter her from making the offer to give of her time. She already was dedicated to the UNI program because she had been involved in the club team.

“The program could not have developed as quickly and as successfully as it did without ‘Cat’. She brought local knowledge and contacts to the program which greatly helped us gain strong support from the local community and further.

“She had a strong rapport with the players. She was a talented player in her own right and the players respected her immediately. She also brought a strong background in strength and conditioning and coordinated the players’ training.”

Another native Canadian, Bering came to UNI to pursue a master’s degree.

“I made some immediate friends through soccer,” Bering said. “Once they knew I had coached soccer in the past they recommended I go talk to Linda and I did – turned out she is from my hometown in Canada – what a small world! It was a good fit from the start.”

“(Bering) first contacted me inquiring as a player but we realized she didn’t have any eligibility left, so I brought her on staff as a graduate assistant,” Whitehead said. “As a player she was a goalkeeper and so she became our goalkeeper coach.”

The Canadian Connection

It was hoped the first team would be comprised of several scholarship athletes, freshmen, transfers, and members of UNI’s club team.

Being a native Canadian and having spent much of her professional career there, it’s no surprise that



2000 Team Photo

First Women's Soccer Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Year	Hometown
00	Audrey Veach	GK	So.	Ames, IA
0	Emily Buss	GK	Fr.	Waverly, IA
1	Anne-Marie Witko	GK	Fr.	Toronto, Ontario
2	Jessica McCarron	F	Fr.	Dubuque, IA
3	Lindsay Davis	D	Fr.	Sioux City, IA
4	Sarah Lowe	M/D	Fr.	Davenport, IA
5	Shauna Nelson	M	Fr.	Denison, IA
6	Allison Crosby	M	Fr.	Iowa City, IA
7	Andrea Prochaska	M	Fr.	Dubuque, IA
8	Kate Shaw	M	Fr.	Burlington, Ontario
9	Amy McCoy	F	Jr.	Des Moines, IA
10	Angie Froehle	D	Fr.	Cedar Falls, IA
11	Libby Long	D	Fr.	Altoona, IA
12	Bridget Strottman	D	Fr.	Waterloo, IA
13	Abby Luensmann	M	Fr.	Dubuque, IA
14	Jenny Scheller	F	Fr.	Racine, WI
15	Abby Sloss	M/D	Jr.	Stuart, IA
16	Karyn Borcharding	M/D	Fr.	Bettendorf, IA
17	Jordan Kerstetter	F/M	Fr.	Iowa City, IA
18	Jane Masteller	M	Jr.	Sioux City, IA
19	Amy Reinhold	F/M	Fr.	Bettendorf, IA
20	Sarah Lang	F/M	Fr.	West Des Moines, IA
21	Stacey Lyon	M/D	Fr.	Independence, IA
22	Alaina Shoopman	M	Jr.	Waterloo, IA
23	Carianne Bouillon	F	Fr.	Ames, IA
	Katie Hobart	D	Fr.	Adel, IA
	Heather Guck	D	Sr.	Fairfield, IA

Witko Cornerstone of Soccer Program

Native Canadian Anne-Marie Witko was the cornerstone of UNI’s emerging soccer program. In the Panthers’ inaugural campaign, her true freshman season, she tied an NCAA record for most saves in a single game when she recorded 24 in a 1-1 tie versus Evansville. Nine of those saves came in an extra period. She finished the season as the nation’s leader in saves with 192.



“I chose UNI because I wanted to play soccer,” Witko said. “UNI was a brand new program, and I was part of its inauguration. I wanted to play, rather than be a part of an established program. I wasn’t interested in sitting on the bench.”

No other schools were recruiting her at the time she chose to leave Canada and attend school in the States. She hadn’t planned going away to school, possibly attending the University of Toronto. However, she realized she couldn’t pass up the opportunity of earning her education at UNI.

She had traveled to the States on numerous occasions for tournament play. “Culturally, I wasn’t used to the attention that athletics, in general, received in the U.S.,” she said. “In Canada, the majority of the focus is on hockey, the way Americans focus on football. It was always great to see the support of the community during home games, and the stands filled with young kids cheering on their favorite players. That’s something I definitely miss.”

Despite wanting to play for a new program, Witko said there were a lot of tough times.

“Losing is frustrating and we did a lot of that in the beginning,” she said. “But by the time I was in my senior year, we were contenders. Other teams started to take us seriously. And I was proud and still am of that. Not only were we building a program, but we were building character. I don’t think I could have learned those tough lessons playing anywhere else.”

“Coming to Iowa to study criminology would not have been possible without the women’s soccer program. Had I not been recruited and offered a scholarship, I probably would not have obtained a degree, for financial reasons. I owe a lot to Linda Whitehead and the UNI women’s soccer program.”

Whitehead used that connection in her first recruiting efforts.

“Obviously, every coach uses their strengths and mine were the connections I had in Ontario,” she said. “It allowed me to recruit the best players in Ontario (a province of over nine million people) and (it) has a long and rich soccer tradition. The start of the program fell largely on the shoulders of Anne-Marie Witko and Kate Shaw – two Canadians.”

Witko, the team’s goalie, has been the most decorated of the Panthers to date (through 2009). She held the top three marks in school history for most saves (top mark of 24 vs. Evansville, 10-15-00), the school mark for most saves in a season (192, 2000), owned the top three of four marks for most shutouts in a season (5, 2nd high, 2003), held the school record for goals against average (1.01, 2003) and total minutes in goal (1774:22, 2003), and career records for most saves (602, 2000-03) and most shutouts (14), among other marks. Through the 2009 season, she also ranked second in the Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) in most saves in a season, was first in career saves and third in career goalie time.

“I was recruited by Linda over the phone,” said Witko. “She was actually in pursuit of Kate, and in conversation, while Kate was on an official visit, mentioned that she was still looking for a goalkeeper as the final piece of her puzzle. Kate recommended me, and the rest is history. Linda took a huge chance on me. Knowing this, I did my best not to disappoint.”

“We were actually lucky to have Anne-Marie choose UNI,” Whitehead said. “She made a late decision to come to the U.S.A. to play college soccer... We signed her to a scholarship sight unseen as I relied on a coach’s scouting report.

“Annie was a brilliant goalie and despite our first tough year (3-14-2), she weathered it well and grew stronger from the experience. She had tremendous athletic ability, a strong drive to do her best and an unbelievable work ethic. I would compare her to any of the best goalkeepers in the NCAA at the time.”

Season I

Despite the 3-14-2 overall record and sixth-place finish in the conference, Whitehead said the first season was a success. “We’ve survived the first-ever

season of soccer at UNI," she said. (Northern Iowan, Nov. 3, 2000) "And I have to say that it's gone much, much better than any of us could have anticipated. I'm very proud of the players."

The Panthers began play on Aug. 22 against St. Ambrose in an exhibition match. Junior mid-fielder Jane Masteller scored both goals in the 2-1 victory. She followed that up with the season's only hat trick performance in the first regular-season home game against Morningside, a 7-6 loss. Freshman forward Jenny Scheller scored two goals, including the program's first regular-season home goal. She scored five goals in the team's first eight contests. Unfortunately, the Panthers lost their leading scorer for two months due to torn cartilage.

Freshman mid-fielder Sarah Lowe moved over from the defense to fill the void. The first in her family to graduate from college, she was tied for third in the UNI record book (through 2009) with most game-winning goals in a season (2) and was tied for first for most games played and started in a career (73).

UNI's first regular-season victory in school history came on Sept. 10, a 3-1 win over Nebraska-Omaha. Scheller had the lead-off goal in the third minute. All scoring came in the first half. Witko recorded nine of her 10 saves in the second half.

One highlight of the inaugural season was the 1-1 tie in double overtime versus MVC foe Evansville on Oct. 15. UE was heavily favored, having won its previous four contests by a combined score of 15-1. Freshman forward Carianne Bouillon's first-half goal tied the game.

For the season, freshman defender Lindsay Davis was the Panthers' assist leader and fourth-leading scorer.

Season II

The Panthers finished the second season winning one game more than the inaugural season with a 4-12 overall record, but went 0-6 in the MVC. However, they were competitive in each contest.

All four wins were captured on the home field. They opened the season with a 4-0 win over Western Illinois (WIU), with three of those goals scored by Masteller, marking her second career hat trick. Ironi-

Alaina Shoopman

Alaina Shoopman (Small) served as the first captain of the team, making the jump from club team to inter-collegiate play. "She was instrumental in anchoring the defense the first two years," Whitehead said. "What she lacked in natural talent she made up for in grit and determination, exactly the traits a new program needs. She helped set the tone."

"I played club soccer my first three years at UNI," Small said. "We set our own practice and game schedules, paid for our uniforms, and transported ourselves to games and tournaments to places around Iowa and Wisconsin."

"Shortly after becoming athletic director, Rick Hartzell made (my dream of a varsity team) a reality in late December 1999. A committee was formed to help with the hiring process of finding a coach for the team. Amy McCoy and I were the club team co-presidents at the time, so we were chosen as the student-athlete representatives on the hiring committee."

"Training camp started in August. It was a very intense couple of weeks with two-a-day practices in the late summer heat, sessions on nutrition and strength training, and team-building activities. This was a big change from club soccer."

"I was proud to be a co-captain and play every single minute of every single game those first two seasons of UNI soccer. It was an honor to receive the Panther Impact Award my senior season."



cally, both occurred on the same date – August 31 of 2000 and 2001.

On Sept. 21, the Panthers traveled to third-ranked Nebraska, falling 3-1. The only shot on goal came when Masteller scored with less than nine minutes remaining.

"I knew that night would be the biggest challenge of our season," Lowe said. "We even put in a new defense to prepare for that team. I had never been so

The Hat Trick

The hat trick in sports often refers to scoring three times in succession. The term hat trick may originate from various tricks performed with a top hat in magic. In a sense the hat trick implies great skill and a little bit of magic to accomplish.

However, the term hat trick in sports has its roots in cricket, where a bowler was given a hat after successfully taking three wickets. Now in cricket, a bowler who successfully defeats three batsmen is thought to have performed the hat trick. It has to be three in a row to be considered a hat trick.

The hat trick migrated to the world of both forms of hockey. It generally meant that a player had scored three times in a game. Thus it didn't have to be three in a row, but simply three in a game for a player to have successfully completed a hat trick.

The hat trick in soccer is essentially the same as in hockey. A player must score three goals in a game. In soccer, penalty shots do not count as part of a hat trick. Scores have to be made during the non-penalty portions of the game.

Soccer actually defines several types of hat trick. A flawless hat trick in soccer refers to three goals made by the same player in a single period. The three goals must be scored consecutively for the hat trick to be flawless. Another type is the golden or perfect hat trick. This requires tremendous skill to be performed and is seldom accomplished. According to definition for the perfect hat trick, the player must score three goals, one from the right foot, one from the left and one from the head. www.wisegeek.com

nervous in my life. Butterflies all over my stomach from the time I stepped on their field until kick off time. We ended up surprising them by scoring on them. By the end of the game we were cheering and celebrating. I knew we lost, but to us the way we played and handled the pressure of playing them, in our hearts we won."

The 2001 roster included twin sisters Emily and Natalie McCart of Omaha, Neb. Both were starters on two state championship teams. Emily scored her first career goal in the match against WIU.

Masteller highlighted the season, leading the team both on and off the field. The co-captain scored eight total goals, making her the school record-holder with 18 points in a season. She was tied for second in the league in goals per game (0.500) and was third in

points per game (1.130). She was an honorable mention all-MVC selection, was named to the conference's Scholar Athlete team and was a member of the Verizon Academic All-America Team for District VII.



Senior Jane Masteller led the Panthers with a school-record 18 points in 2001

The Panther defense allowed only 34 goals on the year, 29 better than the inaugural season. Witko led the defense with 116 saves. She was named honorable mention all-conference along with Masteller. Davis scored the school's first penalty kick at the 44:35 mark against Southern Utah.

Season III

Season three found the Panthers breaking a number of school records while winning more games than the previous two campaigns, finishing 5-13-1 overall and 3-4 in the conference, the most league wins in history. Picked to finish eighth in the league, UNI ended with a school-best fifth place.

2002 began with a grueling string of eight games away from the West Athletic Field. In the opener at Western Illinois, Emily McCart scored the quickest goal in UNI history, just 1:14 into the match, beating graduated Masteller's 2001 best of 2:33 into play. Although a second goal by Emily gave the Panthers a 2-0 lead at the half, WIU came back for a tie that was unbroken in overtime. She finished the season with a team-high seven goals.

The Panthers proceeded to lose nine straight games following the tie, but again, all games were competitive. In the 1-0 loss at Iowa, Witko recorded a season-high 17 saves.

The regular home season slate began Sept. 29 against Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Beginning with the first win of the season on Oct. 6, a 4-0 win over Drury, the Panthers then won five of their next nine matches, defeating Drake 2-1, Indiana State 4-0, Texas Tech 1-0 and Southwest Missouri State (SMS, now Missouri State) 2-0 in the conference's play-in tournament match as the no. 5 seed. Emily recorded her first career hat trick against ISU.

With the win over SMS, UNI moved to the semi-finals for the first time in history, losing 2-0 to Creighton.

Of the 12 freshmen on the Panther roster, a number played significant roles. Shanon Dechant scored four total goals, including two game-winners. Billie Berens and Jillian Carroll recorded two goals. Carroll tallied the overtime game-winner against Drake. Of the 18 goals, nine were by freshmen.

The Panthers set a school record for shutouts in a season with four. UNI was the only team in the MVC to score four goals in conference play on two different occasions. Witko compiled 154 saves, 8.56 per game, ranking fifth in the nation in both categories.

Lowé earned second-team all-conference honors, Witko was honorable mention and Dechant made the all-freshman team. Natalie McCart earned honorable mention Scholar Athlete accolades.

Season IV

2003 is the most successful season for UNI women's soccer in its 11-year history (through 2010). A strong returning nucleus of 16 veterans and 11 of 2002's freshman class helped make it so.

Since the inaugural season in 2000, the Panthers continued to earn more wins each season. In 2003, UNI doubled its win total from the previous season. The 10-8-1 overall mark and 4-2-1 record in the conference, good for fourth place, still are the most wins in school history. UNI tied for sixth in Division I as the most improved team.

The Panthers won the UTEP (Texas-El Paso) Tournament to begin the season, defeating Centenary 2-1 and Louisiana-Monroe 1-0.

"(The UTEP Tournament had) four teams, playing two games, with most points scored winning the tourney," Whitehead said. "We played really well but unfortunately we had to leave to catch our flight before the final game of the tournament had been played. We found out by phone while in the airport that we had won the tournament – the program's first official success. I felt bad the players didn't get to be recognized as they should. Our reward was a flight delay and we got stuck in Phoenix overnight."

The campaign's four straight wins to begin the season also included a 3-2 win over Ball State and a

Team Building Made Fun

Coach Linda Whitehead and her staff incorporated many tactics in order to build character and cohesiveness amongst members of the new program. Players themselves also got in the groove.

"I loved the team building the captains did the first four years," Assistant Coach Kathy Bering said. "The first class of recruits had a great work ethic and knew how to have good fun. They would put on plays for the coaching staff – it was hilarious, creative and just plain fun, especially during the years we had losing seasons.

"The breakfasts in the locker room – getting up with 'Cat' (Broshears) and Linda and cooking up in our little skillet their pancakes and eggs to make sure the players ate a good meal before training every morning during training camp – all four years we coached together."

Whitehead and Broshears also assisted Bering in her training for the Olympic trials in Greece. "They helped me prepare for the training camp for the 2004 Olympic Greece National Soccer team. I'll never forget that experience."

"My teammates were great," goalkeeper Anne-Marie Witko, another winner of the Panther Impact Award, said. "We used to keep a mental note of all the funny things that happened throughout the year, and when the season ended, we used to make a top 10 list. If it was an exceptionally good year, the list quickly grew into a top 15 or top 20 list. We would then design our own t-shirts with the list on the back."

Canadian Kate Shaw said one highlight of her junior and senior years was being elected captain. However, one of her team-building memories "would be the (blank) team bus. I have never spent so much time on a coach bus as I did during my years at UNI. It feels like I spent half of my university career on the team bus. But I think some of my best memories come from (the hours spent on the bus)."

2-0 victory against Indiana-Fort Wayne, both games played on the road. Actually, the Panthers went 6-1 before losing four straight. The Panthers then finished the year with a 4-3-1 record, losing to Creighton 2-1 in overtime in the league's tournament match, played just two matches after tying the Bluejays 1-1 in double overtime. They played a total of five overtime matches, going 2-2-1 in those contests.

Dechant had a stellar sophomore season, leading the MVC in goals scored per game (0.41) and game-winning goals (4). Senior goal-keeper Witko broke two league records -- minutes in goal (6430.26 in her career) and saves in a career with 602, surpassing the former record of 509 when UNI defeated Valparaiso (VU) 2-1 on Sept. 19. She ranked sixth in the nation in saves per game (7.84). Freshman forward Ann Caley scored her first career goal against VU off of a penalty kick in OT.

The Panthers defeated Evansville 3-0 on Oct. 12 for the first time in program history to help celebrate Homecoming. They were the only MVC team to defeat Drake (2-1) in regular-season play.

Season V

Following a record-breaking season which saw the Panthers win 10 games, expectations were high for the 2004 season. However, UNI ended the year with a 2-14-2 overall mark. It was 2-5 in the Missouri Valley Conference heading into the league tournament against third-seed Indiana State, which was 8-9 overall and 4-3 in the conference. UNI lost the match 2-1.

Ironically, one of its two wins was 1-0 on the Sycamores' home field on Oct. 3, followed by a 3-2 win in double overtime against Drury on Oct. 8. Freshman goalie Krista Thorley, another native Canadian, had



The Panthers' new soccer home venue, the Cedar Valley Youth Soccer complex

her best outing against ISU. The Sycamores took 19 shots but Thorley did not allow any past her goal. She played the full 90 minutes, collecting nine saves in the Panthers' only shutout of the season.

With construction beginning on the McLeod Center, the Panther soccer team found a new home.



Shanon Dechant led the MVC in game-winning goals in 2003

UNI formed a partnership with the Cedar Valley Youth Soccer Association which resulted in all home games being played at that complex in Waterloo. The team had a record 10 home matches, all played on the premier field equipped with lights. Several games were scheduled to start at 6 p.m.

A record-breaking crowd of 575 fans turned out for a Thursday night intra-state rivalry between the Panthers and Iowa in the final regular-season match. The Hawkeyes prevailed 3-1.

UNI played three overtime games – the 3-2 win over Drury, and 1-1 ties against Loyola and Western Illinois.

Thorley had the unenviable job of replacing the graduated record-holder Witko. Heading into the conference tournament, Thorley had 11 starts and had played 1,006 minutes in goal, collecting 107 saves, posting one shutout, picking up the two wins and recording an incredible .793 save percentage. She earned the starting role after rotating with freshman Heidi O'Mara.

Two players were selected to the NIKE Central Valley All-Tournament Team – forward Candice Divoky and defender Amy Seubert – despite the Panthers' 4-0 loss to Pacific and 1-0 loss to Idaho State.

Whitehead resigned following the 2004 season, citing burn out from "coaching as I had been a professional coach for almost 20 years. At the college level in soccer, the head coach does everything – and it is exhausting," she said. "It was time to take a break."

The Bering Years (2005-2007) Season VI

Bering took over the reins from Whitehead on an interim basis in the 2005 season, her sixth season overall with the Panthers. She was the only staff member who had been with the program since the inaugural 2000 campaign. Brian Bahl served as a graduate assistant.

An avid promoter of Cedar Valley soccer, Bering was a co-founder and co-president of the Cedar Valley Adult Soccer Association. She also served as head coach of the Denver (IA) High School boys' soccer team for three years.

After serving as an assistant for five years, Bering said transitioning to head coach was "extremely

difficult. It was hard for (the players) to see me as the final decision maker as opposed to the good guy assistant that made them laugh all the time and helped them with anything.”

The Panthers returned 10 starters, including seven seniors. Four juniors and six sophomores had seen a lot of playing time in previous years. However, the experience did not turn into wins as the season concluded with a school-record 16 losses in 17 outings, and no wins against Division I opponents. A 5-2 victory against Minnesota State on Aug. 28 was the sole win.

UNI was hampered by injuries, losing three starting midfielders to season-ending knee injuries -- senior Kaitlin Stimpson and junior Divoky early, while senior Carroll went down later in the year. The three combined for 17 career goals and 47 career points. Divoky was leading the team with six points at the time of her injury. For the first half of the season, the Panthers also played with just one healthy goalie. Sophomore O'Mara was sidelined with injury, also. She saw her first action against Drake on Oct. 2.

Sophomore goalkeeper Thorley led the MVC with 115 saves. Seven Panthers tallied a goal during the year, led by freshman Lindsay Daugherty's four, the most for any freshman in school history.

The team had its second set of sisters on the roster. Senior all-conference defensive performer Brooke Orcutt was joined by true freshman Gretchen.

Dechant ended her career as the Panthers' career leader in goals (20), points (45), game-winning goals (7), shots (157) and most shots on goal (80). She also set the record for most shots in a season with 46 in 2003. She, along with sophomore Seubert and Daugherty, were named all-conference. Seubert tallied 19 shots and one assist against Iowa and started all 17 games along with Dechant. Daugherty had 26 shots and 14 on goal, recording a .538 shot on goal percentage.



Kathy Bering

Season VII

Following the 2005 season when she served as interim head coach, Bering was promoted to permanent head coach by Hartzell beginning with the 2006 season.

Walk-on Becomes Captain

Lone senior Abby Luensmann came to UNI as a walk-on and served as captain her final two seasons. The four-year Presidential Scholar played in 15 games her last year in uniform. Plagued by injuries during her high school years, she wanted to continue playing sports at the collegiate level. Basketball had always been her first love and she attempted to make that roster as a walk on. When that didn't work out, she tried out for the soccer team.



“I didn't care that the team was new, I just wanted to keep playing sports when I was physically able to do so,” Luensmann said. “The major challenge was the time commitment. In-season, I would spend an hour in the training room every morning, three-to-four hours each afternoon with practice and training room rituals, and even more time on the weekends for games, especially if we were traveling.”

“The off-season was just as rigorous with early morning weight-lifting and/or conditioning practices on top of afternoon practices.”

Luensmann entered medical school after graduation.

“She brings an energy and team approach that is critical to our overall departmental success,” he said (UNI website).

“Our end goal is to build and sustain a program that the University and community will be proud of,” Bering said (UNI website). “This will take some time and effort, but I am excited for the challenge that is in front of me.”

The season did not start so rosy for Bering and her staff of Bahl and Chris Kowalski. After a pair of blowout exhibition wins, UNI proceeded to lose 13 straight games, a streak of 28 consecutive regular-season losses dating back to the previous year.

A match versus Iowa State on Sept. 10 helped turn the tide a little. Though top scoring threat Divoky had been lost for the season due to injury, the Panthers tallied two goals, but eventually fell 3-2. Bering felt the

team played as a unit and showed it could compete with a top program (UNI Athletics Media Relations release, 10-25-06).

After beginning the campaign with a 0-13 record, the Panthers earned their first win (1-0) against Illinois State on Oct. 13. It not only was the first win of the season, but Bering's first conference victory as a head coach, UNI's first conference win since 2004, and the program's first-ever win over the Redbirds. It also was the first shut-out victory since a 1-0 win against Indiana State in 2004.

A 3-1 loss to Evansville on Oct. 15 eliminated the Panthers from post-season play. Two more non-conference losses preceded the final game of the year -- a 1-0 upset win over MVC second-seed Creighton, giving UNI a 2-16 overall record, 2-4 in the MVC.

Injuries to major contributors hampered the Panthers for a second consecutive season. Fifteen newcomers dominated the roster, including 14 freshmen. As many as seven first-year players started at least one game.

Sophomore Gretchen Orcutt started nearly every game since coming in off the bench against Western Michigan with a four-shot performance on Sept. 8. She ended the year tallying 11 shots, including seven-on-goal, to go along with a goal and an assist.



Gielau led the Panthers with four goals and eight points in 2006

Daugherty climbed into fifth place on the all-time UNI goals chart. With four goals in 2005 and three in 2006, she joined company with Divorky (9), Emily McCart (9), Mastellar (12) and all-time leader Dechant (20).

Jackie Gielau was a one-woman offense against Illinois State and against ISU, she scored the only UNI goal against UE as well. She led the Panthers with four goals and topped the team with eight points for the year.

Season VIII

Bering added two new assistants to her staff in what turned out to be her third and final year serving as

head coach. Trevor Warren had over 20 years of coaching experience. A native of England, he came to UNI from Portland, Ore., where he coached developmental and club teams. Jennifer Plante most recently had served as director of coaching for the Pacesetter Soccer Club in Ohio.

“The experience and professionalism they bring will strengthen all facets of the program,” Bering said of her new hires (UNI Athletics Media Relations release, 3-8-07).

The Panthers returned 16 players from the 2006 2-16 (2-4 in the MVC) squad while welcoming nine new faces to the mix. They didn't host their first home match until Oct. 5, marking the latest regular season home opener in history.

UNI earned the sixth and final seed for the State Farm Missouri Valley Conference women's soccer tournament, meeting third-seed Creighton. It was the Panthers' first return to post-season play since the 2004 campaign and fifth overall. The Panthers fell 4-0 to Indiana State in the opening round in 2004 and this time dropped a 2-0 decision to the Bluejays.

UNI's 6-10-2 overall mark (1-4-1 in the MVC) was the second-most victories in a single season, beaten only by 2003's 10-8-1 record. Defensively, they allowed fewer than half as many goals compared to the previous season. As a result, O'Mara's goals-against-average dropped from 2.69 a year previous to 1.52. UNI also took nearly 50 more shots than the year previous heading into the post-season Creighton match.

O'Mara forced her fifth shutout of the season and pushed the game into overtime in the regular-season-finale 1-0 win over South Dakota heading into tournament action.

The Panthers' 3-0 win over Indiana State on Oct. 21 was their sole MVC win. The victory marked Bering's 50th game as head coach. Whitehead had served 91 games as head mentor.

Freshman Chelsie Hochstedler's six goals for the year were just two shy of the school's single-season record of eight, which Mastellar scored in 2001. She finished her career with 12. Hochstedler and senior Seubert



Hochstedler made her presence known as a freshman

earned all-tournament honors for their play at the Idaho State Tournament. The former scored the game-winning goal in the 1-0 overtime win against Air Force.

Hochstedler scored a goal in three straight games early in the season, taking control of two different records in the process. She claimed UNI records for most consecutive games with a goal and most consecutive games with a point, records formerly owned by Gielau and Daugherty, among others. She was named to the league's all-freshman team.

UNI forced five overtime games in 2007, ending 2-1-2. It tied South Dakota State 1-1 in the opener, lost 1-0 to Valparaiso, beat Air Force 1-0 as mentioned and played Evansville to a 0-0 tie Oct. 5. The South Dakota 1-0 win was the final extra period match.



Jennifer Plante

The Plante Season Season IX

Bering resigned following the 2007 season, stating the reason as "the decision to step down and take care of myself and my family." (Northern Iowan, 2-22-2008) Assistant Plante was promoted to head coach by interim Athletics

Director Mark Farley.

"I met Jen originally when UNI played against Iowa – she was the assistant coach there," Bering said. "I was able to see her coaching ability and style (at various coaching conferences). She also is a very good player. Having those two things is very valuable for coaching at Division I. When I found out I would be head coach, I needed to surround myself with people I knew shared my same ideals and passion for the sport...She was the complete package to add to the coaching staff."

"(Bering) has started a great foundation and the players and I will build upon that success," Plante said (Northern Iowan, 2-22-2008). "I'm determined to bring in staff and recruits that will embrace UNI's athletic traditions."

The 2008 edition of Panther soccer saw 10 recruits added to the roster. It was another year plagued by injuries. Plante needed to replace 12 letter winners from 2007 when UNI finished 6-10-2. The Panthers

were led by two seniors – Gielau and Gretchen Orcutt – both who returned from the previous season's injuries. Both were named captains, along with junior Tiffany Wendel.

The squad was composed of 16 freshmen and sophomores. Also returning was all-MVC honorable mention pick Hochstedler. As a sophomore, she led the team with six goals and 12 points, which also earned her a spot on the MVC all-freshman squad. In addition, she earned one of the MVC "Good Neighbor" Awards. She volunteered in the athletics marketing department and was responsible for planning and coordinating UNI's Kickin' Cancer match against Illinois State. She also was responsible for writing and distributing a weekly e-newsletter for all members of the Panther Scholarship Club.

Sophomore Ericka O'Meara also returned after scoring two goals in 2007. Ten freshmen were on the roster for the season opener, including goalie Lauren Potzman.

The Panthers finished the season with a 3-15-1 overall record, including 0-6 in the MVC, the third time in history they went winless in the league. They defeated North Dakota State 3-2 on Sept. 21 for the first win after dropping eight straight games with one tie, and beat South Dakota 2-1 on Sept. 26 and North Dakota 3-1 two days later. Three consecutive games were played to overtime, all losses, against Georgia Southern (2-1), Eastern Illinois (0-0) and Northern Illinois (3-2). UNI lost six straight contests to end the season.

Heading into the season finale, a 4-2 loss to Creighton (CU) on Oct. 30, Potzman was leading the league with 139 saves, 50 more than her closest competitor. With her 13 more saves in the finale, she moved into the league's Top 10 all-time in a single season.

Gretchen Orcutt and Hochstedler led UNI's offense against CU, both scoring goals in the loss. Orcutt registered her only goal of the season, while the latter scored her eighth. Hochstedler and Nicole Feritio were consistent scoring leaders throughout the year. The former had a four-game scoring streak dating back to the North Dakota State win, but it was broken against Drake on Oct. 1.

One Panther suffered a career-ending injury against Western Illinois on Sept. 16. Sophomore Colleen Gallagher "went up for a header in the box with an opposing player and got elbowed on the side

Colleen Gallagher

Colleen Gallagher grew up in Augusta, GA, playing for one of the best club teams. She moved to Iowa during her freshman year, attending Dyersville-Beckman High School, which didn't sponsor soccer. She and her father, John, got the program started.



Recruited to play at UNI by Assistant Coach Bahl, she played in all 15 games as a freshman in 2007, starting seven. However, her career came to an end in 2008 after just five games when she lost sight in her right eye after being elbowed in the temple.

"Coach (Jennifer) Plante was great in supporting me," Gallagher said. "She later drove me to Iowa City with two of my teammates so that I could be seen by some of the top ophthalmologists. She really went out of her way to make sure I was taken care of, which I deeply appreciated. My teammates were supportive as well."

"I did rehab and tried to come back and play (my) junior year...I was thrown back into practice expecting to be able to play like I used to, (and) that, along with being hit in the head two more times, is what caused me to quit. It was too hard to play not being able to see what was going on on my right side."

"(Colleen's) character was challenged in many ways and I have never been so proud of one of my players," Plante said. "The morals and values that her wonderful parents instilled in her got her through the unfortunate injury/school/ and now adapting to life. The injury to her eye sight will never go away yet she pushes to her excellence every day."

of my head near my temple. I was knocked out briefly and immediately could not see out of my right eye. An ambulance came and I was taken to the hospital. The next day I went to the ophthalmologist where he told me I wouldn't see again," she said.

Plante resigned her position after just one year as head coach, accepting a position with the expansion Atlanta franchise of a new pro soccer league.

"This was a very tough decision for me," she said. "But this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and being involved in the early stages of the league is very exciting. Atlanta allows me to work with a good friend and be close to my family on the East coast. It's a new challenge and the possibilities are endless." (UNI Athletics Media Relations release, 9-20-2008)

The Price Years (2009-Present) Season X

A native of Great Britain, James Price was named head coach on Dec. 22, 2008, following the resignation of Plante.

Prior to his appointment, he spent 11 years as head coach at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., and one season as the technical director for the Soccer Organization of Charlottesville Albemarle.

He led Liberty to three Big South Conference Tournament titles and two league regular-season crowns, leading to three NCAA Tournament appearances. He was a member of the NCAA Women's Soccer National Committee from 2002-2005 and served as the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional Committee Chair from 2003-2005.

Price said he was looking for an opportunity to get back into the college game. He spoke with personal contacts about life in Iowa and the Midwest. When he interviewed he thought the Cedar Valley "seemed like a great community that really supported its university. I was struck by the honesty and desire of the players."

"Consistency is a word we use all the time with the team, and something that I promised to bring to the program," he said. "(During the interview process) the first question asked by Ericka O'Meara was 'Are you going to stay more than one year?' Most people laughed but I could tell immediately that she meant it and craved some consistency for her team."

Upon his appointment to UNI, Price said, "I was impressed with the athletic administration's commitment to the women's soccer team, and by the honesty



James Price

and eagerness of the returning players. There is already a solid foundation, and I look forward to working hard with the players and staff to build a soccer program that UNI can be proud of.” (2010 UNI Soccer Media Guide)

Price added Sonia Rodriguez as his assistant. Prior to coming to UNI, she served two seasons as a graduate assistant at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C. She was a goalkeeper for Price at Liberty from 2001-05.

The Panthers returned 11 letter winners for Price's first campaign after graduating just two seniors. Since 2008 once again was hampered by injuries, many of the 2009 underclassmen had played considerable minutes. All of the scoring power returned, including point leader Hochstedler. Also returning was league Freshman of the Year, goalie Potzman, who had played every minute in 2008 and led the MVC with 152 saves.

Hochstedler led the team in goals, total shots and shots on goal, finding the back of the net five times in 2009. Junior Kala Negus and sophomore Kiki McClellan each tallied two goals.

UNI finished with a 4-12-2 overall record and 1-5 in the MVC. It lost six straight matches before tying South Dakota State 0-0 in two OTs. The Panthers then won two straight games – 1-0 over North Dakota State and 3-1 against St. Ambrose before losing three straight. A 0-0 double overtime tie against South Dakota preceded two more wins before they lost three straight to end the season.

Megan Cameron and Hochstedler were selected second team all-MVC, while O'Meara and Negus were named honorable mention.

Season XI

Seven seniors concluded their UNI playing careers in 2010. As a group, the seven had combined to play in 375 matches heading into the season finale, a 2-0 loss to Drake. Those seven combined for 36 goals and 13 assists.

With four wins on the season (4-12-2, 1-4 in the MVC), UNI surpassed its win totals from each of the previous two seasons. Heading into the Drake contest, it had allowed one goal or less in eight of its past 11 games.

After a 0-6 start, the Panthers responded by posting a mark of 4-6-2. An 85th-minute goal by North

Hochstedler Becomes UNI's Career Scoring Leader

Assistant Brian Bahl recruited Chelsie Hochstedler to UNI after seeing her play in a tournament in Florida. She chose UNI because she knew she would receive a lot of playing time. “I also liked the campus and the business program,” she said.



“My best friends have come from playing on the UNI team. We may not have won a lot of games, but the determination, teamwork, and work ethic was all there. Bus trips, though long, were always a lot of fun. Playing on our home field under the lights on Friday nights was a great feeling.”

Playing for three different coaches over her four years was difficult. “Having coaches stay for a year made it really hard for our team to feel positive,” she said. “(Coach James) Price has given our team the much needed stability that would allow us to grow off the groundwork that he set in place.”

Hochstedler says her fondest memory was playing against Illinois State. “They have always (beaten) us and they have many team accolades. We played great the first half and when we went into halftime, I can still remember Coach saying, ‘We will score a goal in this game’. Our team had a lot of energy and we went out and I scored a goal off of a corner kick. We didn't let Illinois State score at all...It was the best feeling I have ever felt.

“I'm most proud of being the all-time leading scorer at UNI. I put a lot of hard work into soccer and it has been great in the different ways it has paid off.”

Dakota on Oct. 10 ended a 314-minute stretch where UNI did not allow a goal, dating back to the 60th minute against Creighton on Oct. 2.

A highlight of the season was a 1-0 win at Illinois State on Oct. 8. “Our win at Illinois State was a tremendous achievement,” Price said. “(ISU was) the reigning conference champion and had come to our place the season before and thrashed us 5-0. Physically, we stayed very strong and organized, and mentally we were able to see the game through after we scored a well-

rehearsed goal to win 1-0. It was the type of all-around performance that 12 months previously we could not have produced, and should provide us a great reference for future victories.”

Junior goalkeeper Potzman was honored twice as the MVC's Player of the Week. She led UNI to its first league win in nearly three years by recording eight saves in the ISU victory. She made seven saves before halftime to keep the Panthers in the game and wound up with her second shutout of the season.

Senior forward Hochstedler became the school's all-time leading scorer with her 53rd-minute goal

against Northern Illinois on Aug. 29, a 3-2 loss. It was her 21st goal of her career, moving her in front of Dechant. She scored six goals as a freshman, eight as a sophomore, five as a junior and four as a senior.

“The goal is for UNI soccer to be challenging and winning conference titles on a regular basis,” Price said. “This will take time, as we do not want to be a one-season wonder type program and go for quick fixes. The future is very bright for UNI soccer. We are starting to attract some of the best players in Iowa and the Midwest and the team continues to maintain high standards in the classroom.”

Soccer Record Book

All-Conference Selections	
2001	Sarah Lowe, 2nd Team; Jane Masteller, HM
2002	Sarah Lowe, 2nd Team; Anne-Marie Witko, HM
2003	Anne-Marie Witko; 1st Team; Shanon Dechant, 2nd Team; Sarah Lowe, Kate Shaw, HM
2004	Shanon Dechant, 1st Team; Brooke Orcutt, 2nd Team; Candice Divoky, HM
2005	Shanon Dechant, 2nd Team; Amy Seubert, HM
2006	Jackie Gielau, Amy Seubert, 2nd Team
2007	Amy Seubert, 1st Team; Chelsie Hochstedler, HM; UNI Team, MVC Fair Play Award
2008	Chelsie Hochstedler, 2nd Team; Lauren Potzman, HM, Freshman POY
2009	Megan Cameron, Chelsie Hochstedler, 2nd Team; Ericka O'Meara, Kayla Negus, HM
2010	Kiki McClellan, 2nd Team; Chelsie Hochstedler, HM

All-Freshman Team Selections	
2000	Anne-Marie Witko
2002	Shanon Dechant
2003	Ann Caley
2004	Amy Seubert
2005	Lindsay Daugherty
2006	Katie MacBride
2007	Chelsie Hochstedler
2008	Lauren Potzman
2010	Sam Copley

All-Tournament Selections	
2002	Lindsay Davis, Sarah Lowe
2003	Kate Shaw
2004	Shanon Dechant
2007	Amy Seubert

Scholar-Athlete Selections	
2000	Jane Masteller
2001	Jane Masteller, Alaina Shoopman
2002	Natalie McCart, HM
2003	Abby Leunsmann, Anne-Marie Witko; Kaitlin Stimpson, HM
2004	Shanon Dechant; Appy Luensmann, Kaitlin Stimpson, HM
2005	Shanon Dechant
2006	Amy Seubert, HM
2007	Jenna O'Hara, Amy Seubert
2008	Chelsie Hochstedler
2009	Kala Negus, HM
2010	Kiki McClellan, Morgan Olsen, HM

Coaches' Records				
Coach	Years	Win	Loss	Tie
Linda Whitehead	2000-2004	24	47	5
Kathy Kakoyianni-Bering	2005-2007	9	42	2
Jennifer Plante	2008	3	15	1
James Price	2009-2010	6	23	5

Intercollegiate Softball 1972 to 2010

Jane Mertesdorf, David Whitsett, Ryan Jacobs

Coach Jane Mertesdorf, 1972-78

Eager and talented intramural softball players realized a dream with the beginning of women's intercollegiate softball in the spring of 1972. The coach was Jane Mertesdorf who had competed on a traveling softball team in Minnesota. She completed her undergraduate work at Mankato State College, received her Master's degree from Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. and her Ph.D. at Iowa State University.

At the time women's intercollegiate athletics were being organized at UNI, Mertesdorf was teaching in the Women's Physical Education Department. Her assignment within the Department was to become the school's first women's softball coach based on her past experiences and her interest in the development of the sport at the intercollegiate level. In addition to her teaching and coaching assignment, she coordinated the women's intramural program.

The softball team started the season with minimal resources. The budget was set at \$298. The program had no uniforms, softball diamond, grounds crew, athletic trainer, assistant coach, scholarships, or a public relations staff. The coach did the scheduling of fields for practices and games, umpires, opponents, travel plans, driving, and reporting of games. The coach and players prepared the field for practice and games. Practices were usually held on the intramural and Physical Education Department's fields with the use of their equipment. All of the infant women's athletic teams were given great support from other coaches and the Physical Education Department faculty. They volunteered to score, referee, drive vehicles and any other help as needed. Wanda Green was important to the softball team as a referee and frequently was the driver for the second station wagon. She also assisted with team selections, attended some practices and when possible, served as a first base coach.

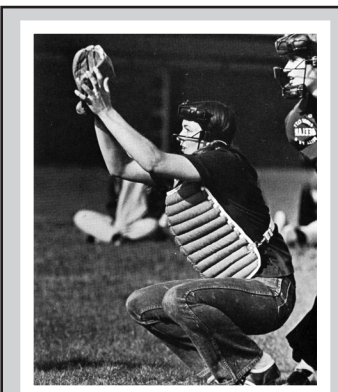
Following the Women's Intercollegiate Guidelines, the intercollegiate softball season was set to be completed during the last half of spring semester. Practices would be for no more than four hours a week. Games were to be played on weekends. The established

rationale for women's athletics by the UNI Women's Intercollegiate Committee (WIC), was they did not want athletics to consume either student-athletes or coaches. As a result, this allowed students to participate in more than one sport. Coaches were given release time from teaching that was equivalent to one credit hour for the nine-week period. These policies eventually changed as the need for more conditioning and practice time was needed for the level of competition.

There was no softball field on the UNI campus, therefore, games were held at Pfeiffer Park in Cedar Falls. When those fields were unavailable or unplayable, games were played on the grassy area south of the UNI Administration Building (Gilchrist Hall), the grassy open field at Southdale Elementary School in Cedar Falls or at the Price Laboratory School diamond.

Tryouts were held to trim the interested 48 students to a manageable 20-member team. The first ever UNI intercollegiate softball team members were: Teresa Allen, Deb Busch, Jan Meier, Sherry Ebensberger, Marlys Frohwein, Julie Goerner, Lori Kluber, Carol Johnson, Laurie Luhman, Judy McAndrew, Charlene Magnuson, Kris Meyer, Deb Moran, Sue O'Brien, Janet Parker, Myra Rasmussen, Diana Reynolds, Diana Rickertson, Debbie Shay, and Peggy Sneddon.

Kris (Meyer) Plueger was the shortstop on the 1972 and 1973 teams and remembers that they practiced and played games wherever the coach could secure a field. She also remembers there was no press, athletic trainer, and often no back stop or outfield fence. She reflected on tournaments when players bought their own reversible UNI tee shirts. Plueger remembered when Coach Mertesdorf cleaned out a terrible strawberry on her leg she got sliding into base. She went on to say, "If scholarships

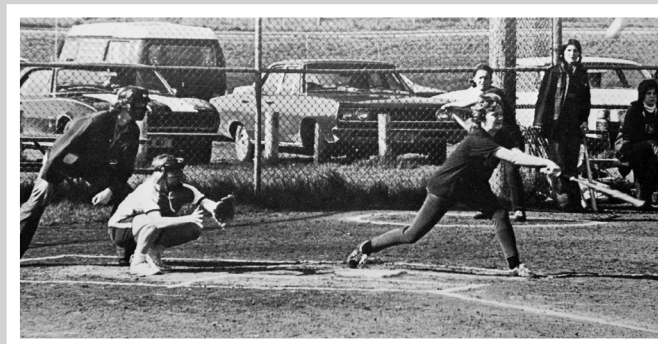


Sophomore Janet Parker provided excellent coverage behind the plate for UNI's first year.

would have been available in the '70s, my dad wouldn't have had to raise extra pigs for five years to pay for my education." As she reflected over her athletic experience at UNI, she said, "I just love looking back on those years. They were fun. I am very proud to have played on the first intercollegiate softball team at UNI."

The Panthers had an impressive inaugural season with an 8-2 record. The first Iowa College Women's State Softball Tournament was held at Iowa State University with 12 teams participating. UNI went two-for-two in the double elimination tournament. Luther College won the tournament and represented the state of Iowa at the Women's College World Series (WCWS) in Omaha, Neb.

With the success of the first season, the prospects for the second season looked very promising. Nine players returned from the first year. In order to complete the 20-member roster, tryouts were held and 12 new players were selected.



Kris Meyer, all-state tournament player connects with another base hit. She had a .413 season with 14 RBIs and four home runs.

The WIC was an oversight committee that helped provide governance for the newly established women's athletic programs. It realized the talent of the UNI intercollegiate teams was progressing beyond seasonal play, taking them to the regional level and even to national level competition. Because of this, a supplemental \$520 budget for 1973 was submitted to the UNI Student Association seeking support to accompany the \$458 seasonal budget. Student representatives were added to the WIC to better represent the athletes and Busch was chosen to represent softball.

Spring time in Iowa can offer its own challenges and this season was plagued with cancellations due to rain. The team went into the state tournament with a

3-5 record behind the pitching of Bonnie Rawdon and Janet Parker. Diane Braun did most of the catching.

The second Iowa College Softball Tournament (1973) was hosted by Luther College with nine teams participating. UNI defeated Iowa State 7-6 in 11 innings and 6-4 in the double elimination tournament to win the tournament and represent the state intercollegiate teams at the WCWS Tournament.

UNI was the only team participating in the WCWS who did not wear team uniforms. The rag-tag UNI players purchased their own reversible dark colored tee shirts with a large UNI logo on the front. Meyer said, "We were really excited when Coach Mertesdorf and

Women's College World Series (WCWS)

1973 was the first year UNI played in the Women's College World Series. The annual WCWS sanctioned tournament was first held in 1969 at the George W. Dill Softball Center in Omaha, Neb. The sanctioning organizations were the Division of Girls and Women in Sports (DGWS) and the American Softball Association (ASA).



The 1973 team at WCWS Dill Field in Omaha, Neb. wearing the t-shirts that identified them as the UNI team. UNI finished 7th -of-16 teams in the tournament. Front left to right: Marcia Finn (ss), Bonnie Rawdon (p), Janet Parker (p), Carol Johnson (3b), Mary Drey (of), Debbie Shay (2b), and Teresa Allen (rf). Back left to right: Coach Jane Mertesdorf, Donna Troyna (2b), Diane Braun (c), Kathy Shogren (1b), Sherry Ebensberger (rf), Deb Busch (cf), Kris Meyer (ss), Mary Tietge (c).

Wanda Green purchased stirrup socks for the team to wear at the WCWS tournament.”

The lack of uniforms may have been a disguise for the talent of this team. Undaunted by the lack of uniforms, they were confident, great hitters that offered a very strong defense. Mertesdorf was told by another coach that wherever they hit the ball, our fielders were there to make the out. UNI placed seventh in the 16-team tournament. Arizona State took first place, Illinois State was second, and Southwest Missouri State placed third. UNI finished the season with a 10-8 record.

1974 was a rebuilding year with only five players returning from the previous season. As would be the case, tryouts were held and the rest of the team was selected from those attending. The softball budget was increased to \$1,012. Games were not restricted to weekends and practice times were expanded beyond the four hours a week. Mary Ann Tiege was the newly selected softball student representative on the Women's Intercollegiate Athletics Committee. (Note the name change to better identify the committee.)

Although funds were made available to purchase softball uniforms, the softball team wore the basketball team's uniforms until the new ones arrived. The team had added a catcher's mask, a chest protector, softballs, bases and bats to their equipment inventory.

UNI had a strong 7-1 start to the 1974 season. The Panthers downed Grandview College 9-1 with the battery of Patty Stockman and Braun and won the second game 18-4 with Rawdon pitching and Kay Whitaker catching. The bats were powerful with Jenny Diercks, Mary Drey and Teresa Allen hitting well. The same batteries teamed up to beat Iowa State 7-3 and 6-5 with Sharon Johnson and Braun each providing two extra base hits.

The Panther women improved their record to 9-1 by defeating Luther 6-3 and 7-3 and went on to sweep a double header from Iowa. The battery of Stockman and Braun won the first game 13-0. The second game was won 34-1, with Rawdon pitching and Whitaker catching the five-inning game. (This is the correct score.). The Panthers had taken command at the plate in both games.

The Panthers were, once again, scheduled to play their home games at Pfeiffer Park. Apparently there was miscommunication with the Cedar Falls Parks Department grounds crew. When Mertesdorf and her players



Diane Braun attempting to tag a Wartburg runner at home plate during the last game of the season. Diane was a multiple sport athlete also participating in basketball and field hockey. After graduation, she became an assistant softball coach.

arrived at Pfeiffer Park to prepare the field for game play, they found the infield had been dug up – it appeared to have been cultivated. Since it was too late to cancel the doubleheader, the coach and a player drove their cars back and forth over the infield so the tires could pack down the surface. By the time the visiting team arrived, the field was smooth, marked and ready for play. No one seemed to be aware of the challenges of the afternoon.

The third Iowa College Softball Tournament was hosted by Luther with 11 teams participating. UNI went into the tournament with an outstanding 13-1 record. However, the Panthers did not fare well in the tournament with a third-place showing. They were defeated by Luther in the first game of the double elimination tournament and lost to ISU in the second game. Luther went on to defeat ISU and move on to the WCWS Tournament.

There were several new developments with the 1975 season. First, the team had new softball uniforms, there were discussions for constructing a softball diamond on campus and finally, Nancy Justis, from the Department of Public Information, began reporting on games and tournaments.

The budget for 1975 was projected to be \$2,508, including the \$1,160 to be spent for the much needed uniforms. The supplemental budget was set at \$1,069. The new uniforms consisted of purple pants with a

white pin stripe, purple shirts with a number on the front and back and the UNI logo on the front, an undershirt, socks, and a warm-up jacket. After several years of difficulties with practice and playing fields, the UNI Physical Plant was finally given the go-ahead to develop a softball diamond near the Physical Education Center (PEC). Ed Adamson guided the planning and development of the field, but while the diamond was being developed, all home games for the season were once again scheduled to be played at Pfeiffer Park.

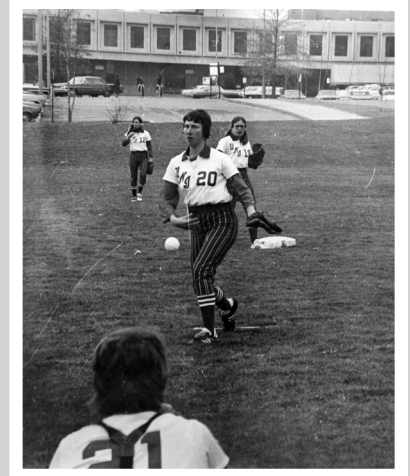
All UNI women's athletic teams continued to have great success. The WIAC, under the leadership of Chairperson Dr. Elinor Crawford, reported that it was pleased with the number of women on campus being served by their athletic participation. In the May 9, 1975 Northern Iowan, Dr. Crawford goes on to say, "We are exposing them [student-athletes] to a rewarding educational experience in competition. That's what we feel is important and we're very successful at that. Winning is secondary."

Softball tryouts continued to be necessary in order to arrive at a manageable 20-member team. Mary Drey was selected to be the student representative for softball on the WIAC.

The 1975 season started with a doubleheader against Luther. Stockman won the first game 3-0 and the second game was a 6-5 loss with Pat Jackley and Rawdon pitching. The next games of the season were plagued with swampy fields at Pfeiffer Park. In order to keep the season going, when Pfeiffer Park was not usable, games were played on the grassy area south of Gilchrist Administration. Not the ideal place to play, but the women's coaches had to be inventive and in order for the team to keep going, this location allowed that to happen.

The Panthers did continue to play with eight games being played in five days in which the Panthers finished 7-1. The pitchers gave up very few hits while the hitting was impressive. A 10-run rule victory over Iowa in the first game and a 6-4 win in the second with the battery of Jackley and Pat Brown got the season off to a great start. The six runs came off the bats of Jo Moeller, Charlene Manguson, Marcia Finn, and Sue Huebner. UNI went on to defeat ISU 7-1 and 10-2. Bats were again strong with three doubles each by Kathy Santi, Huebner, and Rawdon. Sharon Johnson displayed her defensive

Pat Stockman of Clear Creek made a significant contribution to the team. She came to UNI with noteworthy high school credentials, having received the Jack Northern Memorial Award in softball. She had a high school three-year pitching record of 83-15. She pitched her team to 46 straight victories through two seasons, culminating in the 1973 High School State Championship. Here she is seen pitching on the grass field south of Gilchrist.



ability when she snagged a fly ball in center field and pegged the first base for a double play.

Later in the week UNI defeated Graceland 8-3 with Braun, Barb Wahlstrom and Deb Saunders hitting three-for-four. UNI lost to Kansas State, 4-3. It had a slower pitcher which the team wasn't able to adjust to. The Panthers went on to easily defeat Wartburg 15-1 and 9-0 in windy, rainy conditions.

1975 was the first year a district tournament was held, with the top two teams moving on to the state tournament in Des Moines. Ten teams were entered in the district tournament and UNI finished in first place, advancing to the state tournament.

UNI entered the state tournament with an 11-2 record. This was the fourth Iowa College Softball Tournament held and was hosted by Grand View College in Des Moines. The Panthers handily defeated Graceland 12-3 and Iowa Wesleyan 12-0. The following day proved to be a test of endurance with three back-to-back games. UNI won the double elimination tournament beating ISU and Luther and then going on to beat ISU again in the championship game.

As university classes were ending for the semester, the softball team was packing up and heading to Omaha for its second trip to the WCWS Tournament. Green traveled with the team as the second driver and assisted as the first base coach. Justis also traveled with

the team for the first time. UNI made a strong showing at the tournament going 5-2 and taking second place. The hitting leaders were Stockman, .440; Jan Bernhardt, .417; and Wahlstrom, .308.

The 1976 Panthers looked strong after coming off the second place finish at the 1975 Women's College World Series. The proposed softball budget was elevated to \$1,635 and the supplemental budget for the WCWS was set at \$1,090. Shogren was the softball student representative to the WIAC. Seventy-one students came to the try-out sessions hoping to make the squad. There

Results of the 1975 WCWS Tournament

UNI 5-0 over University of Oklahoma

UNI 6-5 over Michigan State University

UNI 4-1 over University of Kansas

University of Nebraska-Omaha 1-0 over UNI

UNI 7-3 over Michigan State University

UNI 11-1 over University of Nebraska-Omaha

University of Nebraska-Omaha 6-4 over UNI



The 1975 WCWS Tournament team. Front row left-right: Bonnie Rawdon (p), Barb Wahlstrom (rf), Pat Stockman (p), Mary Drey (of), Jan Bernhardt (2b), Sharon Johnson (if). Middle row: Sue Huebner (ss), Pat Brown (p), Deb Shay (2b), Donna Troyna (2b), Pat Jackley (of). Back Row: Coach Jane Mertesdorf, Charlene Manguson (of), Kris McCartney (3b), Diane Braun (c), Kathy Shogren (1b), Wanda Green (Asst. coach). Not Pictured: Jo Moeller, Marcia Finn, Deb Saunders and Kathy Santi.

were 22 positions available and those that could eventually find a place with the team was limited since there were 13 returning players.

This was also the year the UNI-Dome was completed. Due to the purpose of the UNI-Dome it was heavily used, but whenever possible, it became a backup option for spring practices and home games when there was inclement spring weather. Teams were eager to schedule with UNI for early spring games knowing the UNI-Dome was often available if conditions made the outdoor fields unplayable.

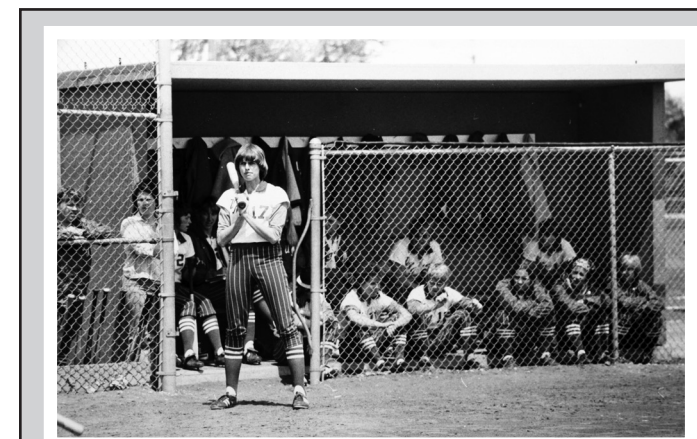


Barb Wahlstrom may have made it in the nick of time. Certainly all eyes are on Barb's race against the peg. Coach Mertesdorf is seen to the right in the white hat coaching third base.

The pitching staff was strengthened with the addition of freshman lefty Michelle Thomas. Pitchers Rawdon and Stockman returned. Rawdon and Thomas pitched in an 11-0 win over Iowa. Stockman just missed a perfect game, giving up a walk in the sixth inning in a 3-0 win over Luther. Mertesdorf praised the pitching depth, the defensive strength and the powerful bats in the wins over Luther and Iowa State.

1976 was the first year that UNI was picked to host the 16-team Iowa Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAIW) Softball Championship, which was to be played at the Waterloo Softball Complex. This was also the first time an admission fee to watch softball was charged. Student tickets for the day were \$1.00 or \$2.50 for the three day tournament. Adult tickets were \$3.00 for the day or \$5.00 for the three days. UNI swept the tournament.

Regional tournaments were beginning to develop. The teams that made it to the regional tournaments had to win their respective state's championship. Region champions would then proceed on to the WCWS Tournament in Omaha. The seven states represented in Region VI were Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.



The Panthers at the AIAW championship at the Waterloo Softball Complex. Kathy Shogren waiting for her turn at bat.

Having won the Iowa State Softball Tournament, UNI progressed to the newly formed Region VI Tournament held at Southwest Missouri State in Springfield, Missouri. UNI became the Region VI representative qualifying for the WCWS Tournament. This was UNI's third trip to the national tournament over the past four years. The Panthers went on to place sixth with a 2-2 record. Michigan State took first place followed by Northern Colorado and Nebraska-Omaha. The 1976 Panther team finished the season with an impressive 24-3 record.

The budget for the 1977 season was \$3,160 with the supplemental budget for the WCWS set at \$1,390. Wahlstrom was chosen to be the softball student representative on the WIAC. Because of graduation, there was a need for new players to become part of the team. Of the 60 students who tried out for the softball team, 18 were selected. Games were to be played at the Waterloo Softball Complex as the new softball diamond wasn't yet finished. UNI hosted the state tournament at the Waterloo Softball Complex.

Dave Burton was hired as the head athletic trainer at UNI in 1977. With his hire, women athletes were able to join the men athletes in the athletic train-

ing room and a trainer was assigned to the softball team. This was also the first year a graduate assistant served as an assistant coach. Braun was hired for that expressed purpose. She was a former UNI softball and field hockey player and was a graduate assistant in Physical Education.

The Panthers opened the season with an impressive pair of wins over Nebraska-Omaha, the 1975 WCWS champions and which also had a 1976 third-place finish. Playing on its home turf, Stockman was the star of the first game, striking out nine, walking one and hitting a three-run homer in a 9-3 win. Adding to the win were Vanessa Fulton who went three-for-four, Wahlstrom who had a triple and went three-for-three, and Julie Olson who added a triple. Thomas pitched the second game with a 7-2 win, striking out six and giving up no walks. The offense came through with Connie Bruess going two-for-three, Teresa Kennedy hitting two-for-two and Carol Rankin hitting a two-run homer.

The first home game for the Panthers was played in the UNI-Dome against Wartburg College. Thomas won the opening game 4-3. Joyce Bernhardt added a double and a triple and went three-for-five. Bruess went two-for-four. Stockman threw a 9-1 win and added to the win hitting a double. Sue Coakley hit three-for-three in the win.

UNI continued its winning streak with an 8-0 record downing Iowa 5-3 behind Thomas' pitching. DJ Parker added three singles. Kennedy, Olson and Bernhardt each hit three-for-four. Stockman allowed only one hit, struck out nine, and walked one in the 7-0 second game over the Hawkeyes. The Panthers had 15 hits in the second game.

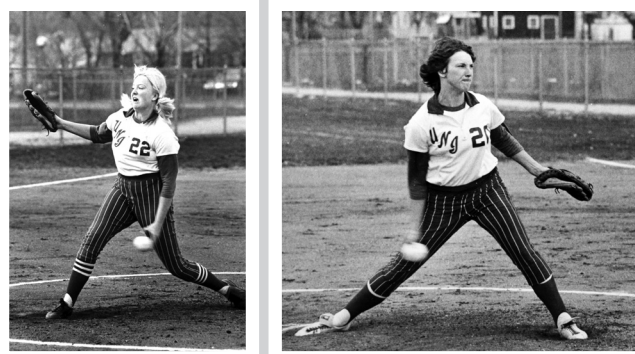
Thomas pitched a no-hitter in a 9-0 win over Wartburg. Sharon Johnson went three-for-five with a triple and Coakley hit three-for-three at the plate. The second contest was won by Stockman 10-3. Fulton hit four-for-four with two triples, and Wahlstrom, Parker and Stockman each hit two-for-five.

Luther gave the Panthers their first loss of the season 1-0. Thomas gave up four hits, two walks and struck out eight in the game. Not happy with the loss, the Panthers came back strong in the second game, defeating Luther 13-0. Stockman pitched a no-hitter and smashed a double and two singles. Fulton had three hits and Parker hit a single and a double in the win.

The Panthers won the district tournament defeating Upper Iowa 13-0 and Luther 3-2. Thomas pitched the first game allowing one hit and striking out nine batters. Stockman took the second game striking out 14 while giving up seven hits. In a makeup game held the next day, UNI defeated Iowa State. Thomas pitched the 2-0 win. She also provided the offense with a double and two singles, bringing in both runs.

The April 29, 1977 issue of The Northern Iowan recognized the 1977 softball team as a "legend in the making." It based its prognostication on the possibility of UNI winning its third state championship and the fact that the Panthers had competed in the last two WCWS Tournaments with impressive stats. The staff at The Northern Iowan also recognized another legend was in the making, namely in pitching.

Each pitcher had her own idea about her pitching strength. Thomas viewed herself as a change-up and placement p was as a strikeout pitcher. She had a terrific fast ball and a well-timed changeup. It was during the end of the season when Stockman was drafted by the Buffalo (NY) Briskies. At that time, the Briskies were one of six professional women's softball teams in the country.



The Northern Iowan referred to Michelle Thomas and Pat Stockman "as possibly the best women collegiate softball pitchers in the state, region and, yes, even the nation".

Michelle Thomas, the lefty with a great rise ball. Pat Stockman -who had a very fast, fast ball.

UNI was slated to host the State AIAW Softball Tournament and did so at the Waterloo Softball Complex. The Panthers entered the tournament with a 19-1 regular season record. No records were available for results of the tournament, but UNI won the tournament. UNI went on to play in the Region VI Tourna-

ment and came away with a 3-0 record. Its first game was a 3-0 victory over Southern Illinois-Carbondale, with Stockman pitching a one-hitter. UNI took the second game 4-0 over Kansas and went on to defeat Michigan State 7-3.

The headlines read, "Following four trips to the WCWS, UNI wins the championship"

Stockman pitched four of UNI's six games in the WCWS for a total of 31 innings. She tallied 10 hits, one run, two walks, and an impressive 32 strikeouts. Stockman defeated Kansas 4-0 and two-of-three games against Arizona State, 1-0, 0-1 and 7-0. Her tournament ERA was 0.00. Thomas pitched wins over Southern Illinois, 3-0, and Michigan State 7-3. She had a 1.28 ERA for the tournament. The offense for the Panthers in the six games was led by Wahlstrom hitting .375, Kris McCartney .313 and Stockman .278.

UNI finished with a 5-1 record; Arizona State had a 5-2 record and defending champion Michigan State slipped to third with a 4-2 record. UNI had an impressive 17-1 record for the regular season and a 32-2 season including tournament games.

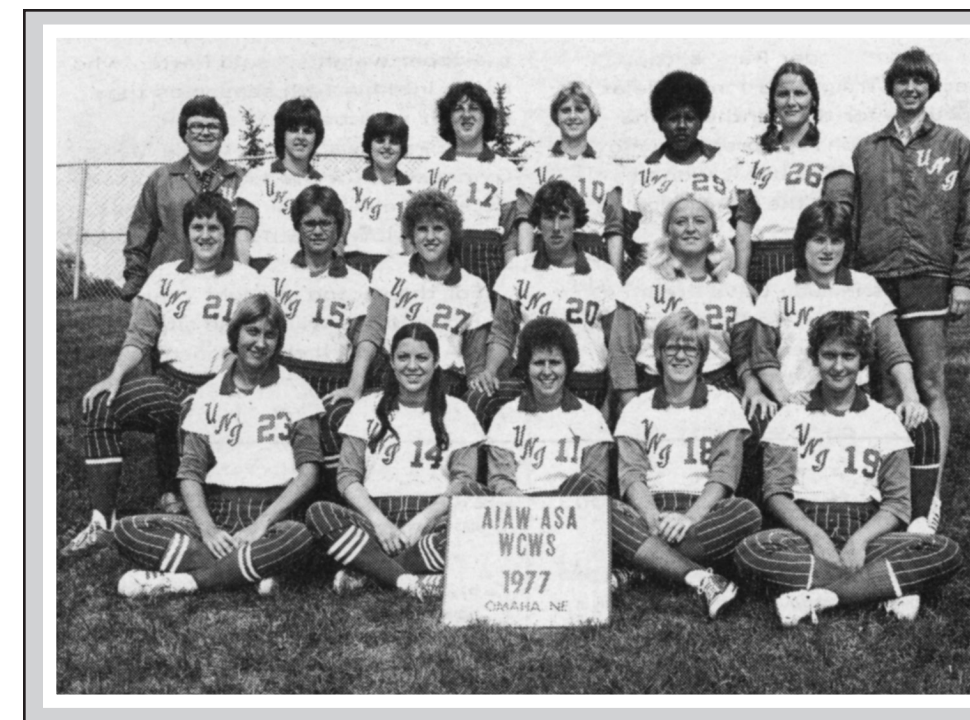
1978 would be another rebuilding year for the Panthers after losing 13 players from the 1977 WCWS championship team. A small nucleus of returning play-

1977 Panther Tournament Record

District	2-0 and first place
State	4-0 and first place
Regional	4-0 and first place
WCWS	5-1 and first place

The 1977 WCWS Scoreboard

- UNI 3 vs. University of Southern Illinois 0
- UNI 4 vs. University of Kansas 0
- UNI 7 vs. Michigan State University 3
- UNI 1 vs. University of Arizona 0 (8 innings)
- University of Arizona 1 vs. UNI 0 (9 innings)
- UNI 7 vs. University of Arizona 0



The 1977 AIAW and WCWS CHAMPIONS Left to right, bottom row: Kathy Santi (2b), Janeen Benson (2b), Barb Wahlstrom (of), Doris Parker (of), Julie Olson (c). Middle row: Theresa Kennedy (3b), Kris McCartney (3b), Carol Rankin (1b), Pat Stockman (p, ss), Michelle Thomas (p), Pam Schneider (2b). Back row: Head Coach Jane Mertesdorf, Sharon Johnson (of), Jan Bernhardt (3b), Jeanelle Robins (of), Joyce Bernhardt (ss), Vanessa Fulton (ss), Sue Coakley (c, of), Assistant Coach Diane Braun. Not pictured: Connie Bruess (of).

ers -- Coakley, Kennedy, McCartney, Santi and Schneider -- formed the base for the team. New pitchers were Jenny Corkrean, Linda Edwards and Trish Kinley. The team was rounded out with Kathy Martin, Kris Olson, Karla Schiltz, Sheryl Schlader, Sue Tyler, Jocelyn Drabelle and Mary Kriener. McCartney was the softball student representative to the WIAC.

The Women's Intercollegiate Athletics Annual Report for 1977-78 announced the first awarding of scholarships for women athletes. An ad hoc committee had studied the issues and had sent its report to President John Kamerick for his review. On April 21, 1977 he responded with \$25,000 for women's athletic scholarships. AIAW regulations were to be followed in allocating the funds to each sport. Softball was granted \$2,902 for 13 athletes. Mertesdorf identified the softball players returning for the 1979 season as who should be considered for a scholarship. However, since Mertesdorf intended to step down as head coach following the 1978 season, she felt the new softball coach should make the final scholarship decisions.

The new softball diamond was completed and was now available for practice and games. The new field was the first on-campus diamond for Iowa softball teams and was considered to be an excellent facility. The UNI-Dome continued to serve as backup for practice

and games. UNI would once again host the Region VI Tournament and would do so on the new field.

The 1978 season opener against Wartburg was held on the new diamond. Corkrean pitched a three-hitter in the 2-1 victory. Edwards and Kinley combined to down the Knights 5-3 in the second game. Coakley hit three-for-seven in the doubleheader. Kinley, McCartney, Schiltz and Schneider each had two hits.

UNI split a doubleheader with Luther, winning the first game 4-3 and losing the second game 1-0. Kennedy socked a three-run homer in the first game. Kinley was the winning pitcher. Edwards pitched the loss in the second game.

The Panthers swept two from Grand View, 4-3 and 5-1. In the first game Kinley relieved starting pitcher Corkrean in the seventh to give UNI the win. Corkrean and Coakley provided the offense with two hits each. Edwards took the second game.

UNI then dropped two games. It lost to Luther 4-1 and to Iowa 5-1. Kinley gave up three hits to Luther. Coakley drove in the only run in the loss. Edwards took the loss against Iowa. Drabelle drove in the only run and hit two-for-three in the game.

Strong hitting in two doubleheaders brought the season record to 9-3. The Panthers took two games from William Pen, 5-3 and 5-4, and won two games from Drake, 13-3 and 10-3. Corkrean was the winning



UNI second baseman Jocelyn Drabelle tags out the Minnesota base runner during a run-down in the opening-round game of the AIAW Region VI softball tournament. At right is UNI first baseman Kathy Santi.

pitcher in the first game. Edwards pitched a three-hitter for the win in the second game. The doubleheader over Drake turned out to be a slugfest for UNI with Coakley, Kennedy and Schiltz the leading hitters.

Minnesota split a doubleheader with UNI. In a 13-7 win, UNI belted 11 hits. Kinley went the distance for the win. Edwards took the 3-0 loss in a strong pitching duel, giving up a three-run homer in the first inning.

UNI captured the top spot in the district tournament which was held in Decorah. It defeated Upper Iowa 13-4 and Luther 7-5 in the championship game. Corkrean threw the first game and Kinley picked up the win over Luther.

The Panthers took a 17-7 record into the state tournament held in Sioux City. They came away with their fourth straight state tournament championship and entered the Region VI Tournament to be held at the UNI Softball Complex.

The Region VI Tournament included teams from Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and Iowa. Games were played on the UNI softball diamond except for the Friday games which were played at Pfeiffer Park in Cedar Falls. UNI lost the first game to Minnesota 4-0 and moved to the double elimination loser's bracket. There, it posted two wins, soundly defeating South Dakota 11-2 and Luther 8-3 before losing to Kansas 5-0. Southwest Missouri State took first place and the trip to the WCWS. UNI finished fourth behind Minnesota and Kansas. Drabelle topped all batters with a .571 average. Coakley placed third with a batting average of .454.

The 1978 season ended with a 21-11 record. Mertesdorf was pleased with the team effort in the rebuilding season. Coakley, Kenney, McCartney, Santi,

Drabelle and Schiltz consistently led the hitting charge while defense gave great support to the new pitching staff.

After meeting and exceeding the goals for the intercollegiate softball program, Mertesdorf stepped away from her coaching responsibilities. The demands of coaching, teaching and coordinating women's intramurals had become more than she cared to continue with. She decided it was now time to return to full-time teaching.

Mertesdorf had coached the softball team from its inception in 1972 until 1978. At the end of the 1978 season, Mertesdorf's final responsibility to the program was to recommend players for whom the incoming coach could consider to receive a softball scholarship. The final decision would be made by the incoming coach. Mertesdorf wrapped up her coaching career with a 127-33 record. She was inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame with the Class of 1993.

Softball Hall of Fame Inductees

In addition to Coach Jane Mertesdorf being inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame, several of her players have also been so honored. Many inductees were multiple sports participants. They include Pat (Stockman) Sann (1988) for basketball and softball, Diane (Braun) Eckhardt (1992) for field hockey, basketball and softball; Barb (Wahlstrom) Carter (1996) for field hockey, basketball and softball; and Kathy (Shogren) Fell (1999) for basketball and softball. The entire 1977 team of 19 players was the first ever full team to be inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame.

Several candidates were interviewed for the position of combined softball coaching and teaching in the Physical Education Department. The search committee selected Meredith Bakley to fill this dual position.

Coach Meredith Bakley, 1979-2000

Beginning in 1979, the softball program was led by new head coach Meredith Bakley. Bakley received her bachelor's degree from Black Hills State College and earned her master's degree from Colorado State. She taught at Valley City State College where she coached basketball and softball for six years. Her softball team took second place in the 1978 state tournament, losing to North Dakota State in the finals. Bakley was a former

volleyball and softball player. As a coach, she believed in sound fundamentals and throughout her coaching career, she focused the practice sessions on establishing strong defenses.

The new coach began her first year with 10 returning players from Coach Mertesdorf's '78 squad, along with three junior transfers and three new freshman players. Bakley's tenure as the head softball coach started off well as she led her team to the AIAW District II finals her first year, defeating Upper Iowa 5-2 in the championship game. Winning the district title was an important achievement for Bakley in her initial year because it continued something of a tradition because UNI had won the same title four previous times. In the Iowa State AIAW Tournament, UNI performed well, advancing to the semi-finals by defeating Iowa Wesleyan, Iowa State and William Penn, but then met undefeated Drake in the championship game, losing 2-1. The team finished with a very respectable 22-10 record.

In her second year (1980), Bakley lost just three players to graduation and added five new ones. She took the team to Hawaii in March for some early warm weather experience at the Hilo Hawaii Invitational Tournament. The coach felt that it would give the team a chance to play some early games and perhaps get a jump on some of the teams they would be playing in the regular season. UNI finished second in the tournament, losing to Texas Women's University, the defending national champion. Four UNI players were named to the all-tournament team, including Gloria Andersen (first base), Sue Tyler (outfield), Jill Peterson (catcher) and Jocelyn Drabelle (shortstop).

The team won four straight games in less than a week in April, beating Wartburg and Iowa twice each, so perhaps the early game experience in Hawaii did pay off. The Iowa games were played in the UNI-Dome due to inclement weather. In a Northern Iowan interview after the games Bakley said, "It's different playing in the Dome. I'd rather play outside. It's nice, though, because without it, we wouldn't be playing at all."

During the following week UNI pushed its season record to 15-9 with two wins each over Luther



and Loras. The games featured some outstanding pitching by UNI's Judy Daleska (two-hitter vs. Luther), Lisa Ternary (one-hitter vs. Luther), Kathy Gross (one-hitter vs. Loras) and Lori Stielow (no-hitter vs. Loras).

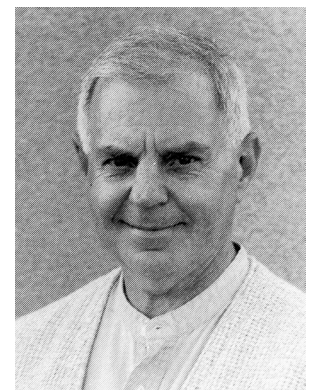
After a third-place finish in the AIAW State Tournament, UNI amassed a season record of 31-15. The team was given an "at-large" berth in the AIAW Regional Tournament. However, some members of UNI's athletic administration had reservations about sending the team, which resulted in a delay in choosing a course of action. By the time it was decided to allow the team to go, tournament officials had already set the schedule and it was too late to include UNI.

Bakley's comment in the May 9 Northern Iowan was, "I really feel like we should be going, but I don't make that decision." A letter from team members to President Kamerick, which was also published in the May 9 Northern Iowan, made it clear that they were very unhappy with the lateness of the decision as well.

The 1981 season began slowly with UNI compiling just a 3-7 record during a spring break trip to Texas. However, by mid-April it was back up to a .500 average at 8-8 and later in the month the record stood at 16-9. It finished the season with a very respectable 28-15 record after finishing fourth in the regional tournament.

The 1982 season was an outstanding one for UNI softball because, in part, Coach Bakley was successful in recruiting Dr. Gene Bruhn as her assistant coach. Bruhn was hired as the first part-time assistant softball coach. He came to UNI with 20 years of pitching experience, having played on a fast-pitch softball traveling team. Coach Bruhn brought knowledge of pitching and a commitment to the athletes. Along with coaching, he continued his chiropractic practice in Clarksville.

The 1982 win-loss record was excellent at 35-15-1. The icing on the cake was a national title. After sweeping the regionals, the Panthers were seeded fourth in the 12-team field at the WCWS held in Sioux Falls, S.D. UNI's first game in the event was a 1-0 win over Eastern Illinois. It beat the no. one seeded Northern Arizona 6-2 before cruising to the championship game



Coach Bakley's assistant coach, Dr. Gene Bruhn.

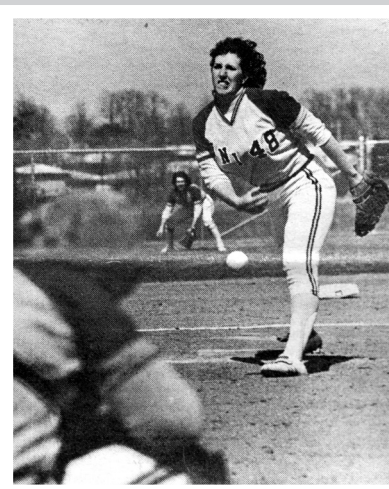
in which pitcher Jenny Berger threw a no-hitter vs. Southern Illinois-Edwardsville, striking out eight and walking none. In her four tournament games, Berger gave up only two runs, seven hits and three walks. The imposing 6-1 Berger finished the season with an excellent 17-5 record, including five no-hitters. Laurel Magee finished as the team's leading hitter with a .319 average and was named to the all-tournament squad.

It was at the WCWS that Bakley and Bruhn noticed a pile of free standing fence sections. They both had the idea that these fences could be used as outfield fences when games were played in the UNI-Dome. They had been turning tables on their sides for the outfield



1982 WCWS Division II national championship team: Front row l-r: Robyn Murken (c), Melinda McCauley (of), Beth Sloan (3b), Marshelle Clark (2b), Laurel Magee (1b). Middle row: Shellie Pfohl (1b), Sherri Salisbury (3b), Linda Stone (of), Jerri Augustus (c), Pamela Severin (of), Laura Norenberg (of). Back row: Jane Wagner (of), Trish Eason (p), Kathy Gross (p), Jennifer Burger (p), Lori Cook (p), Jackie Winter (c), Betty Thronson (ss).

Walk-on 6'1" pitcher Jennifer Burger used a whiffle ball to practice her pitching style by throwing the ball against her dorm-room door. Through the season, her style simply overwhelmed batters and by nationals, her pitching was near perfection.



boundaries. When Bakley was told she could have all of them for \$100, she immediately wrote out a personal check for the fences. They were later hauled back to UNI piled high on a pickup and trailer. They were the perfect answer, especially because two fields were needed for the preseason UNI-Dome Invitational Tournament.

In July of 1982 it was announced that UNI had entered several of its women's athletic programs, softball being one of them, into the newly formed NCAA Division I Gateway Conference. In addition to UNI, conference members included Drake, Bradley, Wichita State, Indiana State, Illinois State, Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Southern Illinois-Carbondale and Southwest Missouri State.

In 1983, UNI would be competing for the first time in the Gateway Conference, with the 10 teams engaging in a full round-robin conference schedule. All conference games were scheduled to be played on Fridays and Saturdays, with non-conference opponents to be played during the week. Led by Berger's pitching and Magee's hitting, UNI compiled a 31-13 regular season record before going on to the Gateway Conference Tournament in Macomb, Illinois in May. The season, however, ended abruptly when the Panthers lost their first two tournament games.

The 1984-'86 seasons were not particularly successful ones for UNI softball. The season records were: 1984, 23-22-1; 1985, 24-30; 1986, 20-29. It may be worthwhile to note that during the 1986 season, the team had 16 one-run losses and that pitcher Krista Fosbinder took 10 of those losses. She ended the year with a fine 0.63 ERA, 114 strikeouts and 28 walks in 166 innings pitched. The regular season ended on a high note as Nancy Sackett threw a no-hitter (the first in her collegiate career) against Drake.

There was a major change in UNI's allocation of scholarships for women's sports during this period. In December of 1984, Athletics Director Bob Bowlsby announced the department would be phasing out all scholarships for women's swimming, golf and tennis and that these scholarships would be reallocated to women's basketball, volleyball and softball. In a December 14 Northern Iowan interview, Bowlsby was quoted, "Our primary goal is to enhance the image of UNI. The media doesn't follow our minor sports. Our program is in need of progress toward success in our high visibility sports."

Nancy Sackett was one of three pitchers that had a combined 1.24 E.R.A., which was below all other teams they played. The other two pitchers making up the pitching staff were Krista Fosbinder and Sarah O'Byrne.



For the 1987 season, Bakley added seven new faces to her eight returning letter winners. Regular season play opened at the Oklahoma Sooner Invitational in March. The NCAA had instituted a significant rule change, announcing that the pitching rubber was to be moved three feet further from home plate, from 40 feet to 43 feet. Bakley commented on the rule change in the March 13, 1987 Northern Iowan, "I think the NCAA moved it back to get more hitting into the game. It may do so, but it also gives the pitcher more distance to put some extra break on the ball. We'll just have to wait and see what happens."

For Sackett, the distance was in her favor and she went on a pitching streak. She finished the '87 season with a 10-6 record and, at one point, had won five consecutive games, including four shutouts. One of those games was against Wartburg, which in essence was a no-hitter except for a fourth inning walk and a one-hit batter. Had these not happened, she would have tossed a perfect game.

Another pitching positive for the '87 season was based around the stellar pitching of Fosbinder, who led the pitching staff with 14 wins, seven of which were shutouts. She had a 0.96 ERA, third best in the Gateway Conference. The team as a whole set six school records, including lowest team ERA (Fosbinder, Sackett and Sarah O'Byrne). At least in the case of UNI, the increased distance from the pitching rubber to home plate seemed to help the pitchers more than the hitters. An exception may have been sophomore Chris Ehlert who played third base. She was UNI's only representative on the Gateway All-Conference squad. The team's

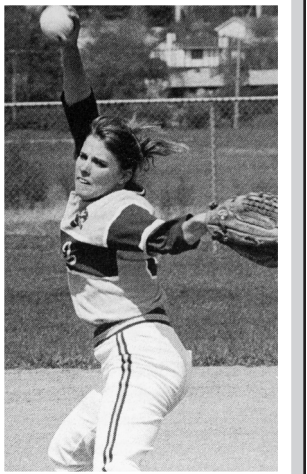
overall season record was 29-23. UNI had returned to winning seasons.

For the 1988 season, her 10th at the UNI helm, Bakley landed some outstanding recruits, including Diane Schrage, an all-state pitcher from Plainfield, Iowa; Dixie Froning, an all-region second baseman from Waldorf Junior College; and Melissa Schafer, a utility player from Cedar Rapids Jefferson. The Panthers opened their 56-game spring schedule on March 10 at the Sooner Invitational in Norman, Okla., where they finished with a 4-4 mark. Considering the level of competition (11 of the 18 teams were nationally or regionally ranked) and the fact that most of those teams had already been playing for several weeks, Bakley was pleased with her team's showing. Catcher Holly Harrison led the team in hitting with a .277 average.

O'Byrne's outstanding pitching performance in mid-season was a highlight of the 1988 spring. Beginning in the first game of the UNI-Dome Classic Tournament, she threw six consecutive shutouts for a total of 44 scoreless innings. O'Byrne credited Coach Bakley for her success. "She's a very good coach," O'Byrne said. "She really stresses the fundamentals, which is very important. Coach is very positive with the team. She pushes us, but she treats us like people." Another outstanding UNI pitcher, Fosbinder reported similar feelings about Coach Bakley. "She's more than just a softball coach to the team. She is, and always tries to be, very helpful to all of the players."

The 1988 season concluded with a record of 35-25 and a best ever fourth-place finish in the Gate-

Krista Fosbinder: "When I came to visit UNI, I liked the program, the softball team, and Coach Bakley was very friendly. I don't think I could have picked a better softball team." Fosbinder would eventually end up as one of only two pitchers in the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament history to record a complete game no-hitter, shutting out Indiana State enroute to the conference title in 1990.



way Conference Tournament. For the year, 27 school records were set and two were tied. Three UNI players were named to the All-Gateway team, including shortstop Paula Evers, third baseman Chris Ehlert and first baseman Susan Mahoney.

The 1989 season ended with an overall 34-26 record and another fourth-place finish in the Gateway Conference. Fosbinder and Ehlert concluded fine careers that year. Both were four-year starters. Fosbinder became the school's pitching record holder (since records were kept) with career and season marks for wins, 57 and 18, respectively. She also set the career and season



Senior co-captains third baseman Chris Ehlert and pitcher Krista Fosbinder.

records for games pitched with 113 and 32, as well as for innings pitched with 636 and 223. She threw 27 shut-outs. Ehlert was first-team All-Gateway third baseman for three years, team MVP for two seasons, and set the season record for 64 hits, 191 at-bats and 145 assists. Fosbinder was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame with the Class of 2007.

After a disappointing 24-28 1990 season the Panthers were not expected to be much of a threat at the Gateway Conference Tournament. However, they surprised just about everyone when they eliminated Wichita State, Illinois State, Drake, Southern Illinois and Western Illinois, earning their first trip to the NCAA Tournament. The team's elation over their success was short-lived, however, when they learned they would have to travel to Los Angeles to play no. 1 ranked UCLA at home in a best-of-three series. UCLA was the two-time defending NCAA champion and had won five of the last seven crowns. UNI lost two straight to UCLA but could still be proud to have won the Gateway title for the first time.

The 1991 season was something of a low-point after winning the Gateway Conference title in 1990, but the young team finished 24-40. With eight returning starters, Bakley hoped for a better 1992.

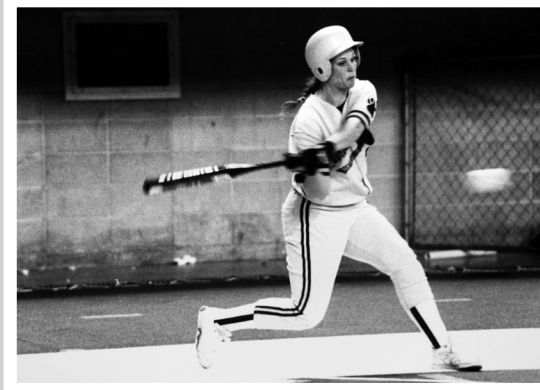
In the 1992 pre-season poll, UNI was tabbed to finish ninth by the Gateway Conference coaches. Bakley said in a February Northern Iowan interview, "I think that's a legitimate evaluation. We did not play well last year. We ended up on the bottom. I think it should provide us with incentive, and it shows us we have a lot to improve on. We definitely want to be in the top four by the time of the conference tournament."

Early in the season it looked as though Bakley's hopes might be realized as UNI surged to an early 15-4 mark before conference play began. However, it lost its first nine conference games before going 3-1 in double-headers in late April versus Bradley and Western Illinois. Though it finished the year with a winning record (29-24-1), the team did not qualify for the conference tournament. A bright spot was that two team members were named to the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) All-District VII Academic Softball Team. They were Karen VandeVoort, a sophomore catcher with a 3.31 GPA in mathematics; and Jennifer Peters, a junior shortstop/outfielder with a 3.50 GPA in history.

Beginning with the 1993 season, UNI began play as a member of the Missouri Valley Conference (MVC), which meant it would face some new conference foes, including Creighton and Tulsa. Bakley was quoted in the August 1 Northern Iowan, "We still have 10 teams and it will be a real strong conference. I would like to be in the upper half of the conference and in the hunt for a conference title." The year began well with a 5-1 start at the Iowa State Invitational and it was 7-2 after the Kansas Invitational. The Panthers lost starting catcher VandeVoort for the remainder of the fall season when she suffered torn ligaments in her foot. Nevertheless, the team finished the fall 13-6 and looked forward to the spring season.

An offensive highlight of the 1993 spring season was the selection of UNI's Heather Daters as the school's first player to be named an MVC Player of the Week. Daters got this recognition following her performance in the UNI Invitational Tournament where she hit a very respectable .648, scored 10 runs and drove in five in the six games played.

Later in April, UNI pitcher Desiree Bebout was chosen as the MVC Pitcher of the Week based on her three wins while allowing zero earned. Senior outfielder Deena Chipp was named to the all-conference first



Heather Daters smacked her first grand slam home run of her collegiate career against Nebraska. The team unfortunately lost by a run in both games of the double-header, but Coach Bakley said of Daters, "Heather Daters was outstanding in both games."

Teams liked to play UNI in the early spring because the Dome allowed them to play indoors. The UNI-Dome Invitational Tournament was a big hit in the beginning and continues to be so today.

team for the third consecutive year. She posted a .413 batting average and held 11 hitting records for the Panthers, including a career total of 123 runs scored. Even though the team compiled an overall winning record of 25-19, the seventh-place finish in the MVC was not what Bakley had in mind.

In looking forward to the 1994 season, Bakley was counting on her pitching trio consisting of seniors Bebout and Dana Happel and sophomore Kandy Keiper to hold the opposition at bay. She was also expecting Daters to continue her good hitting and she was pleased with her team's overall speed. When the Panthers went south over spring break to compete in the Florida State Invitational, Bakley's expectations were realized. UNI finished 8-4 in the tournament and the coach said in an April 5 Northern Iowan interview, "The team played very, very well."

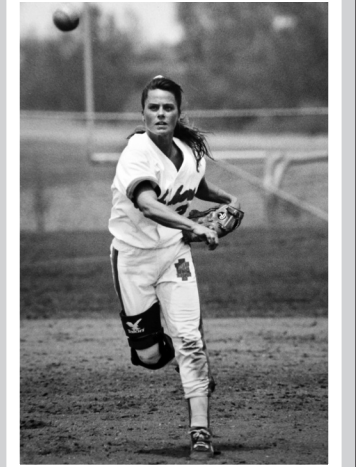
By the end of the season, even though they did not win the conference tournament, the Panthers had become the winningest softball team in UNI history with 40 victories against 21 losses. They also set team season records in runs scored (266), hits (433), doubles (60), home runs (26), RBIs (248), stolen bases (79) and walks (111). Daters, VandeVoort and Stacey Weber were named to the MVC first team. Bakley's feelings about the season were summed up in an interview in

the June 17 Northern Iowan. She said, "I feel good about the year; we played good teams. We had a strong schedule and we beat some of those teams. My only disappointment came in the conference tournament. I felt we should have gone further, but the kids worked hard, played hard and competed hard."

The 1995 season was the first since 1991 in which the UNI team finished with a losing record. Ending with a 24-32 mark and a disappointing ninth-place in the MVC, it proved to be the first time it didn't make the MVC post-season tournament. Bakley candidly said in a June 9, Northern Iowan interview, "We didn't have a very good season. It was far below what we had expected, yet I'm very proud of this team. They never gave up."

A highlight for the softball program took place in January of '95 when VandeVoort, a 1994 grad and catcher for the team, was selected as the NCAA Woman of the Year and received a Gateway Scholarship Award as well. Both awards were for her combination of athletic and academic achievements. A math major, VandeVoort had been a two-year academic all-America selection and was also chosen as a MVC first team selection her senior year.

the June 17 Northern Iowan. She said, "I feel good about the year; we played good teams. We had a strong schedule and we beat some of those teams. My only disappointment came in the conference tournament. I felt we should have gone further, but the kids worked hard, played hard and competed hard."



Third baseman Connie Fangmann was very much a part of Coach Bakley's defense oriented team sporting an 84 fielding percentage.



Catcher Karen VandeVoort is seen here receiving one of her many award recognitions. While many of UNI's softball players have been recognized for their accomplishments, VandeVoort may have garnered the most while in a Panther uniform.

The 1996 team bounced back from the disappointment of the prior year and compiled a very respectable 34-22 record. It notched three wins over top 25 opponents, including no. 1 Kansas, no. 15 Minnesota and no. 20 Illinois. Keiper, for her pitching, and shortstop Stacy Weber were named second team all-conference and Kari McLaughlin was a first team MVC all-conference selection. In the spring, sporting a 17-7 record, UNI received four votes for the USA Today/National Softball Association's Top 25 poll which was released on March 27.

Unfortunately for the Panthers, in that same week starting third baseman Jen Dean was lost for the season due to a broken finger. However, since they had been picked in pre-season polls to finish ninth in the MVC, their fourth-place finish had to be considered a success.

The team opened the next year, Bakley's 18th as UNI's head coach, at the Nebraska Invitational where it went 3-0. Sisters Jen and Jody Dean led the Panther attack. Jen went six-for-10 and scored six runs, while Jody went four-for-10 with five RBIs, including a two-run homer against Nebraska. The squad finished the fall season with a very promising 12-6 record.

A long southern road trip in March included impressive wins over no. 20 Louisiana Tech and no. 16 Michigan State. By the time the Panthers got back home at the end of the month, they had a 10-11 overall record and Bakley was pleased with her team's showing. "Our



Jen and Jody Dean: In the end, Jen held the NCAA Division I national record for consecutive stolen bases with 64 along with six Northern Iowa records. Younger sister Jody was only the sixth player in Missouri Valley Conference history to ear third team all-American honors after tying her own record for home runs in a season with 12.

pitching staff is doing a great job," she said. "This trip was a real roller coaster ride."

The Dean sisters continued to lead the Panthers' potent offense. By late April, UNI was leading the conference in hitting with a .313 team batting average. Jody was hitting .400 with 11 homers. Her two-run blast against Southwest Missouri State broke her sister's school record for individual homers in a season. Jen was hitting at a .327 clip and was in the midst of a string of 12 consecutive stolen bases. She had previously set the UNI school record of 55 consecutive successful steal attempts.

The 1997 MVC Tournament was held at UNI. Although the Panthers entered the tournament with high hopes, they were unable to perform as well as they wanted and finished seventh in the conference with a 29-27 record.

The following fall the Panthers were at home for just one event, the UNI-Dome Invitational. Prior to that they spent four straight weekends on the road during which they put together a strong 12-6 record. As they got ready for the UNI-Dome event, Bakley said, "We need to raise our game to another level so we can come out of this weekend 5-0, heading into spring." And the Panthers did exactly that, racking up wins over Mankato State, Grandview, Indian Hills CC, Augustana and Kirkwood CC. With two more wins the next weekend, UNI finished the fall exhibition season 17-6 and looked to the spring with high expectations.

As is often the case in college sports, the conference portion of the season proved to be more difficult than the non-conference schedule had been. Nevertheless, by early April, UNI had a 13-13 record and was 2-2 in conference play, including a 1-1 split with two-time defending conference champion Southwest Missouri State. The season

continued to unfold in the same fashion and by the end of April, UNI stood at 17-18 overall, 6-6 in the MVC. It finished the season 26-22 with a second-place finish in the MVC Tournament. Junior Jody Dean was named to the All-Midwest Region and MVC first teams and was a finalist for the MVC Player of the Year award. She batted .393 with 12 home runs. She was later drafted



Pitcher Jeannine Soncini

by the Virginia Roadsters of the Women's Pro Softball League in 1999.

UNI finished the 1998 fall season with an 8-5 record which Bakley assessed in an October 2 Northern Iowan interview, "We made a lot of progress. We've gotten a lot better. Our pitchers did really well and we have some good power hitters."

Stand-outs included pitcher Jeannine Soncini as well as hitters Jody Dean and Jackie Paulus. By the end of March and with UNI at 14-10, Soncini had shown herself to be a team leader on both offense and defense. She was leading the team in hitting with a .328 average and in wins as a pitcher with nine. She finished the season with 19 wins against nine losses and with a 2.25 ERA and 133 strikeouts. Another highlight was the performance of freshman infielder Lindsay Wood who was named the MVC's top newcomer after batting .323 overall and .469 in conference play. UNI completed the year with a very good 32-22 season and an excellent second-place finish in the MVC Tournament.

In October of 1999, UNI completed its fall season with a 10-4 record by winning five straight in the UNI-Dome Invitational and then opened the spring season with an early appearance in February at the Metrodome Classic in Minneapolis, where it went two-for-five. By the time it began the spring conference schedule versus Southern Illinois, UNI's record stood at 14-20. It split a doubleheader with the Salukis and then beat Evansville twice to open conference play. By mid-April, the Panthers had won seven consecutive games and were tied for first place in the MVC with defending champion Creighton. At that point, pitchers Soncini and Heidi Fromherz had combined to go 13-4 with a 1.73 ERA, while third-baseman Wood continued, as she had done during the prior season, to excel as a hitter. She had scored 36 runs on 54 hits, including nine doubles and six triples along with eight walks.

For the first time in history, the Panthers won a share of the MVC regular season title, tying with Evansville and Creighton. Bakley was selected the MVC Coach of the Year.

Bakley announced her retirement as head softball coach in July 2000 after leading the UNI program for 22 years and compiling a UNI record of 632-518-3. When adding in her Valley State College record, her overall career record of 691-552-3 ranked her as one of the winningest college softball coaches in the nation.

With Bakley's announcement, Dr. Gene Bruhn, her long-time assistant, also announced his retirement. The UNI team needed to find some new leadership for the fall 2000 season.

Coach Sara Hayes 2001-2002

Sara Hayes, a native of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., became the third softball coach at UNI. Hayes earned her anthropology degree from Notre Dame and played softball there from 1992-95. She was a two-time Notre Dame MVP and the 1995 Midwest College Conference Player of the Year. Following her playing days at Notre Dame, she served four years as an assistant coach at DePaul. Hayes would coach the UNI softball team for two seasons, compiling a 58-59 record.



Coach Sara Hayes

The goal for Hayes in her first year was to continue the success of Bakley who had led the Panthers to a first-place finish in the 2000 Missouri Valley Conference. The Panthers, however, struggled in the opener of the spring season at the Liberty Metrodome Classic in Minneapolis with a 1-6 record. UNI lost to Western Illinois 4-3 and 3-1, Minnesota 10-1, Wisconsin-Green Bay 5-2, and Louisville 4-0 and 4-2. It came back to win 10-1 over Wisconsin-Green Bay. The bright spots in the tournament were freshman shortstop Kimbee Plata hitting .500, including two homeruns; and senior Kristi Johnson contributing with four stolen bases and a .333 hitting average.

Following the struggles in the Classic, Hayes shared her coaching philosophy in the February 16, 2001, Northern Iowan. She believed a tough preseason schedule provided the players an opportunity to experience different situations and gain cohesion that strengthened them to step into the season with confidence. However, nine hits against Southern Mississippi were not enough to offset fielding errors in a 6-1 loss in the Mardi Gras Classic in Monroe, La.

The Panthers were hot in all areas of their game in the Southeast Missouri Classic in Cape Girardeau. Cara Graver had a 6-0 no-hit victory over Buffalo. There were no errors and the offense slammed seven hits and had six walks. UNI picked up its second win over South-

west Missouri State 5-4. Melinda McClintock pitched the win with 10 strikeouts. Plata and Beth Scheetz each went two-for-three at the plate. The Panthers came up short in the third game, losing to Western Kentucky.

Before the conference opener the Panthers were on a 10-game road trip in San Diego, Calif. They came away with a 7-3 record after beating Tulsa, Boston College, San Diego, and splitting a doubleheader with San Diego. The Panther losses were to Portland State, BYU and San Diego.

UNI went into the Missouri Valley Conference opener with a 13-12 record. The Panthers downed Southwest Missouri State in three games. McClintock pitched the first 3-1 win. The second win saw great pitching from Graver and a solid defense behind her. The third game was a 12-inning marathon with both McClintock and Graver handling the pitching. The game ended with a 12th-inning homer by UNI's Wendi Kragel.

The Panthers experienced a disappointing home stand against Iowa. The Hawkeyes downed the Panthers 7-0 and 4-1. The disappointments continued with three home games against Creighton. UNI couldn't overcome Creighton's fast start with six runs scored in the first inning. The Panthers continued on the losing trail, getting bested in three home games to Wichita State and then lost a doubleheader with Minnesota.

UNI came back to sweep a three-game series from Drake. Graver threw a strong game to win the first game. Julie Phillips relieved McClintock to win the second game and Graver came through with a strong pitching performance in the third game. Wood led the offensive charge for the Panthers with six hits in the series over the Bulldogs.

The Panther season ended with a 25-33 record, placing them fifth in the Missouri Valley Conference with a 13-14 record. The leading hitter for the season was Wood with a .331 average, including 58 hits and 13 doubles. Plata recorded a .315 batting average. McClintock led all pitchers with a 13-10 record and a 2.15 ERA. Graver had an 8-9 record with a 2.31 ERA.

Hayes was ready to "redefine UNI softball" in her second year at the helm. She was looking for Wood and Stacy Sampson to be team leaders. Vonya Olachnovitch, who had pitched for the Western Illinois team, replaced Jody Dean as a pitching coach. With the 2002

Bradley Invitational being held on the weekend of the tragic events of 9-11, all games were cancelled.

The Panthers were able to get their season underway by winning their own Panther Invitational. They won handily 8-0 over Minnesota State-Mankato and Kirkwood Community College with another 8-0 win and wrapped up their fall season with a 2-2 record at the Hawkeye Classic, defeating Drake and Iowa State and losing two games to Iowa. Hayes was encouraged with her young squad. She felt they offered great courage against a Hawkeye team that had gone to the WCWS the previous year.

Spring season opened with half of the 16-player roster new to the program. McClintock and Phillips returned as pitchers. Hayes said, "Although we have a great deal of youth and inexperience up the middle, we have increased our speed, athleticism and instinct."

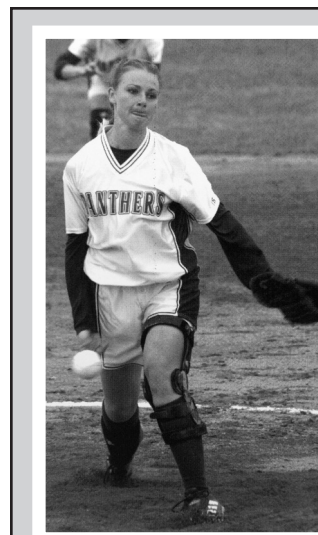
The Panthers made a strong showing at the Metrodome Classic, winning five games before losing in the semifinals. They downed Wisconsin-Green Bay 8-0 and Missouri-Kansas City 7-0 with Phillips and McClintock allowing just three hits in 13 innings of play. The offense was led by Wood and Claudia Sandoval. UNI continued the following day with strong hitting in wins over Northern Illinois, 1-0, and Minnesota 4-2. McClintock took both wins and came on the next day to defeat Western Illinois. Although Wood continued her hitting streak with a .556 average over six games, the Panthers couldn't muster enough runs to advance to the championship game.

UNI had another successful tournament at the Arizona Wildcat Invitational in Tucson. McClintock pitched a win over California State-Northridge and Wood went four-for-five at the plate. Phillips then pitched the win over San Jose State and a loss to powerful Arizona. McClintock pitched the win over Eastern Michigan and the Panthers finished the tournament defeating Drake, 7-5.

The Panthers struggled offensively in the Louisville Cardinal Invitational although Wood continued her offensive dominance at the plate, starting the fireworks with a grand slam homerun. McClintock pitched the 7-5 win over Louisville. In the second game, allowing only four hits and no runs, Northwestern defeated the Panthers. McClintock took the loss. Kent State downed the Panthers with Phillips pitching.

UNI came up with a huge win over Arizona State, 2-1, in San Jose, Calif. With the game tied at the end of the seventh inning, the international tie-breaker went into effect. Each team started the inning with a runner on second base. In the bottom of the ninth, with bases loaded, Wood smacked a single for the win over ASU which was ranked seventh nationally. McClintock pitched the win.

The Panthers were home for the Missouri Valley Conference opener. Phillips pitched a shutout over Drake with the support of 13 hits from her teammates. The Panthers split a doubleheader with Minnesota in a non-

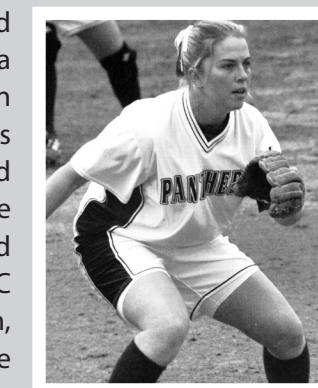


Malinda McClintock led the Panthers in nearly every statistical category on the mound in 2001 including: earned run average (2.15), innings pitched (169.2), appearances (34), wins (13), earned runs allowed (52), strikeouts (146), walks allowed (41) and shutouts (4).

Lindsay Wood

Lindsay Wood had a stellar four years as a Panther. She led the MVC in batting average, hits, runs scored, stolen bases, and was ranked second in home runs, runs batted in and triples. She won the MVC batting title as a freshman, sophomore and senior. She earned first team all-conference honors in each of her four years. Hayes said, "Her ability to do everything at the plate makes her the best offensive player in the conference and possibly an all-American."

Lindsay Wood was signed as a free agent by the Akron Racers of the National Softball league. She was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame in 2010.



conference contest. Wood continued her dominance at the plate, leading the league in three categories -- stolen bases, batting average (.460) and runs scored. However, the bats went cold against league-leading Illinois State, losing two games in a doubleheader. UNI ends the season with a 32-26 record.

Hayes left the program over the summer to become the head softball coach at Indiana University. She left UNI with a two-year record of 57-59. Her assistant coach, Christy Hebert, was named the new softball coach.

Coach Christy Hebert 2002-2007

Christy Hebert took over as head coach of the UNI softball team in the fall of 2002 following two years as the Panther assistant under Hayes. A Cedar Rapids, Iowa, native she was an all-American shortstop on the Iowa team and later played shortstop with the North Carolina Diamonds of the Women's Professional Softball League. She also served as an assistant coach at Northwestern two seasons.



Christy Hebert

The Panthers opened the 2003 season at the Metrodome Classic, one of five fall preseason tournaments. They posted a 3-3 record with wins over Western Illinois, Bradley and Wisconsin. Losses came at the hands of Drake, Tulsa and Northern Illinois. They fared better at a tournament in Houston, Texas with victories over Pittsburgh, Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston and Texas Southern. They lost in the championship game to Houston 6-1. Hebert felt the team gelled throughout this tournament.

UNI had another good showing at the Hillenbrand Wildcat Invitational in Tucson, Arizona with a 3-1 record. Wins were twice over San Diego State and Harvard. Its lone loss was to Long Beach State 1-0.

UNI opened conference play losing three games at Illinois State. It travelled to Drake for a three-game series, losing the first game and winning the next two. The Panthers handily routed Butler twice in non-conference play (8-4 and 14-7).



Play action with pitcher Julie Gerdes who pitched to all, but one batter; Jen Sieleman at 1st-base clinched the win with a fourth inning home run. Erin Strellner (#1) is ready at defense.

After 28 road games and a 17-11 record, the Panthers were ready to play on their home field. Everyone contributed in a series sweep over Indiana State. Good defense backed up the solid pitching of Philips and Julie Gerdes. UNI took another home game from Iowa 9-7 before it hit the proverbial brick wall, losing two games at Missouri State with poor hitting and fielding errors. Poor hitting continued to plague UNI, losing to Southern Illinois in a doubleheader. Although the season was a roller coaster for the Panthers, they ended with a 26-22 winning record.

In 2004, the Panthers returned all starters except for catcher Angela Higgins. Four new freshmen were added to the team. UNI kicked off the fall season winning games over two community colleges. According to Coach Hebert, the fall season is "to get the team



After an eleven inning marathon, the Panther team shows the joy of the win.

to mesh and to see what the freshmen can do at different positions." The team had a winning 3-2 record in its next outings. Two freshmen stood out in preseason play. Mandy Kumamoto from Santa Clarita, Calif., went five-of-seven at the plate. The other Californian, Krystan Reed, had a solid pitching performance. The team as a whole demonstrated a solid defensive effort.

In "The Battle of Iowa," UNI started the weekend with inconsistent hitting and made several errors in losses to Iowa and Drake. It came back the next day with a solid effort and defeated both Iowa and Iowa State. Phillips and McClintock pitched well both days.

The Panthers faced some tough pitching at the round-robin tournament in Houston. UNI dropped games to Baylor, Sam Houston State, and Texas A&M. The lone win was over Louisiana-Monroe with Gerdes pitching.

The Panthers did not start off well on their trip to Arizona. They were shut out in two games -- 8-0 to Indiana and 7-0 to Georgia Tech. They came back, however, to shut out North Texas State 6-0 and UTEP 3-0. Phillips had a strong pitching performance in both wins. Rachel Rogers was a hitting machine with two home runs and she went two-for-four in the North Texas win. The Panthers lost five games and won one in their play in Florida. They lost to Rhode Island, Miami (Ohio) and three games to Florida Atlantic. They shut out Manhattan College.

The MVC season opened against Southern Illinois, the preseason conference top ranked team. UNI couldn't get anything going at the plate and lost all three games. The pitching staff of Gerdes, McClintock and Phillips had been steady all season including these games. The team's problem was hitting. Runs were hard to come by, and even though hitting did improve with specific games, the Panthers ended the 2004 season with a disappointing 17-23 record.

The 2005 Panthers had some big shoes to fill having lost three solid pitchers from last year -- Gerdes, Phillips and McClintock were gone to graduation. Uju Ibekwe was the lone returning pitcher. Liz Adams, Stephanie Aguero and Amanda Hess were the new ones being added to the pitching staff.

With so many new faces the team was looking for some positive results from the fall preseason to carry it into the spring season. According to Hebert, the team had good chemistry in the fall season, although

it finished with a 5-7 record. She thought they gained some great experience for the spring season and saw strengths in hitting and pitching. The hitting consistency was shown by Tracy Davis, Nikki Ferden and Jamie Kelling. Hebert complemented Ibekwe and Hess for having a great fall pitching season.

UNI opened the fall season at the Metrodome Classic with a strong showing, defeating Drake, Wisconsin-Green Bay and Tulsa while losing two close games to Minnesota and Western Illinois. Davis and Hess earned all-tournament honors. Davis hit .438 in the tournament and Hess was flawless with a zero ERA in 15 innings of pitching.

Hits and runs were plentiful in several games during spring break. UNI downed Connecticut and San Jose State twice. It took nine innings to beat Southwest Missouri State 8-3 after losing in the first game 4-1. Adams and Ibekwe had great games from the circle. Erin Stiller had a slugfest and was the hero at the plate. UNI experienced another three-game sweep at the hands of co-league leading Creighton. Hebert said, "The team played hard but didn't have the polish they'd showed earlier this season."

The Panthers snapped their losing streak with a win over Iowa State. Hess pitched another solid game. King, Jesse Quade and Davis provided the offensive power. After the great showing against ISU, the Panthers fell hard with three losses to Evansville. The bright spot of the game was the strong hitting by Erin Strellner and Kelling. The Panthers rebounded to take two games from Bradley, with the first game (11-2) an offensive example of what they were capable of doing. The rebound was short lived however, as co-league leading Wichita State swept UNI in three games. Hess put it simply, saying, "It seems we don't want it as bad as the other team." This relatively inexperienced team finished the season with a 22-25 overall mark, thus improving from the previous season.

The Panthers began 2006 with the loss of two of their top hitters from last season. Strellner (.366 average, 23 RBI) and Davis (.302, 29 RBI) had graduated. Both players started all 47 games. Two strong hitters were returning, however -- Kelling with a .331 average and Ferden hitting .298 would be on hand to assist with their play at the plate. Three of the four pitchers were also returning, including Adams, Aguero and Ibekwe. Monica Wright would join the pitching staff. The pitch-

ers gave good performances at the Chicagoland Classic in Orland Park, Ill., but couldn't overcome defensive errors in a 1-3 losing record.

UNI returned from a 1-5 road swing during spring break only to find a very tough schedule during the first two weeks of conference play. UNI ended its losing streak, beating Creighton 8-6. Ibekwe earned the win after pitching the final five innings while Brittney Ruzicka, Aguero, Rogers and Morgan Paulson contributed offensively at the plate. The Panthers took another hit in non-conference play, losing to Iowa State and Nebraska.

Wichita State gave UNI two come-from-behind losses, 4-3 and 3-2. The losses were followed by a 6-1 win over Iowa State. Freshman pitcher Wright completed all seven innings. Paulson and Kelling were the spark plugs at the plate. With the Iowa State win, the Panthers were back in conference play hoping for more of the same, but they dropped a pair of 3-2 contests to Drake. UNI continued play splitting with South Dakota State. Ibekwe earned the win and multiple hits came from Aguero, Kelling, Ferden and Rogers.

Indiana State and Bradley both pinned a pair of losses on the Panthers. UNI lost a heartbreaker to Indiana State 1-0 in the bottom of the seventh inning. ISU won the second game 4-3 in eight innings. Kelley Papesh hit a ninth-inning home run in the third game against the Sycamores to give UNI a one-run victory. The season ended with a disappointing 12-38-1 record and a last-place finish in the MVC.

The Panthers expected to make a better showing in 2007. Some of their hopes were tied to a four-pitcher staff rotation with Adams returning and adding Ashley Lepley, Jen Larsen and Sarah Bakey. They also hoped to continue their strong defense from last year which had a .957 team fielding percentage, ranking them 10th in the nation even though their record wasn't the best.

Starting the fall season at home rather than on the road is always a favorable way to begin, so the Panthers opened up their 2007 season with the Ramada Inn UNI-Dome Softball Invitational. UNI finished the tournament with a 2-2 record with multiple hits from Gerking, Paulson and Ruzicka. Larsen pitched several solid innings in her pitching debut. UNI had another 2-2 record in Peoria, Ill. with Larsen and Lepley pitching for the wins.

It would seem the Panthers had mended their ways and had a strong showing with a 4-2 record at the Arkansas Invitational. Aguero continued her hot hitting streak and Lepley pitched her best game as a Panther. UNI dropped two games to the Drake Bulldogs, but finished the series with a 5-2 win. Both the pitchers and hitters were slow out of the gates, but the win over Drake gave the Panthers 13 wins, passing the win total in 2006.

UNI couldn't shake its struggles at the plate, however, dropping two games to Iowa State. League-leading Missouri State lost 6-1 to UNI but came back to take the second game 10-8. Larsen was at the top of her game pitching the win while Lepley, Gerking, Larsen and Aguero had multiple hits. North Dakota State split a doubleheader with UNI. Larsen hit a home run in each of the games giving her eight for the season.

UNI had a rough start with Wichita State, getting blanked in two-of-three games. Lepley's home run in the third game gave UNI the momentum at the plate giving them the 10-5 win. The Panthers took the first game of a doubleheader from Bradley 9-5 with home runs by Paulson, Papesh and Heather Tarter before dropping the second game 12-4 in six innings.

The conference-leading Southern Illinois Salukis swept the Panthers. SIU posted 46 hits, including eight home runs, extending its winning streak against the Panthers to 19 straight games dating back to 2001. The Panthers finished the 2007 season with a 19-31 record. Following recent disappointing years, Hebert resigned after five years as head coach with a 96-148-1 record. Assistant coach Tammy Utley also resigned. Hebert went on to serve as an assistant coach at Indiana University.

Coach Ryan Jacobs, 2008 to Present

Ryan Jacobs took over at the helm in 2008. Jacobs was a Cedar Rapids native and a 1999 graduate of UNI. He had a variety of baseball experiences as a college and professional player and as an assistant coach at Regis High School, Cornell College and UNI. From his baseball coaching role, Jacobs expanded



Coach Ryan Jacobs

his coaching skills and became the head softball coach at Cedar Falls High School in 2004. He talked about the carryover from baseball and at the same time how very difficult the transition was. "I was motivated to learn as much as I could about the game of softball, the evolution of the game, and apply my baseball game knowledge in as many places as I could. It was the spring of 2004 when my softball coaching career began, and I hired Julie Gerdes as an assistant who would help bring everything together. It would be her knowledge of softball, my knowledge of fundamentals, and our competitiveness to outwork other coaches that would make it such a great match." His hard work has paid off as his reputation for being an offensive-minded softball coach has gained him respect from players and other softball coaches.

Jacobs had an advantage stepping into the UNI job. He had gotten to know several UNI players through Iowa high school softball. Jacobs said, "Knowing the schools and programs this core group of players came from, I knew it wouldn't take long for them to buy into our new system and attitude about the program."

In 2008, Jacobs began his coaching era with all but one starter returning from the previous season. The Panthers opened the preseason schedule at the Chicagoland Classic. They finished 3-1, defeating South Suburban Community College, Kankakee Community College and Illinois. Their only loss was to Indiana.

The Panthers hosted the second annual Ramada UNI-Dome Classic. Senior Lepley pitched the 7-5 win over the Dayton Flyers. UNI lost a close one in eight innings, 4-3 to South Dakota State. They came back in the next game to down the Jackrabbits behind Lepley's strong pitching. The final game was a win over North Dakota State, with Bakey throwing a shutout and allowing just three hits.

UNI continued strong indoor play at the Metrodome Classic, pulling off an extra-inning win against Tennessee Tech and wins over Western Illinois, Arkansas and Minnesota. With their bats failing them, the Panthers fell to Iowa by one in the final game.

The National Invitational Softball Tournament in San Jose, Calif. was not friendly to UNI. It went one-for-four with a win over San Jose State and losses to Nevada, Boston College, Tennessee State and California. The bright spot was Larsen's pitching and hitting.

The Panthers moved to the Hospitality House Classic in Martin, Tenn., finishing with a 2-3 record. Minnesota handed UNI a 1-0 loss. Larsen pitched well, allowing only one run on six hits. Indiana State took the second game and UNI lost to Dartmouth 8-5. UNI came through with two wins over Ball State and a win over Tennessee-Martin. Larsen and Lepley not only pitched these wins, they provided the power at the plate.

The women opened at the Jayhawks Classic in Lawrence, Kan., with two wins. Jaye Hutcheson pitched an 8-5 win over Kansas. Melissa Tillett pitched the 5-1 win over North Dakota State. UNI hit a grand slam in the victory.

The Panthers opened a five-game road trip by splitting two games with Iowa State -- a 6-3 win and a 6-3 loss. They experienced good hitting in both games. The always tough Creighton Bluejays took all three games from UNI by scores of 4-2, 11-6 and 1-0. In spite of the losses, several players had good showings at the plate. The long balls were hit by Larsen with a solo home run and Michelle Phillips, who had two home runs and a double.

Several rain-outs and cancellations shortened the season. UNI came out ready to play against the Nebraska Cornhuskers and broke its 44-game home non-conference winning streak. Bakey threw the 2-1 win for the Panthers. Not liking for the results of the first game, the Cornhuskers came away with a 6-2 victory in the second game.

Drake took three games from UNI, 10-1, 15-7 and 11-10. The pitchers struggled in all three games even though the bats were strong. This was an especially frustrating series of losses as Jacobs felt the team was more focused on not losing than on winning.

After losing the series with Drake, the Panthers came back strong, defeating Wisconsin in two games. In the first game, Lepley allowed no runs on two hits with Bakey throwing the final two innings for a 3-0 win. Brittney Balduf dished out a three-run homer.

The Panthers pulled off a 7-0 win over the Missouri State Bears in a cold and snowy game. Larsen had a stellar pitching performance giving up three hits and no runs. The women went up against a very tough North Dakota State team with two wins behind the solid pitching of Larsen, Lepley and Bakey.

UNI was eliminated from post-season play, however. Wichita State took two-of-three games from

the Panthers. They finished the 2008 season with a 20-28 record, 5-16 in the MVC.

The 2009 season opened with the third annual Ramada Inn UNI-Dome Invitational. The hopes were high with the majority of the 2008 team returning. UNI pulled off a convincing win over Dayton, 14-6. It recorded an 11-9 win over South Dakota State with Larsen relieving Eranne Daugherty and Bakey for the final two innings. The Panther sluggers were Keiper, Gerking, Larsen and Balduf. Although Larsen pitched a solid game in relief, the Panthers lost to Nebraska 2-1.

Next up the Panthers rolled over Western Illinois with strong play at the plate and another great pitching performance from Larsen. Next was a loss to Minnesota. A win over Wisconsin-Green Bay was bolstered by Machovec who went two-for-four at the plate. UNI downed conference foe Drake 3-2.

UNI went 4-1 in the Metrodome Softball Classic on a combination of strong hitting and solid pitching. The third tournament of the early season was the LSU Purple and Gold Classic in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Panthers had a 3-2 record behind the outstanding hitting of Larsen who also turned in three solid pitching performances.

UNI took two-of-three games from one of the elite teams, 24th-ranked Southern Illinois, winning 3-2 and 6-5 and losing 4-0. Home runs by Gerking and Daugherty provided the spark. The Panthers moved into first place in the conference after two wins over Iowa State. Their 20-8 record already matched the number of wins from the previous year.

The Panthers had moments of brilliance, such as the 9-0 and 8-0 dominance over Wisconsin, or the 5-0 and 1-0 wins over Evansdale. And maybe there were losses that should have shown up on the other side of the ledger, such as the 9-8 loss to Bradley.

The Panthers viewed the 2009 season to be an historic one at this time of the season. They had posted a 28-14 overall record which was their best since 2002 and they posted a 10-6 conference record which was their most wins since 2004. The team ranked first in the MVC in batting average, slugging percentage, runs scored, hits, doubles, triples, home runs and RBIs. Papesh ranked first in the conference with 12 home runs and Balduf second with 10. The one weak spot according to Jacobs was the team's growing number of errors.

Larsen was the surprise in the pitching circle. She had a 1.69 ERA for 2009 compared to a 3.81 last year.

UNI lost in the first round of the MVC Tournament and ended the 2009 season with a record of 34-22, 15-11 in the MVC. The team recorded its best record since 1996. Jacobs stated, "Up to this point in my time at UNI the highlight has to be the 2009 season and having six players selected to the all-MVC teams. We had three first-team selections in Larsen, Machovec and Gerking. We also had three second-team selections in Mackenzie Daigh, Papesh and Balduf." It is impressive to see the improvement in the team GPA over the last four years, too, from a 3.08 GPA to a very respectable 3.36 GPA in 2010.



An all-around player, Jen Larsen was capable of hitting the ball to a strategic placement in the outfield as well as pitching a complete game.

The Panther women opened the 2010 season in the UNI-Dome Classic with sizzling bats. They won four of their five games over Dayton (10-0 in five innings), North Dakota (13-6), Valparaiso (7-2) and South Dakota State (10-1). Their only loss came at the hands of Wisconsin-Green Bay (5-4). Larsen pitched the first game and Livi Abney went two-for-three with two home runs. Then it was Hutcheson's turn and she picked up her first win of the season. The offense continued strong with 12 hits in the NDSU game and 11 hits against Valparaiso. Jacobs contributes the improved offense this year to the strength and conditioning program his team followed and also being mentally prepared.

UNI continued to roll offensively at the Austin Peay Tournament in Clarksville, Tenn. It won four-out-of-five games defeating Austin Peay and Tennessee State in five innings and twice defeating Indiana University-Purdue.

The Arizona State DeMarini Challenge gave the Panthers a chance to have encounters with top-ranked teams in which they lost four-of-five games. Second-ranked Arizona beat the Panthers 4-1, Samford won 11-7, ninth-ranked Arizona State won 10-0 in five



Rachel Gerking

Mackenzie Daigh

Coach Ryan Jacobs interviewed two of his highly recruited players, Rachel Gerking (left) and Mackenzie Daigh, regarding their choice to attend UNI and play softball. Gerking chose UNI over several other schools because she felt a good fit with the current players. She also saw the potential to make an instant impact on the team. She liked the campus size and the reasonable distance from home. Although Daigh was committed to go to Yavapai Community College in Prescott, Ariz., her visit to the UNI campus at the request of Jacobs won her over. She liked the size of campus, distance from home, facilities and family atmosphere. She saw the UNI coaches as developing student-athletes and also the mentoring of athletes to be better people.

innings and Creighton came out on top 4-0. UNI got its only victory over Idaho State with Larsen throwing the shutout.

Throughout the tournament, the Panthers were plagued by errors and runners left on base. UNI took on another tough team later in the season, losing to third-ranked Missouri. It continued the slump in the batter's box and on the mound in a 3-0 series shutout by Illinois State. The pitchers gave up 17 hits in game one, 13 in game two and seven hits in the night cap. Jacobs said, "Illinois State was just one step ahead of us the entire game and they made some great plays."

UNI snapped the losing streak in a win over South Dakota State and continued through the season with big wins over Evansville, Bradley and Nebraska. The team wasn't as successful against Drake's multiple homerun fest and games with Creighton, but at the end

of Jacobs' second year at the helm, the team boasted a 28-24 overall record, 13-12 in the MVC.

As to what happens next, that history is yet to be written.

Swimming at UNI

Jim Hall, Caitlin Kregel, Carol Cooper, Glen Henry

This chapter is about swimming at the University of Northern Iowa. In addition, it is a dedication to the man who put it in its place as a sustainable sport. He didn't start the swimming program, but he is credited with its viability and development. It is, therefore, appropriate to dedicate this chapter to "The Coach for All Seasons", the architect of UNI intercollegiate swimming, Coach Glen Henry.

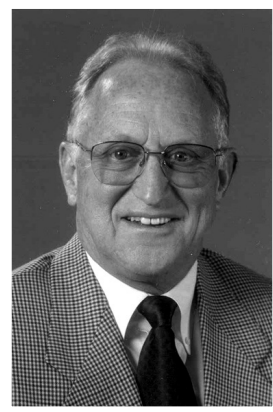
Glen "Bullet" Henry

With 15 years of coaching the men's team to his credit and 25 years devoted to the aquatics program, Glen Henry epitomizes UNI Swimming and Diving.

He was the very first, and perhaps the most successful, swim coach at UNI, yet he had no formal training in coaching. In a personal interview, Coach Henry described his background. Although he was raised around pools and was active in both the Red Cross and the Amateur Athletic Union programs, he never swam on a high school or college team. The college he attended, Chadron State in northwest Nebraska, didn't have a swim team, so he participated in football and basketball. It did have a pool, though, and since the school and its staff were small, his background in swimming and the Red Cross certification allowed him to teach swimming and diving classes as an undergraduate. He also coached an intramural swim team, which won its championship.

Henry decided that he liked coaching and teaching so much that upon graduation, he took a coaching/teaching position (that didn't involve swimming) at a junior high school in Wyoming. Before long, he received word that Chadron State wanted him to come back for his Master's degree along with being a graduate assistant in football. With a little encouragement from his wife, Karen, he returned and when a coach was needed for Chadron State's newly-formed swim program, he was chosen.

After earning his Master's degree in Physiology, Henry went searching for a job that involved coaching



The Early Days of Women's Swimming

As early as 1921 the Teachers College swimming team won an invitational meet at Iowa City. Miss Lulu Sweigard was the coach. Scores for this first competition were: Teachers College 28, the University of Iowa 27 and Coe College 17. Four women trained intensively for three weeks prior to the meet so they would be ready

both football and swimming, which according to him, "this was a little bit of a different breed of cat." He ended up at SCI, where he immediately began educating himself further on how to coach a college swim team by attending clinics and reading books.

Henry felt he could have had more success with the swim team his first five years at UNI, but swimming didn't command his full attention. He was expected to devote much of his energies to football where he was an assistant coach. It was in 1971, when he dropped his job as an assistant football

coach, that the swim team became a force to be reckoned with. That season, the team took the conference lead over favored Mankato State and held the title for the next six years.

With a UNI career men's record of 72-58 and nine conference crowns, as well as two second-place finishes, Henry's tenure as head coach was definitely a successful one, especially when you consider that he started with absolutely nothing. Along with sending numerous swimmers to nationals, he has coached 35 all-Americans.

When he retired from coaching in 1982, he assumed the position of Director of Aquatics for the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. He also taught aquatics classes. Henry retired in 2004. He remains a Panther fan today. The new UNI pool was named in his honor in 2007. Glen F. Henry was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame in 2002.

-Phil Luebke (1990). *A Brief History of the Men's Swimming Team at the University of Northern Iowa.*

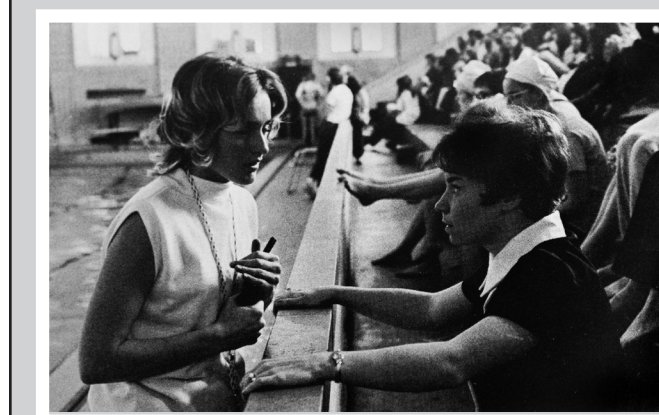
to represent their university. In 1922 seven women worked with Miss Sweigard, with four being selected to compete in the state meet at Iowa City. In this meet the final scores were Iowa 34, Teachers College 18, Burlington Junior College 6 and Cornell College 5.

In 1925 seven TC women traveled to the Waterloo East pool. They swam in what was known as a telegraphic meet sponsored by Iowa. Events were swum and the times for each event were telegraphed to the other competing teams to determine who had the best times and what score was finally accrued. While probably not the best way to have a swim meet, it seemed to work then and all apparently enjoyed the spirit of the competition. These early years marked the very beginning of women's swimming.

The Official Beginning of Women's Swimming

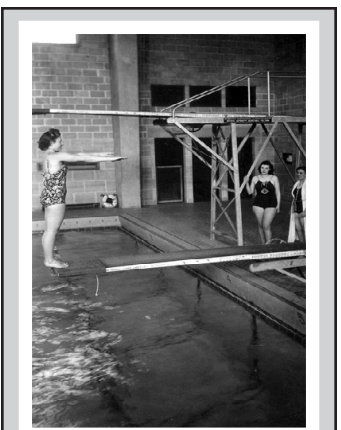
Intercollegiate women's swimming officially began with the 1972-73 academic year and was the fourth sport to be offered for women at UNI. Diving was added during the 1973-74 season. Miss Claudia Ferguson was the first coach. The first meet was held Feb. 26 with a team of 24 Panthers winning a home meet against Iowa, 67-28. Graceland College visited on March 4 and Teachers College won that meet, 61-34. Additionally, there was a triangular at Iowa State. The Cyclones won with 84 points. UNI came in second with 55 points and Graceland finished with 22.

The pool the women used was in the Women's Gym (later named the East Gym). It was built in 1938 under the auspices of President Franklin Roosevelt's

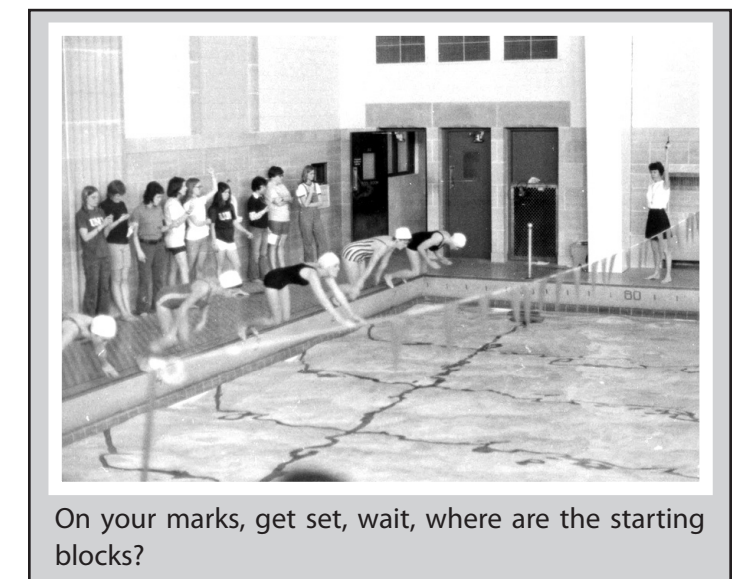


The starter is visiting with Coach Ferguson in the Women's Gym pool.

Works Project Administration. The pool was designed as an excellent teaching facility with less area of deep water than a usual pool. It was 30 yards long and 36 feet wide, which made it five yards too long to host an official meet; competition pools were set at 25 yards. And, with only five lanes in width, using the East Gym pool did cause problems with specific events since



The 1-meter and 3-meter boards were options for divers.



On your marks, get set, wait, where are the starting blocks?

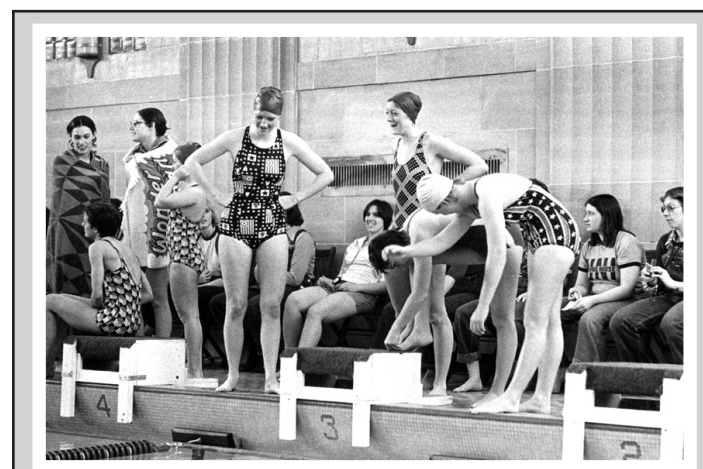
teams normally had two swimmers in each of the individual events.

The East Gym pool had two diving boards, a 3-meter and 1-meter board. Cement bleachers were built to allow spectators a place to sit to observe meets, as well as a common place for swimming instruction. At that time there were no locker rooms or weight room, although some weight work was done on the concrete bleachers. (A note could be added at this time. The East Gym pool was removed when the building was refurbished in 2005 to accommodate other academic needs. The pool area was designed to make way for a study area, but those cement bleachers; well, they're still there.)

For the first two years, swimming meets held in the East Gym pool were held without starting blocks, lane lines, or backstroke flags. To make certain that the

back stroke swimmers did not hit the wall with their head, volunteers would stand over the end of the pool and wave a towel over the water. Starting blocks were later inherited from Price Laboratory School and in 1975 lane lines were purchased. Initially there were no team swim suits, but that was rectified when suits were acquired in 1976. If the expression, "living on a shoestring," has any merit at all, it best describes the conditions surrounding the early years for women's swimming and later with diving, when it was added as an additional intercollegiate sport for women in 1973.

Tryouts were held before each season. All swimmers were walk-ons as recruiting was prohibited by the rules established by the State Division of Girls and Women Sports (DGWS), later known as the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAIAW). Practices were from 5-6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and early mornings on select days. Usually there were 15-20 swimmers with a wide variance in skill level and experience.



Tryouts were the common practice to acquire a team. The women came with different levels of talent and experience, but their successes became noteworthy.

As for their counterparts, few Iowa colleges had intercollegiate swimming and there was no common season among colleges and universities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois or Iowa, which made scheduling competition quite difficult. The decision was made to establish an intercollegiate swimming/diving season from Nov. 27 through the month of February with practice time from 5-6 p.m. Because the home pool was the dimension that it was, that one factor made scheduling home meets nearly impossible.

The 14 women that made up the 1973 team swam at Augustana College, losing 70-39. In the second meet of the season the Panthers tied Iowa for first place in a quadrangular meet; UNI and Iowa both finished with 75 points. Augustana ended with 71 and Graceland finished last with 46 points. The Panthers competed at Northwestern University against the College of Du Page, Principia College, the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, and Northern Illinois University. The season ended with a home triangular meet against Grinnell and Iowa State. Carol LeBeau was the lead swimmer for the Panthers.

Coach Ferguson stepped away from her coaching duties at the end of the 1973 season and Carol Cooper was recruited to become the second coach for women's swimming.

Following the ascribed philosophy that the university had for women's athletics at that time [We are exposing them to a rewarding educational experience in intercollegiate competition], and believing it to be the right philosophy for the novice years of women's athletics, Coach Cooper wanted to involve the women at UNI in her sport. As a result, she placed the following advertisement in the **What's Up??** section in the Oct. 1, 1974 *Northern Iowan*.

Women's Swim Team – There will be an organizational meeting for all women interested in participating in intercollegiate swimming and diving Monday, Oct. 7 at 3 p.m. in the Women's Pool, Room 22, Women's Gym. Questions – Contact Miss Cooper at 273-2601.

With Coach Cooper at the helm, she found the majority of meets during her initial years away from the home pool at schools such as Luther, Kearney State in Nebraska, South Dakota, South Dakota State, Southwest Minnesota State, Iowa, Iowa State, Grinnell, Northern Illinois and Northwestern. For in-state meets, university cars were used with faculty from the Department of Physical Education serving as the drivers/chaperones. When the team had to travel any great distances, then a single van was made available and within four years, UNI vans became common place for travel.

There were 15 swimmers and divers on Coach Cooper's 1974-75 team. The season opened with a win at the Luther College Invitational. The final scores were self-telling: UNI 95, Iowa 90, Grinnell 81, Luther 67 and Augustana of South Dakota 20. Freshmen Kerry

Shanahan and Ann Foss supported LeBeau, who continued to be one of the most productive swimmers on the team. Pat Stub, who was the first diver to represent UNI in competition, won the 1-meter event. Said Coach Cooper, "It was a pleasant surprise; we found we had strength in numbers and our added depth made the difference. Pat Stub's diving performance was certainly one of the key factors."

During the same year at Northern Illinois, UNI took third in a triangular with George Williams College and NIU. UNI won a triangular over Iowa and Luther with Foss, LeBeau, and Cheri Muntz leading the way. They then lost a home meet to Iowa, 81-48. UNI took second at the Grinnell Carnival Relays and the final meet of the season was a dual loss to Grinnell, 69-53. With swimmers coming in from much improved high school programs, UNI swimming records fell throughout the season.

1975-76 results included a third at the Luther Invitational; an away loss to Iowa, 88-41; beating Luther at home 71-40; losing at home in a double dual with Nebraska, 91-36, and Northern Illinois 85-45; losing at Grinnell 83-38; and finishing seventh of nine teams at the Grinnell Invitational. It was this year that the University of Iowa hosted the first ever state meet for intercollegiate women's swimming.

In 1976-77, UNI began by hosting a pentathlon in which Luther, Grinnell, South Dakota State, and Kearney State competed. UNI later took fourth in the Luther Invitational and lost to Grinnell, 79-52, in a dual meet. It won another dual before taking fifth at the IAIAW state meet in Iowa City. The Panthers ended their season by winning a dual against Cornell College 73-45. During the 1976-77 season, six swimmers qualified for the IAIAW Regionals and traveled to Lincoln, Neb. for the meet.

The 1977-78 Panther team had 21 younger swimmers. Kaley Vandeventer was one of the strong freshman additions and because of swimmers like her, most of the meets were close. The swimmers lost by one point in their opening meet at Kearney State, and then won at home against Cornell, 81-32. The Panthers took fourth at the Luther Invitational and beat Luther in a home dual, 67-54. A home loss came to Wisconsin-La Crosse, 69-53. The Panthers finished fifth at the IAIAW Regionals.

The 1978-79 women started out their season by beating Kearny State at home, 82-47. They then went on to beat Grinnell 66-47 and Luther 81-31 in dual meets. The Panthers took first at the Luther Invitational, lost 83-48 in a dual at South Dakota and took third at the Southwest Minnesota State University Invitational. Seven swimmers qualified for regionals. Vandeventer qualified in the 200, 400, and 500 yard free style and the 100 yard IM.

In 1978, President John Kamerick let it be known that athletic scholarships were to be offered to women's athletics. However, it should be noted that swimming and diving received only one scholarship, which could be given to one person or divided amongst team members.

The 1979-80 team started with a sixth-place finish at the Wisconsin-La Crosse Invitational. Cindy Jergens, a graduate of Cedar Falls High School, joined the team and added strength to the lineup. Kathy Pfeiffer was another strong addition to an already strong team. UNI beat Grinnell and Luther each, 84-52; won the Luther Invitational, placed second at the Pioneer Relays, beat Augustana 63-42, finished second at the Grinnell Relays, and defeated South Dakota in a home-and-home schedule, 88-50 and 79-50. This was one of the most successful seasons to date for women's swimming and diving. At the end of the season, however, Cooper resigned as coach to allow more time for her teaching duties.

The Glen Henry Era for Men's and Women's Swimming

Just like all things in their infancy, the UNI swimming program had a rough start. In August of 1966 Glen Henry was named the head men's coach for the new State College of Iowa men's swim team. Schools from the North Central Conference had been discussing the addition of some new athletic programs, so SCI decided to create a men's swim team on a trial basis.



Coach Glen Henry

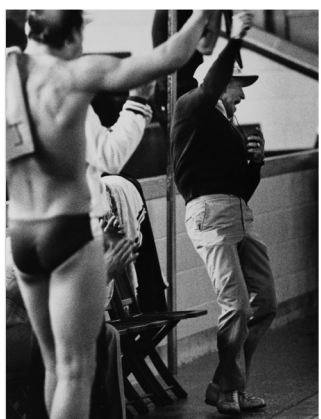
Although 16 men went out for the team, only half were able to compete due to the freshman ineligibility rule. Of the half that could compete, the experience was limited. Only one-fourth of the team had any kind of competitive experience, and of that fourth there were no divers or butterflyers. Along with the experience of the team, or lack thereof, came the need for pool facilities. There was only the one pool in the Women's/East Gym and it wasn't regulation, and no functional pool in the Men's Gym. As a result, for the first four years of the program, home swim meets were held at Price Laboratory School.

In the beginning, the men's team finished with an unassuming 0-6 record its first season. The next year came with a university name change to the current University of Northern Iowa. Maybe this sparked energy because the Panthers recorded their first win and freshmen now became eligible.

Improvement continued into Henry's third season with the first unofficial North Central Conference championship. In the fourth year the team seemed to be exiting the awkward teenage stage with the first winning season on record. With the 1970-1971 season



"In the West Gym Pool, everyone on our team would take bets on which divers on the opposition would end up with a bloody or broken nose. The pool was maybe 7 1/2 feet deep." Roy Fielding- 1974



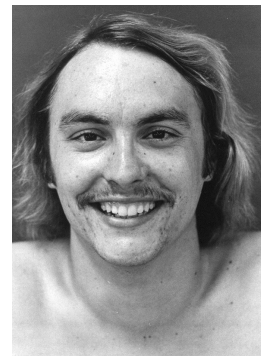
It was not unusual to find Coach Henry in a jubilant mood at swim meets as his swimmers always strove for personal best times and a win. Coach Henry had a knack to get the most out of his athletes.

came some big changes. The Men's West Gym Pool had been renovated to accommodate swim meets. No longer would meets be held at a high school, but rather in a university designated facility. And the men's team had its first Division II NCAA national qualifier in Larry Lampkin, who qualified in the 100-yard backstroke.

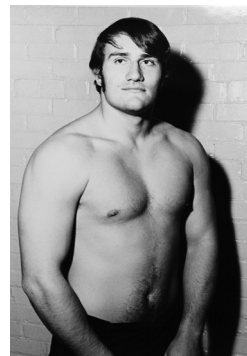
The 1972 men's team recorded its first official conference title and for the next six seasons the men would be conference champions, with many of the swimmers and divers making it to the NCAA Championships. Over 30 swimmers and divers earned all-American status.

One swimmer that stood out during the early 1970's was Bill Fowler. "Bill was a member of the 1971-75 teams. He came to UNI as a state champion in the 200- and 400-freestyle. He qualified for nationals all four years and was a four-time all-American. He was by far, without a doubt, the most talented swimmer to ever get in our pool," remarked Coach Henry. "He could do everything—everything! He still holds a spot on UNI's all-time Top Five in the 50, the 1000, and the 1650." Fowler was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame with the 1992 class.

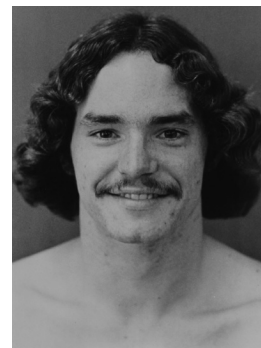
Roy Fielding (1970-73), Mark Onstott (1971-75) and Kevin Meachum (1974-78) were also inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame -- Fielding in 2007, Onstott



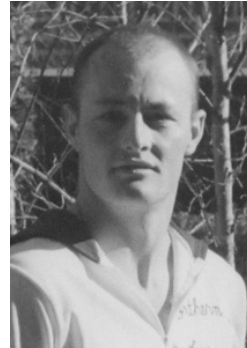
Bill Fowler



Roy Fielding



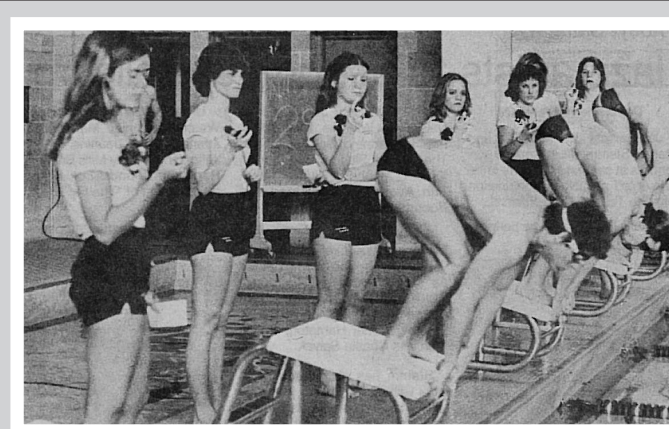
Mark Onstott



Kevin Meachum

in 2009, and Meachum in 2011. Each left their mark on the men's swimming dominance.

The men's team was doing exceptionally well, but with the loss of key swimmers through graduation, the streak ended abruptly when the conference alignment changed to the Mid-Continent Conference for the 1978-79 season. It was during this time frame when the competition pool was changed to the East Gymnasium. The pool had previously been 30 yards long, but with the installation of a bulk-head, the pool could now hold competition at the 25-yard regulation length.



"The Pantherettes (the swim meet timers) were the greatest asset to our team in the '60s and '70s." Roy Fielding-1974

In 1980, the UNI Athletics Department switched from Division II to Division I for all sports. Unfortunately for the women's swim team, Cooper had resigned to teach full-time within the physical education department. And with the loss of Cooper, it seemed only natural that Coach Henry should assume the coaching duties for both the men's and women's swimming and diving programs.

In his first year as the women's coach, Lynne Siefert and Cindy Jergens qualified for the national championships held in Moscow, Idaho. However, the strain of trying to coach both teams and follow both to different swim meet competitions proved to be near impossible and forced a change. Coach Henry would only coach both teams for one year after which Jeff Boss became the men's head coach and Henry continued to coach the women's team.

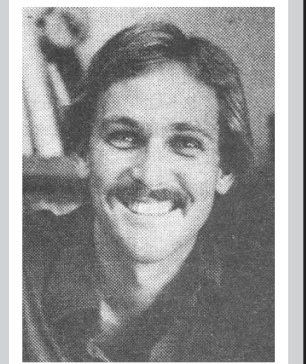
Boss had been assisting Coach Henry during his final year as the men's coach and had become acquainted with the team before he took over as head coach.



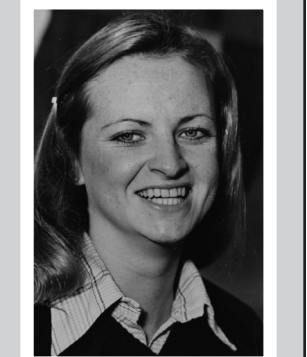
Coach Henry with assistant coach Jeff Boss and the combined men's and women's swim team. Boss would eventually take over the men's swimming program and Henry would stay with the women's program.

However, the team had just gone through a difficult division change and it was facing a rebuilding process. In addition to the division change, UNI was adjusting to the conference change as well. It takes time to build a program to face these changes and Coach Boss worked hard to bring his team to the front of the conference standings; yet the Panther men remained in last place at both conference and championship meets.

With the men's and women's coaching change in place, Coach Henry would remain as the women's swimming coach for one more year before retiring from coaching at the end of the 1982 season. Athletics Director Stan Sheriff commented about Coach Henry's retirement, "The University hates to see Glen retire. He has done an excellent job within the framework of limited budgets. But



Jeff Boss was the men's swim coach from 1981-83.



Sauna Thomaswick was the women's coach for the 1982-83 season.



With the shot from the starting gun, the swimmers are off the starting blocks in a race against the clock. After the completion of one race, there is another race, another practice and another lap to swim.

we also feel that Jeff Boss, who took over for Glen in the men's program, is doing a fine job and we're sure Shauna will carry on with the same dedication and enthusiasm."

Shauna Thom-
aswick was hired to replace Coach Henry as the women's swim coach. However, she and Boss would only coach for one additional year before they both stepped aside to pursue other opportunities.

The next phase of UNI swimming began with the hiring of Jim Hall and Susan Stodghill in 1983-84.

She would only stay to coach for two years after which Hall took over all of the coaching responsibilities for both teams. One can imagine that coaching both men's and women's swimming with upwards of 60 swimmers was quite a challenge. The road was slow, but in time the seasons improved. It took time before the swimmers could challenge for conference titles. There still were no scholarships for the men's program and only two available for the women. Still, and in part due to the coaching staff, each year was filled with many



Susan Stodghill coached the women through the 1983-85 seasons.

Jim Hall

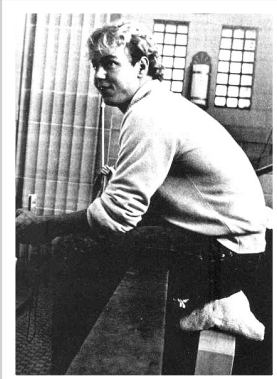
"As a high school prep in McHenry, Ill., Hall competed in swimming and water polo. He attended Eastern Illinois University (EIU) which was in the same conference as UNI. He competed in both the distance and sprint events in both butterfly and freestyle. He was a six-time NCAA All-American from 1979-1981 in six different events. He was also a member of the Illinois All-State Collegiate Team in the same years. He still holds EIU's 500 free-style record and the 800 free relay record. He received his Bachelor's degree in Physical Education and took the job of assistant coach at EIU (1982-1983) while working towards his Master's.

"When Hall came to UNI, he was somewhat familiar with the program and some of the swimmers, having competed and coached in the same conference. His first year here, he only posted a 2-6 duel record, but two six-year-old school records were broken. By 1986, he was entrusted with coaching both the men's and women's teams. Although the trek was slow, he brought both programs up to a new level -- quite an achievement in a competitive conference built on 'full-ride' swimmers. Ironically, the team that UNI has been beating at the conference meet is Hall's alma mater, EIU. His efforts were recognized at the 1988 Midwest Championships, where he was named Midwest Coach of the Year." - Phil Luebke (ibid)

Hall was selected the Mideast Coach of the Year in 1996 and 2000. He is currently teaching within the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services and is working on his doctoral degree.

school records and always a very competitive team that reflected the Panther spirit.

One very significant highlight worth noting during Hall's earlier years can be found in Mary McCuskey. McCuskey was UNI's first Gateway Conference champion, which she attained in 1989. She was later selected to the Gateway's All-Decade Team. She talks about the 1992 team as a year when the team came together. Eighteen school records were broken, 16 at the



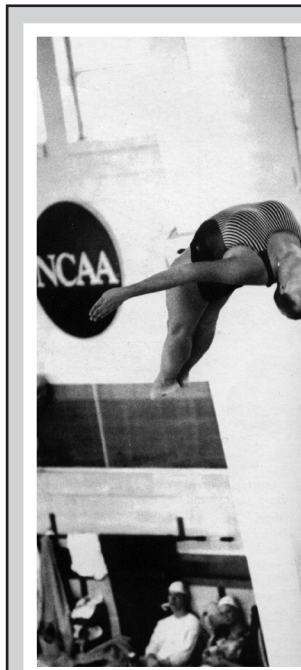
"One great memory was in 1992 when we beat Iowa State at home. The Iowa State coach completely underestimated us and it was purely a night that was awesome!" Shannon Bunger-Closson



Mideast Classic Championship. Phil Luebke reacted to the year's success as, "this team having more togetherness and team-ness than other teams we competed against." McCuskey and diver Heather Gross agreed. "We were always cheering for each other." Luebke's relay teams set records in the 200 free relay and the 200 medley relay. Gross set records in both the one-meter and three-meter diving.

The women's team beating Iowa State in 1992 was another highlight that should be remembered. Hall credited the team's success to the swimmers' and divers' attitudes. "These kids are out here because they want to swim," he said.

"The thing I guess that sticks out in my mind is that it was part of a tipping point; a milestone; a transformation that was all part of the UNI experience that I wouldn't give up for anything. Remembering UNI is remembering swimming there. I know that everyone has these changing experiences when they head off to college, but the hard work, fellowship, friendships, competition and health of the whole experience is something that I am still grateful for - I did a lot of growing up there. I'm



Heather Gross showing her form off the 3-meter board at the Mideast Classic Championship.

not being overdramatic when I say the whole experience provided friendships and developed character that I will carry throughout the rest of my life." - Jim Beal 1992

The men too made tremendous strides when Marc Long became UNI's first Senior National Qualifier. The UNI Sports News release tells the story. "Northern Iowa freshman swimmer Marc Long (Cedar Falls, Iowa) will participate this week (March 26-29) in the U.S. Swimming Senior Nationals in Orlando, Florida. Long, the first Panther to ever qualify for the meet, earned his entry into the national meet by recording an effort of: 50.51 in the 100 butterfly at the Midwest championship, March 6-8 in Chicago, Illinois. Long's time was a new UNI school record, shattering teammate Todd Warth's school record mark of 52.68 set a year ago. The UNI freshman also was the Panthers' only league champion in the Association of Mid-Continent Universities (AMCU-8) meet, which is held simultaneously with the Midwest Championships.

"The Senior Nationals include high school and college swimmers ages 21 and under. Long's effort at the Midwest Championships came very close to the NCAA championship qualifying standard."

Following Long's success, Jacob Stall, from Bettendorf, was another Senior National qualifier that just missed qualifying for the Olympic Trials by one-hundredth of a second in 1996. The men's team captured the Mideast Championships title in 1996, suggesting that the team was ready to return to the successes of previous teams.

"Having the East Pool and coaches' office right there near the center of campus was great. In-between classes you could stop by and hang out in the lobby, the balcony area, or in good weather, on the steps outside. There was almost always other swimmers there doing the same thing. And the old couches upstairs were a great place to take a cat-nap between classes at the height of the season." Phil Luebke (ibid)





"I was never a part of a fraternity, but I have to believe that being on the swim team at UNI was a lot like that -- maybe better. Most of my friends from college were on the swim team. When we weren't training, competing or studying, we were hanging out with other swimmers. The fact that there were no scholarships (for the men, anyway) meant that we were all doing this because we wanted to, and there was no animosity about who was on scholarship and who wasn't. I think the fact that the men and women practiced together, traveled to meets together and shared the same coaches added an element of fun as well." Phil Luebke (ibid)

Moving into the new Wellness Recreation Center eight-lane, 25-yard facility in 1999 was a huge boost to the program. The Wellness Center was the latest building project focusing on a broader wellness theme and swimming was very much a part of that theme. However, with few scholarships to recruit key swimmers, most team members were from Iowa and it proved difficult to move up within the now Missouri Valley Conference. There are countless wonderful memories and exceptional performances within this time frame and team members always reminisce about the bus trips, the fun times at the pool and the Florida training trips whenever they come back to campus.

"Swimming at UNI was filled with memories in and out of the pool. Some of my fondest memories include: pre-race rituals of nail painting and carb loading; Halloween parties where roller skates were optional; practical jokes between the girls' and guys' teams and nicknames that lasted far longer than anyone could possibly imagine. It is hard for me to believe that four years were spent in speedos, grueling workouts on Saturday morning, all of which turned into friendships

The new Wellness & Recreation Center Pool consists of eight 25-yard lanes equipped with the Colorado Times Electronic Timing System. The diving well is 13 feet deep to meet the demands of the 1-meter and 3-meter divers, unlike the shallow depths divers faced in the bygone years of the sport.

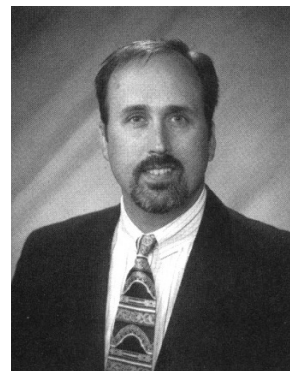


and memories that will seemingly last a lifetime." Jennifer Bonuso (Sokolowski)

By 2000, after 16 years as the head coach of both teams, the attitude between the athletics department and the university changed. Coaches would no longer be shared between physical education teaching and coaching athletics as a dual appointment. So with the change, Coach Hall was offered a teaching position in the HPELS department and the head coaching position was open once again.

The position would be filled by California native Danny May. Coach May would only stay for the next three years before leaving after the 2003-04 season. The University was struck by budget cuts and so was the athletics department. In order to preserve financial support for programs it was decided that both the men's and women's swimming programs would be cut, though after a much heated dispute and the threat of lawsuits, the women's program was reinstated due to Title IX obligations. Coach May was offered his position back to which he accepted, but before the 2003-04 season got underway, he was offered and took a different coaching position at the University of the Pacific-Stockton.

With such short notice, UNI needed a swimming coach for the women's program. Stacy Simmer was hired to replace May. Simmer had been coaching the UNI Masters Club Team before her new position as head coach and was the natural choice for the position.

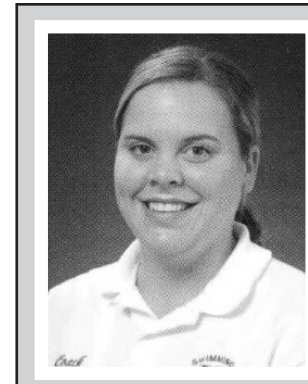


Coach Danny May

A graduate of Price Laboratory School and the University of Iowa, Simmer was the record holder in the 50 and 100 freestyle. Her coaching the UNI Masters Swim Club allowed her to be the candidate of choice and assume the position as head coach for UNI swimming. UNI Director of Athletics Rick Hartzell commented, "We are very fortunate to get someone with Stacey's credentials to coach our women's swimming team. Her youthful enthusiasm and technical knowledge of swimming will give us a chance to get this program back on track."

Simmer went on the recruiting road drawing in swimmers from the state as well as from afar, i.e., Lauren Mendel from Phoenix, Ariz.; Melissa Little from Lawrence, Kan.; and Katie Maloy from Auburn, Ind. And with each class of swimmers that came to UNI, they came with two goals in mind: "win as a team and set personal records within their respective specialties."

With personal best performances also comes recognition and such would be the case of sophomore Rachel Robnett. She was named to the 2005 conference Scholar-Athlete team, which requires the athlete to not only do well within the sport, but in academics as well. For example, in order to receive scholar-athlete honors in swimming, an athlete had to complete one year of college and have one of the following criteria: a 3.0 cumulative GPA along with being an all-conference selection; or a 3.5 cumulative GPA and a top-16 finish in an individual event at the conference championship meet; or a 3.8 cumulative GPA and have participated in the conference championship meet. Robnett finished in the top 16 in the conference meet in the 200-yard freestyle and 200-yard breaststroke, which met part of the requirement, and she met the 3.5 GPA requirement to seal her recognition.



Stacey Simmer, the eighth head coach for UNI swimming.

All Panther athletes strive to be the best that they can be, but on any given day, one or two or maybe everyone excels and reaches a performance level that places them or the entire team on a higher pedestal. Such was the case for freshman Abby Girard in a November 2006 dual meet with Minnesota State-Mankato. She swam her way to finish first in the 100- and 200-yard backstroke events and first in the 200-yard IM; an achievement to make the newspapers. As she continued her push for perfection all the way to the 2006-07 MVC Championships, the team followed suit. In the end, the Panther swimmers capped their best conference performance since 1991, finishing in fourth place with 382 points and breaking six school records.

Girard, who seemed to be destined to stardom, was named to the MVC All-Conference team and four other swimmers (Erin Danielson, Ashley Hunter, Abby Moes and Amanda Firman) were acknowledged with all-conference honorable mention honors. Simmer was named the MVC Coach of the Year. While reflecting about her 2006-07 team in a Northern Iowan article, Simmer said, "The freshmen already thought we were fast, knew we were fast and wanted to be fast." Freshman standout Josie Itzen continued those same sentiments, stating, "I think once the freshmen got in and started practicing, we stepped up [our swimming roles] and realized just how strong we were." The 2006-07 season was a huge success and one for the record books.



Abby Girard

The 2007-08 season proved to be similarly as successful. The underclassmen set the standard. Once again the Panthers were strong in the conference meet. Chelsea Hartman earned MVC All-Conference honors while Girard, Itzen, Moes, Maggie Rickert and Stephanie Yattoni earned honorable mention honors. For the second year in a row, Simmer was named MVC Coach of the Year.

In 2008-09, Simmer had some new freshmen on the team and some senior leadership. Coming off the previous season, she felt her team was ready to tackle the competitive schedule. The women had never won a conference championship, never finished higher than fourth, but maybe this would be the year. The season



Rachel Robnett

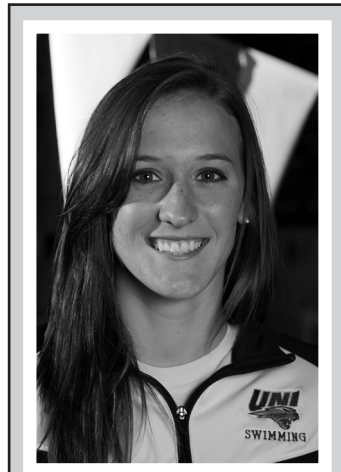
came to an end with the Panthers finishing in fifth place, the same place they were expected to finish in the preseason polling. Personal bests were registered and pool records were established, but the bid for a conference championship would have to wait.

The 2009-10 season would pan out much the same as the '08-'09 season, and as the Panthers finished their dual competition, Coach Simmer responded in a Feb. 5, 2010 Northern Iowan interview, "Spring semester meets are more about getting ready for conference and less about times. We do a lot of positive self-talk, mind-clearing activities and mental preparedness. Any time at practice, this is part of training, so we are always preparing for something."

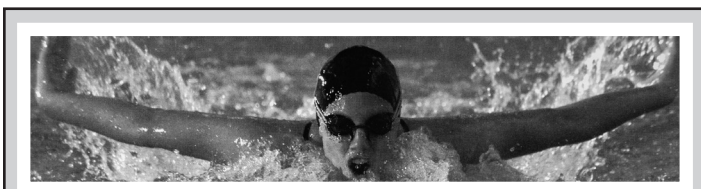
Since Simmer had taken the helm for women's swimming, every event has had a new UNI record established. Records are meant to be a guide and meant to be broken and while it might be hard on some to see their record fall, this is a fact of life in athletics. Simmer has coached record holder swimmers like Hartman (200 freestyle, 500 free, 1000 free and 1650 free); Girard (100 and 200 backstroke and 200 IM); Erika Uthoff-Schmucker (100 and 200 breaststroke); Itzen (400 IM); Sandra Frimenan (200 butterfly); Firman (50 free) and Rickert (100 freestyle and butterfly).

As Coach Simmer begins to look at the 2011-12 season she relates that this new team is made up of a group of very talent-laden swimmers who have had a lot of competitive experience, more so than any other

team. It's a young team for sure, but as Coach Simmer tells Doug Newhoff in an Oct. 7, 2011 Courier article, "This freshmen class (11 members of the team) is very talented, one of the most talented I've ever had. They are definitely faster than what I've lost, so we are looking for some good competition. Let's see what this team can do. Let's see what happens. Anything's possible."



UNI swimmer Chelsea Hartman, one of 10 student-athletes recognized for the 2012 MVC State Farm Good Neighbor Award.



They swim for personal bests and to win.

Men's and Women's Tennis

Carol Phillips

Pre-intercollegiate Tennis

As with many of the early intercollegiate teams, men's tennis began as a club sport. In 1893 the Tennis Club at Iowa State Normal School had 40 members and included both men and women. There was local competition and club championships, but no play beyond the University. In March 1894 the first meeting of the Iowa Inter-Collegiate Lawn Tennis Association occurred in Fairfield, Iowa. Information between this time and 1899 was lacking, but in May 1899 it was reported that Clem Seerley, President Seerley's son, won the Iowa/Illinois Singles Championship 6-4, 10-12, 6-4. It appeared that tennis at ISNS was still going strong even without intercollegiate play. It was also reported in the College Eye that multiple organizations at the college traveled together for competitions. In April 1903 the Oratorical Society, track and tennis teams all traveled together to Illinois to compete against Illinois, Emporia (Kan.), Oshkosh (Wis.), Warrensburg (Mo.) and Iowa State Normal School.

What appeared to be a great impetus to intercollegiate tennis was a change initiated by the Iowa National Guard. In October, 1903 Major Olmstead changed compulsory drill to compulsory athletics at the colleges and universities in Iowa. Men at Iowa State Normal School then took athletics for 45 minutes per day four days per week. At this time tennis was the second most popular sport after basketball. This move helped keep participation in athletics strong at the University for men.

Beginning of Intercollegiate Men's Tennis

In 1915 and again in 1924 there was a call for an Intercollegiate Tennis Tournament, but it wasn't until May 1925 that there was a state tennis tournament between colleges and universities. The first Iowa Conference Tennis Tournament in history was played at Simpson College. There were 14 member institutions, including State Teachers College, Penn, Parsons, Des Moines University, Morningside, Luther, Central, Simpson, and

St. Ambrose. Because there was no formal intercollegiate tennis team, a college-wide tournament was held to determine who would participate in the Conference Tournament. Both men and women participated, with the women being from the Women's Athletic Association and the men from the athletic department.

There is no record of tennis again at State Teacher's College until April 1928. At this time students asked why they did not have a team when other schools did. They were given two reasons: there was a call for players and no one showed up so there was not enough time to get ready for competition and all matches were played on clay courts. The college did not have any clay courts. Students were told that if they wanted a team they needed to express an interest.

Men's Intercollegiate Tennis

The Early Days

The "official" men's intercollegiate tennis team was formed in September 1928. L.L. Mendenhall, a faculty member in the Men's Physical Education Department, was the first coach. The team practiced daily at 4 p.m., but no information about how long practice went or how many men were on the team was found. In May 1928 Homer Haddox, the first long-term coach, was hired. He had played for Ohio State University and won the National Singles Championship of Paraguay while in diplomatic service from 1920-1923. By January 1929 there were discussions within the Conference about students having to be at an institution for one year before competition. This discussion was tabled at the league level, but Iowa State Teachers College already had this rule in place. Even as intercollegiate tennis began there appeared to have been players and schools looking for ways to get an edge in competition by adding players on short notice. This was not allowed.

As the team approached its second year of play there was a varsity squad and also a freshman team. It seemed like in the beginning of men's tennis the emphasis was more about competition than winning. There was an effort to provide opportunities for a number of players against comparable competition. In the first

year, the men played Luther and Coe and ended with a record of 1-2-1. It's not known how a match ended in a tie, but that is what was reported. The first tennis letters were awarded.

By 1930 the University had cement and clay courts. The team conditioned during the early spring on the volleyball and handball courts inside. Haddox described the team as "a good team because of the team's attitude toward training, compliance with the coach's orders, patriotism to the school, and the ability to take victory or defeat gracefully" (Collegiate Eye).

The turn out for the team was small, but those that played were committed. The 1932 season marked the first year that competition went outside the state when the team played Carleton College from Minnesota as well as Luther and Coe in state. At the conference tournament in 1933 the doubles team of Glenn Boysen and Don Klotz upset favored Western Union College. Joe Weissman was the runner-up in singles. During this era the season was very short and matches weren't usually determined until April. The team played three-to-five matches in April and May.

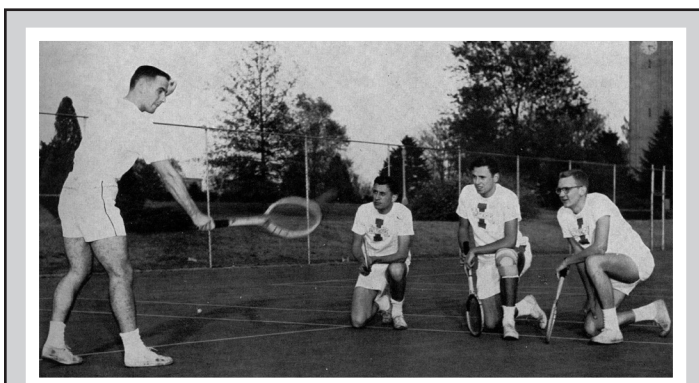
Spring 1935 is the first mention of attending the North Central Tennis Championship. Teams included North Dakota, North Dakota State, South Dakota State and State Teachers College. Stanley Reeves was undefeated for the season and won the NCC Tournament singles. Bill McNabb made it to the semi-finals.

The 1936 season was the most successful yet. The team record was 6-3 with all players being from Cedar Falls. Reeves and McNabb were winners again at the NCC Tournament. In the summer Coach Haddox played in the Waterloo City Tournament, defeating team member Nevitz Bowen before losing to McNabb in the semi-finals. A fun time for tennis when the coach could play team members in a local tournament.

In 1938 the men's team was the defending NCC champion and once again won the singles and doubles titles. But in 1939 there was the first change in direction in men's athletics that affected men's tennis. There was a shift from tennis to golf as the spring "minor" sport because of a lack of interest in tennis and materials. In 1940 there were reports of drills, but no varsity tennis competition. Then in 1941 it was reported that the State Teachers College men's team won the singles and were finalists in doubles in the NCC Tournament. Then again by 1943 there was no competition because

of a limited number of men, transportation problems, and the increased use of athletic facilities by the Army and Navy. Between 1943 and 1947 there is no record of intercollegiate men's tennis.

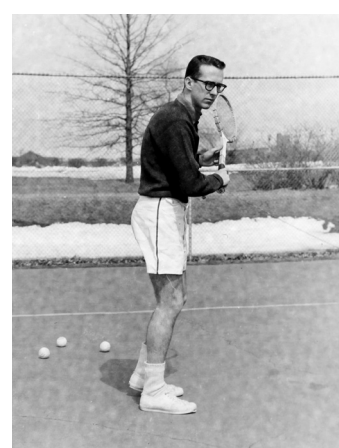
For the spring 1947 season, Dave McCuskey was appointed the new coach, but only one player reported to the team meeting so players were selected from the University tennis classes. Once again, the emphasis on sport competition, at least in the "minor" sport of tennis, can be seen to be low. This team with players from general tennis classes played six meets and attended the conference tournament. State Teachers won the 1947 title. Players got second in singles and made the semis of the doubles which was excellent considering the start of the season.



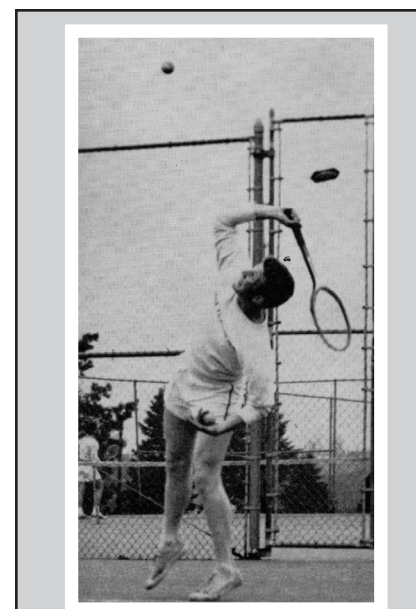
John Van Epps demonstrating his backhand shot to l-r: Don Brendel, Tom Yager and Roger Hessenius.

As the 1948 season began players from across the state joined the team. The Panthers were undefeated going into the last meet, but they lost so ended the season 5-1. Augustana was the tennis powerhouse of the conference and won the league title for the second year in a row, but the State Teachers doubles team made it to the finals. While the number of competitions was still relatively small they were increasing during this time from six meets in 1951 to 11 in 1959.

Meets were also being scheduled with more out-of-state schools like Wisconsin-La Crosse and Carleton.



Bill Kibbie



Jim Baker serves for the point. Teamed with Roger Ditzemberger, the doubles team captured the conference title without dropping a set.

The Pete Mazula Era

In 1964, Coach Koll accepted a position as the head wrestling coach at Penn State University. The new coach, Pete Mazula, would be at UNI for 30 years and carry the men's tennis program to new heights. He was hired in the fall of 1965. He graduated from Courtland State Teacher's College where he competed in tennis for four years. Mazula then received his MA and a Doctorate degree from Teacher's College Columbia University in 1954.

During his first year State Teachers played 10 meets, finishing with a record of 5-5. It played teams like Parsons, Upper Iowa, Wartburg, Iowa State, St. Cloud State, Dubuque, Luther, Loras, and Drake. There were no conferences at the time for competition. Teams scheduled other teams from around the state also, not paying much attention to divisions of colleges and

Bill Kibbie won the North Central title three years in a row starting in 1956. Starting the 1959 season, State Teachers was looking for its seventh conference crown in eight years.

The 1960 season continued the run in the NCC. During this time players from State Teachers College were also playing in the NCAA Regional Invitational Meets. It never won a title, but it was prestigious to even get invited.

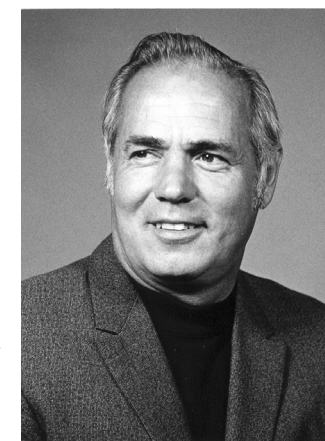
universities. The team finished second at the NCC Tournament behind powerhouse Augustana.

With a new coach and a new time in intercollegiate sports, the program began to expand with longer seasons and more success as well. In 1967 the team had a record of 9-9, but won the NCC title. 1968 saw a great jump with a record of 15-6 and a conference title. The fifth year of Mazula's tenure brought expansion in schedule and travel. State Teachers College played College of the Ozarks, Central Missouri, Arkansas Tech, Ouachita Baptist, and Little Rock University. It was felt that increasing travel and schedules would only increase competition and success for the team. It must have worked as the team went 20-5. This was the first year that competition went to six singles and three doubles matches for each competition. Also, spring trips started to be common. The 1969 season began with a long swing through Missouri and Arkansas, with the team finishing 6-3 on the trip. The Panthers went 25-6-1 and won the NCC Championship for the third year in a row.

The 1971 team set a school record with 15 straight wins, a mark to be broken several more times during Mazula's reign. (1st name unavailable) Stocker and Bob Andres went 21-0 at no. 3 doubles and the team finished second in the NCC Tournament. Men's tennis continued to blossom with the 1972 team winning 18 matches in a row, having a record of 22-2, and winning the NCC Tournament for the fourth year out of the past five. Illes and Andres compiled a 22-1 record and McCartney a 21-2 singles record this season.

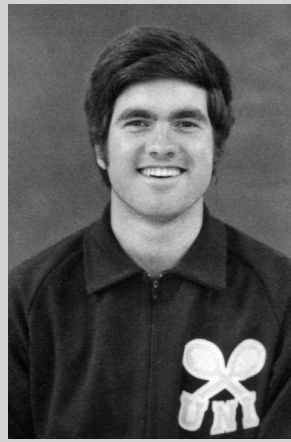
As the history of tennis progressed there were increases in the number of meets, the length of the season, the amount of travel, including more over spring break, and season travel increases. The make-up of the team became more players from out-of-state and was moving toward international players as well. The year's spring trip saw a swing through the southeast, playing teams such as Delta State, West Florida, Southern Mississippi, Millsap, Southeast Missouri, and Southwestern Memphis. The team record soared to 28-3. The Panthers won the NCC Tournament taking seven-of-nine titles. Randy Krejci and Steve McKinstry won as freshmen at the tournament to begin great careers.

The first mention of having fall as well as spring competition occurred in 1974. Four players participated in the NCAA Tournament where they tied for 15th out of 44 teams. Krejci lost in the third round as the best



Dr. Peter Mazula

Randy Krejci is the only men's tennis player to be inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame through 2011. He was inducted in 1994 for his accomplishments on the tennis courts from 1973-1976. In 1975, he was selected an Outstanding College Athlete of America for his athletic excellence, academic achievement and community service.



Randy Krejci

Krejci was a Cedar Rapids native. He was the NCC singles champion for four years and a doubles champion for three. He also played in four NCAA Division II National Championships. He held the career record for winning the most singles matches in a season with 37, most career wins with 139, most doubles victories with 106, and most consecutive doubles wins with 35. His career winning percentage was .863.

After receiving his degree in 1975, Krejci taught at McKinley Junior High School in Cedar Rapids. He also officiated high school basketball, football and volleyball. He moved to Kennedy High School in 1979 where he coached tennis and volleyball. He completed a master's degree at UNI in 1983 and two years later was recognized as an Outstanding Young Man in America. In 1987 he was Coach of the Year. He has been the principal at Harding Middle School in Cedar Rapids for over 11 years where he has taught since 1983.

finisher. He went on to record a career record of 34-3, the best ever at UNI.

After the success in the NCAA Tournament and Krejci's marvelous win-loss record, in a spring Northern Iowan article Mazula talked about the lack of fan support for such a successful team. He also called the athletic scholarship system "pathetic" for swimming, tennis and track. Even with conference championships for numerous years and champion players there was little or no support financially for the team.

During the 1974 season another feat was accomplished when Andres compiled his 100th singles win. The team sported a 29-6 record and captured its third

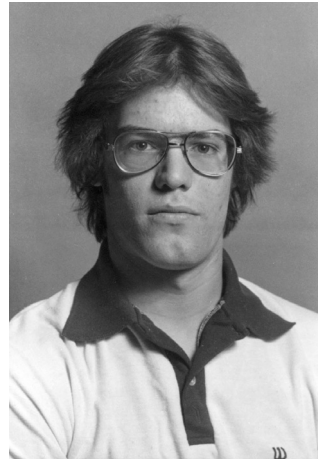
win in the NCC Tournament. Andres won doubles for the fourth time and had three singles titles in four years at the NCC championship.

The 1975 season again shattered records. The team had the most wins in a row at 20, the most season wins at 32, the most shut outs in a row with nine, and was once again NCC champion. During this era the Panthers competed indoors in the Physical Education Center during inclement spring weather. The baseline on these courts was about three feet from the wall and the surface was tartan so the ball slid rather than bouncing like on a tennis court. Needless to say this presented a real challenge for visiting teams and provided quite a home court advantage.

In 1976 UNI beat Iowa State for the second straight year after which ISU refused to play in the PEC again. Guy Mazula, the coach's son, posted 29 wins; Krejci posted a 30-4 record, and the team posted 40 straight dual meet victories at home dating back to 1973. UNI again won the NCC championship, the fifth straight. During his tenure at UNI Krejci won eight conference titles and is the only men's tennis athlete to have been inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame through 2011.

Things were going really well for the men's team and it continued to roll in the 1977 season. Sophomore Mazula posted 27 straight dual wins, the team set a record with 37 wins, and it won the NCC Championship for the sixth consecutive year, 23 conference titles in all. The Panthers won all the singles titles and two-of-three doubles titles at conference. W.T. Grampp was the first freshman in NCAA history to win a no. 1 singles title in a conference tournament. UNI also had three qualifiers at the NCAA Division II Championships -- Mazula, Grampp and Lanny Lang.

The first foreign player, Giuseppe Tirelli from Cali, Columbia, joined the team in 1978. The team's schedule jumped to 40 meets plus several tournaments. Mazula won his 300th tennis meet in just his 11th season.



Guy Mazula

UNI joined the Mid-Continent Conference in 1979 and the team finished second to Youngstown State. Mazula was the Coach of the Year and his son, Guy, lost in the finals of the conference tournament for the best finish by a UNI player. In 1980 UNI finished third at conference, but Mike White was the singles champion and White and Stu Cochrane won the doubles title. This was the first year that men's tennis competed in a fall season, playing Iowa State, Drake and St. Ambrose. It then completed a 40-meet dual schedule in the spring. The spring 1981 team won the M-CC title for the first time, with White being a conference champion for the fourth consecutive year.

Fall 1981 saw Mazula take over coaching the women's team as well as the men's team after 16 years as men's head coach. As a senior, Cochrane became the first assistant coach. He worked 10 hours per week prior to attending law school the following year.

While UNI was playing Division I tennis, the lack of scholarship money, indoor facilities and playing Division II and III schools primarily during the regular season made it impossible to compete at Division I conference championships and to qualify for the NCAA Tournament.

1982 saw the beginning of the "Big 4" meet in which UNI played Iowa State, Iowa and Drake in an interstate rivalry. ISU won the meet followed by Iowa, UNI and Drake. The team traveled south for spring break through Missouri, Louisiana and Arkansas.

These trips gave the Panthers a chance to play outdoors which wasn't possible in Iowa in March. UNI took an impressive 14-5 mark into the conference tournament. The men placed fifth. Jeff Vaage advanced the farthest, placing second in the consolation singles at no. 4. He also teamed up with Bryan Butcher to take first place in the consolation no. 3 doubles.

No matches were contested in fall 1983, but the spring season was a good one. The team boasted a 16-4 record going into the last two weekends. Now competing in a new conference, the Association of Mid-Continent Universities (AMCU), the Panthers finished third in the championship.

Spring 1985 began with a spring break trip to Hawaii where it finished 5-2, losing only to Hawaii. Later in the spring the Northern Iowan posted a picture of Jeff Smith's mother sitting in a sleeping bag as the tennis match against Luther was played in freezing

temperatures. The Panthers took a 22-9 record into the AMCU-8 Conference Tournament. The team crowned two individual and one doubles champions and finished second just four points behind Southwest Missouri State. Smith won at no. 2 and Vaage won at no. 3. The no. 2 doubles team of John Hawley and Eric Crawford also brought home a championship. The rest of the players all finished second in their respective positions -- Crawford at no.4, Nick Rakers at no. 5, Kyle Pederson at no. 6 and Vaage and Pederson at no. 2 doubles. Mazula shared Coach of the Year honors with SMSU's coach, whose team won the tournament.

The Panthers once again returned to a fall season in 1985. They beat Drake and Luther but lost to Central College for a 5-2 fall season. In spring 1986 they traveled to Hawaii again, playing Brigham Young-Hawaii, Hawaii Pacific, Hawaii and Hawaii at Hilo. They returned with a 2-3 record. UNI boasted a winning record, 27-9, once more going into the AMCU-8 Tournament. Once again it finished second, but crowned two second-place finishes by Hawley and Rakers. In doubles both Smith and Steve Mayer and Lents and Pederson took second place, also. SMSU won all singles and doubles matches. The season ended with a 27-8 mark. Mazula was voted Coach of the Year.

In what was considered an exhibition season, the Panthers finished 5-1 in the fall of 1986. In January 1987, Athletics Director Bob Bowsby set in place a "prioritization process" which put men's tennis as a low priority sport. He indicated two purposes for the UNI athletics program: 1) offer opportunities to student-athletes and 2) present a good image for the University. As a result, sports were put into three levels. Level 1 sports were those that had the best possibility of revenue and competing at the national level. These included football, men's and women's basketball and wrestling. Level 3 sports have marginal interest, have no revenue generation, and the quality of the facilities and climate are not favorable for success. These sports included baseball, men's and women's tennis, swimming, and golf. The rest of UNI sports -- softball, volleyball, and track -- were Level 2 sports. Men's tennis received no scholarship money and was competing against teams that were getting more and more money. Interestingly, the men's coaches seemed to display an understanding attitude because they saw the priorities for other men's sports. The women coaches were not so understand-

ing and felt it would be very difficult to compete with conference teams as a result.

To kick off the spring 1987 season the Panthers made another excursion to Hawaii. They went 3-3 with wins over Hawaii-Loa, Hawaii Pacific and Hawaii at Hilo. Hawaii and BYU-Hawaii defeated the Panthers. By the end of March they sported a 14-4 mark. Southwest Missouri State once again claimed the AMCU-8 championship, with UNI finishing second. Hawley broke a 14-match conference meet victory string by the Bears by winning the no. 6 singles crown. Smith at no. 1 and Rakers at no. 4 both finished second. In doubles, both Smith and Pierre Bernard at no. 2 and Barry Twait and Hawley at no. 3 took second place. The team finished with a 22-8 dual meet record.

On Oct. 2, 1987 the men defeated Wartburg College for a 4-0 fall dual meet record but more importantly, Mazula racked up his 499th career dual meet win. The Panthers kept rolling and racked up a 6-0 record, with Mazula sitting at 501 wins. During their annual spring trip to Hawaii the Panthers recorded a 5-2 record. The wins came against Whitworth, Utah State and Skidmore. They still couldn't beat Hawaii or BYU-Hawaii. They finished the spring season with a 22-8 mark led by Smith and Rakers.

Once again Southwest Missouri State is the team to beat. It is heavily laden with foreign players which Mazula feels gave it an advantage. That said, he believed that UNI could take some championships. Smith was probably the best bet to win a singles championship and with partner Mayer, perhaps a doubles title. Lents also had a very good possibility, holding a 23-3 record at no. 6 singles. The Panthers once again finished second at the AMCU-8 championship.

Again the topic of scholarships and support came up in the Northern Iowan. In the Sept. 2, 1988 article, coaches of Level 3 sports, especially the men coaches who earlier had not been so vocal about Bowlsby's system, expressed their displeasure with the lack of scholarship money. They cite the problem of being competitive with teams that have scholarship money and are able to attract better players. Bowlsby cites geographical location, facilities and interest of the public and student body as factors contributing to the lack of support for Level 3 sports. The discussion continues.

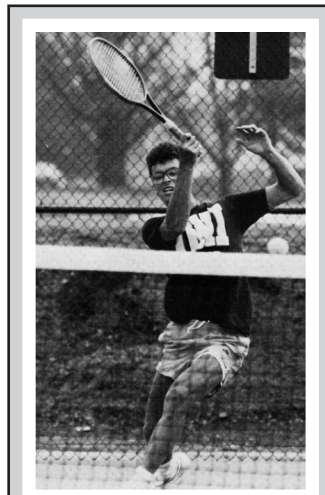
Even with the talk of lack of support, men's tennis continued its winning ways. Fall 1988 it displayed

an 11-2 record, but many of the wins were over Division II and III schools. In 1988 all schools in the conference except Wisconsin-Green Bay had scholarships and many of the schools had primarily foreign players. Yet UNI finished second at the AMCU-8 Tournament and recorded a 22-10 record.

Although a scheduled trip to Spain had to be canceled, the men had a good spring break in San Diego, Calif. After completing the spring swing and several matches in Iowa they had a 13-5 record at the start of April 1989. Once again SMSU won the AMCU-8 Tournament, but this year the Panthers dropped to fourth, edged out by Western Illinois and Valparaiso. Mazula picked Steve LoBianco as the Player of the Tournament, as he made it to the finals of singles as a freshman. After losing five seniors from last year's team, the Panthers finished 18-7 overall.

By spring 1989, one of the team's members became a two-sport athlete. Bernard played no. 2 for the tennis squad and also began playing on the UNI Hockey Club Team. Twait also gave up a promising football career to play tennis instead. He said he was encouraged to give up football by an uncle because of the potential for injuries and the rigors of collegiate football. He did not regret the decision as he had been the no. 1 singles player for two years and was elected captain.

Spring meant another trip to Hawaii. The Panthers took a five-match winning streak into competition. The team left Hawaii with a 12-5 overall mark. By the end of April the team boasted a 24-9 record, winning five of its last seven matches. This boded well for the conference tournament the next weekend. The Panthers, however, couldn't place better than fifth. Southwest Missouri State won the championship for the seventh year in a row. New conference teams Northern Illinois and Akron took second and third, respectively, with Valparaiso taking fourth. Three wins at the confer-



Pierre Bernard sends a powerful forehand shot back during singles play.

ence tournament gave UNI one of its best seasons with a 31-3 record, the most wins since 1975 and 1977 when it won 32 matches. Mazula's career record was 588-183-3 to end the season.

During the 1991 season the Panthers saw opportunities to use the Black Hawk Tennis Club for indoor practice in the off-season. Use was somewhat limited to what it is today for the women, but it was a big help. Mazula recorded his 600th career win and the Panthers finished fifth again at the AMCU-8 Tournament. Phil Baillos was selected for the all-conference team.

1992 saw UNI join the Missouri Valley Conference. It finished ninth at the conference tournament

Mazula Inducted into Iowa Officials Hall of Fame

January 1992: Pete Mazula is inducted into the Officials Hall of Fame of the Iowa Athletic Coaches Association. He had officiated girls' basketball, volleyball, softball, tennis and diving as well as football, boys' basketball, track, diving, and tennis. He officiated state tournament games in girls and boys basketball, girls volleyball and softball and football. He officiated in New York, Missouri, Montana, and Iowa. He said, "I have really enjoyed every minute of it. You keep active and can be with young people. The most enjoyment comes from knowing or feeling you have worked a good game".

Mazula Retires

At the conclusion of the 1993 spring season, Peter Mazula retired. He came to UNI in 1949 and began coaching in 1965. He was the winningest coach at UNI with a record of 639-206-3, second only nationally to Hawaii's Jim Schantter's 646 victories. He had only one losing season, 1966, but the team still won the M-CC Championship. He won 10-of-12 conference crowns and was NCC Coach of the Year from 1972-1980. In 1981 there was a move to the Association of Mid-Continent Universities, moving from Division II to Division I competition. He still was Coach of the Year in 1985 and co-Coach of the Year in 1986. From 1985-1988 UNI was runner up in the AMCU Tournament to Southwest Missouri State each time. Mazula recorded his 600th win in 1991. He died August 6, 1994.

after finishing the season with a 19-7 record. Bill Uelze finished sixth at no. 6, Sam Baig was eighth at no. 3 and Bernard eighth at no. 1. For the first year in a new conference this was a respectable result.

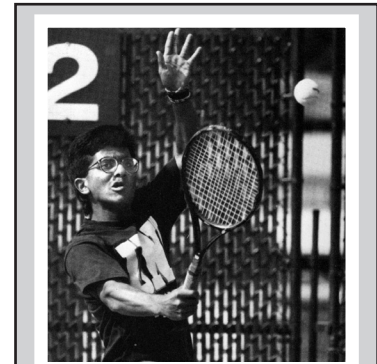
Mazula began his 30th season as men's tennis coach in 1993. For the first time in history the men competed in the TBA Rolex Division I Midwest Collegiate Championship. Players participating included Baillos at no. 1, Baig at no. 2, Anard Balakrishna at no. 3, and Baig and Uelze at no. 1 doubles.

The Final Era

Four coaches served the UNI men's tennis program over the final nine years of intercollegiate competition. In August of 1993 UNI hired a new men's tennis coach for the first time in 30 years. J. Matt Knoll took the reins. He graduated from Washburn University in 1985 and received a master's degree from the University of Kansas in 1993. He was the NAIA District 10 Champion in 1989 and runner-up in 1988. Knoll played on the Portuguese Professional Tennis Circuit in 1988. He had coached since 1986 and was a tennis professional in Overland Park, Kan., from 1990-1993.

The year also saw a change in the tennis rules to shorten match length. For doubles play an eight-game pro-set was instituted, with the team winning two or more of the doubles matches gaining one point toward the match win. That change decreased the importance of doubles play as it now counted for only one point instead of each match counting as one point. Many teams still see that doubles point as an important one because doubles are played first and it does give a team an advantage going into the singles matches.

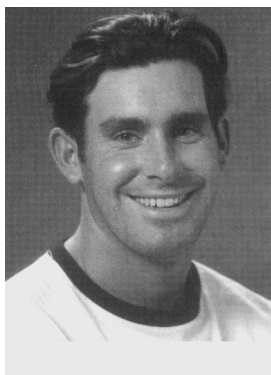
1995 saw another new tennis coach. Nancy Clark took over as head coach for the men's and women's programs. The men's team finished ninth at the MVC Tournament after being seeded 11th. In 1996 and 1997 the team finished 10th, recording 2-16 and 0-15 records,



Anana Balakrishna carefully places a backhand shot.

respectively. The fact that UNI was the only non-scholarship program in the conference, the lack of indoor facilities, and the turnover of coaches probably led to this decline.

Another new coach was hired in 1998 to replace Clark, Eric Rebhuhn. He came with excellent credentials, having won over 150 matches at Concordia



Eric Rebhuhn

College. Tetsu Tanimoto was hired as an assistant. He also was from Concordia College and had been ranked no. 1 in New York and seventh in the Eastern Region tennis rankings.

The team finished eighth at the MVC Tournament in both 1999 and 2000 and had a record of 11-18, the best since the 1994-95 season. By the 2001 season the team had players from seven different countries, including Zimbabwe, Ghana, Finland, South Africa, Holland and Zambia. Just four years prior to this fall all the players were from Iowa. The team posted a 5-2 conference mark and finished in second place in the MVC, beating Southwest Missouri State for the first time in 30 years. The Panthers finished fourth at the MVC Tournament, the first time they had had a winning season in 10 years since becoming a Division I program. Rebuhn recorded a 37-47 record in his four years as head coach.

In 2001 David Wolden was hired as the head coach. He was from Longwood College in Virginia. In 2000 he was the Wilson ITA NCAA Division II East Region Women's Coach of the Year. It seemed there was a move to play tougher competition and to keep moving the team to be more competitive in the MVC.

But in May 2002, after only one season under Wolden, due to budget cuts the men's and women's swimming and tennis programs were dropped from the athletics program. Due to threats of a Title IX law suit, women's tennis and swimming were reinstated and continue competing today. Men's tennis has not been a sport at UNI since the spring of 2002.



Tod Berkey was the no. 1 player all year.

Women's Tennis

Pre-Intercollegiate Women's Tennis

In 1893 the Normal Eye, the school newspaper, indicated that there was a Tennis Club with 40 members, including women. Representatives traveled to Grinnell for a state tennis tournament and to organize an intercollegiate tennis association. The May, 1924 College Eye makes reference again to great interest in tennis and to looking forward to an official Iowa State Teachers College (ISTC) tennis team. May, 1934 saw Marjorie Mace representing ISTC in a tennis match to be held at Iowa Falls and a 1946 article talks about the Women's Recreation Association tennis champions, but there is no further discussion of women's tennis until April 1969.

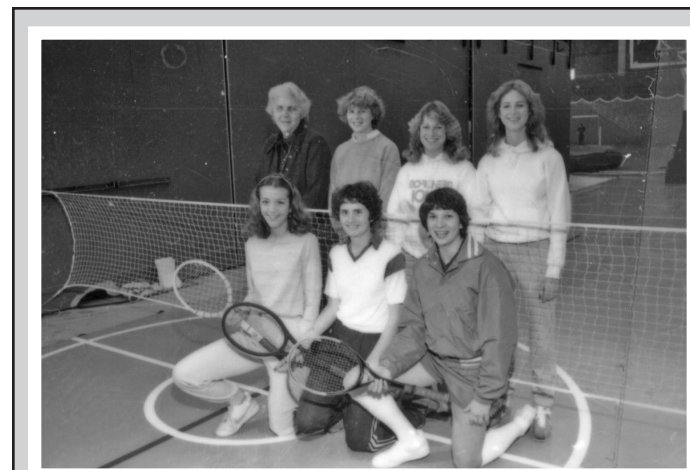
The Beginning

The Women's Physical Education Department, at the request of female students on campus, began the Women's Intercollegiate Sports program in 1969. The faculty wanted to have a sport to represent each season -- fall, winter, and spring -- as well as representing both team and individual sports. As a result, tennis was one of the first three women's sports at UNI. On April 4, 1969, a call comes out in the school newspaper, now called the Northern Iowan (NI), for any women students interested in participating on the intercollegiate tennis team to report to the courts on April 8 at 4 p.m. Again, in the March 1970 NI there is a call for any interested women to attend a meeting to participate in women's intercollegiate tennis. They must decide quickly as there needs to be proof of insurance from the University Student Health Accident Insurance policy by March 15.

Coverage of women's sports at this time, especially since they were new to campus, was rare. Therefore, the first article reporting a tennis score is from April 1971 when UNI defeated Graceland 8-2.

Betty Swanson was the first women's tennis coach and said this team could be tabbed as one of the best in the area.

During the 1971 season, the Panthers defeated the University of Iowa, Graceland and Luther. UNI's Brenda Coffield defeated Sue Oertel of Luther, who later



Betty Swanson served as UNI's first women's tennis coach.

played on the satellite professional tennis mini-tour. During this era in UNI's women's sports, many of the teams, including tennis, defeated Iowa, Iowa State (ISU), and the state's smaller schools. Since UNI was known as an outstanding teacher's college, many women athletes who also were going to be teachers attended the Cedar Falls school. Once scholarship money became available, the wealth of athletic talent became more spread out around the state.

During this time in the NI there were pictures of men's tennis, but none of women. There was limited coverage of women's tennis, but there was coverage. Part of the reason for limited coverage was a thought that most students on campus were not that interested in women's tennis. This was stated earlier for men's tennis as well. The women's tennis team practiced from 5 to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Requirements to be on the team included a minimum 2.0 GPA and to have been a full-time student for at least one semester.

During the 1972 season, UNI lost to ISU but did well at the Luther Tournament, the final tournament of the year. Coffield again defeated Oertel in the finals, defending her title from the year before. Nine other schools participated from Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. In early spring 1973,



Brenda Coffield

UNI hosted the three major state tennis schools -- ISU, Iowa and Luther -- which began the Big Four Tournament. All teams played each other, with UNI defeating only Iowa. ISU won the meet, followed by Luther, Iowa and UNI. UNI again won top honors at the Luther Invitational Tournament. Coffield defended her title once again. Claire McGee and Joan Stolze won the doubles title.

In the September 1973 NI headlines read "women's sports grow". Women's intercollegiate sports have now been in existence for five years. There are five sports sponsored, including field hockey, swimming, basketball, softball and tennis. This is the first time there has been a women's tennis summary in the paper.

Tennis is entering its sixth year as one of the inaugural sports. Women's tennis has not been as successful as other UNI teams, but as Swanson indicated, it is already designated as a "minor". Also, spring is a busy time and being an individual sport it is difficult to encourage team spirit. In spring 1973, tennis participated in three tournaments -- the UNI Quadrangular with Iowa, ISU and Luther; plus in the Luther and Carleton tournaments. Pat Lane was listed as the no. 1 player following Coffield's graduation.

For the 1974 spring season, a meeting was held Feb. 26. Tennis is beginning earlier in the winter now with indoor practices, which have not been prevalent prior to this. Practice times are also expanding to Monday 3 to 5 p.m.; and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 4 to 6. Indoor practice takes place in the Physical Education Center 258N. In the first meet of the season, UNI defeated Iowa and ISU. It also participated in the Luther Invitational and the Carleton College Women's Tournament. As can be seen, the season is quite short with limited meets. It can also be seen that the coverage of women's sports, while still less than men's, has increased over the past couple of years.

Women's tennis was moved to the fall in 1974-75. The campaign began in September with a meet against ISU, followed by meets against Drake, Iowa, and Drake again. The season culminated at the Women's Intercollegiate State Tennis Meet, won by ISU, followed by Luther, Iowa and UNI. Eight teams participated. No. 1 player Beth Stock was UNI's only champion, having won the consolation bracket singles.

Fall 1976 saw the team lose to ISU and Iowa, but rebounded to beat Wartburg and St. Ambrose, and took

first at the Central College Invitational. UNI placed fifth at the AIAW (Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) State Tennis Meet. Drake was first, Iowa second, ISU third, and Luther fourth, with UNI only one-half point behind. Julie Jansa was defeated in the semi-finals by the eventual champion. The team continues to play tough competition against Iowa, ISU, Drake and Luther. The team finished fifth again at the AIAW State Tournament, which Drake won. Sue Quirk advanced to the semi-finals before being defeated.

Beginning with the 1977-78 season, tennis once again went to a fall and spring season. Women's athletics joined the Gateway Conference. This was a major move for the team as the competition was about to get much stiffer. In the fall, UNI fell to Drake 5-4 and Stephens College 4-1 in a rain shortened meet, followed by a 9-0 win over Simpson. It then lost to Iowa, but defeated Luther, Central and ISU. The Panthers compiled a 5-2 record, one of the best finishes in recent history. The major competition at the state tournament was ISU, Drake and Iowa.

The spring season was short with just three matches prior to the Gateway Tournament, where UNI finished last, but since it had just joined the conference and had not competed against any of the teams at this level, it was not a surprise.

Players continued to be from the state of Iowa and many are from the immediate Cedar Falls/Waterloo area, including Quirk, Maggie Lutgen, and Lyn Kobliska from Waterloo; Susan Forrest from Clinton, Jansa from Cedar Rapids, and Katherine Murphy from Des Moines.

The fall season ended with a 3-4 record and the team moved on to the state tournament in Des Moines with Iowa, ISU and Drake. The tourney took on a new format with both team and individual competition. The spring schedule had just two matches in addition to the Gateway tournament.

There continues to be advertisements in the school newspaper for anyone interested in joining the team. The fall 1979 campaign began with a 5-1 record with wins over ISU, North and South Dakota and Loras. UNI continues to play a variety of opponents, including Minnesota, Drake and Stephens College.

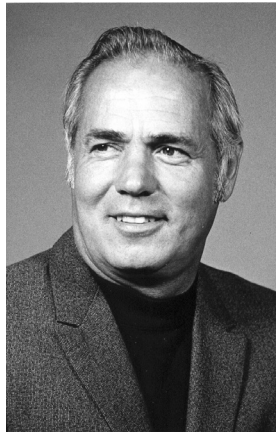
Fall 1980 saw 16 women try out for the team, the most in a number of years. In the AIAW State Tournament, with only three teams competing, no. 1 singles

player Quirk was the lone champion. The team was playing tough competition, but not with many wins. At the South Dakota Invitational, Quirk and Vicki Reinicke won the doubles title and Quirk won the no. 1 singles title. Nina Nelson also brought home a crown. UNI finished third in the eight-team event, just one-half point out of second.

The spring season saw the team finish 2-3. Division I competition is very stiff and without scholarship money, it is very difficult for UNI to be competitive.

The Next Era

Dr. Peter Mazula was named the women's head coach to replace Swanson in the fall of 1981. Mazula had coached the men's team for 16 years and had been very successful. Coaches for the women's sports came from the faculty and it wasn't always easy to find a coach or to have the release time to coach. Throughout the early history of women's tennis, coaches were given release time of approxi-



Dr. Peter Mazula

mately three-of-12 hours of teaching in order to coach. Because there was one head coach for both the men's and women's teams for the first time in its history, tennis had an assistant coach. Stu Cochran, who had played for the men's team, was hired in this position. He had been a four-year letter winner, but did not plan to coach for long as he was preparing to attend Law School.

The team finished the season with a 12-5 record. The women traveled to Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas for the spring trip. Cathy Crowl led the team with an impressive 8-0 record. Nancy Land, Chris Corsello and Tanna Riehl all had 6-2 records. Playing in Decorah on March 30, UNI improved its record to 9-2 and Crowl kept her singles record a perfect 11-0.

Later in the spring, the team took first place at the South Dakota Invitational. First-place winners in doubles were no. 2 Crowl and Land and the no. 3 team of Nelson and Carrie Knudsen. Nabbing first places in singles were Crowl, Land, Nelson and Riehl.



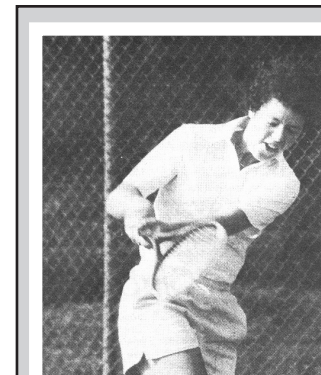
UNI's 1981-82 women's tennis team with Peter Mazula.

The Panthers upset Iowa State in the Iowa AIAW State Tournament, giving them the right to play in the regionals on May 13-15 at UNI. Crowl, Land, Nelson and Knudsen won singles matches against ISU and Crowl-Land and Nelson-Knudsen were successful in doubles.

UNI finished the spring with a 25-10 record. The number of matches, spring trips, and distance traveled was all increasing during the late '70s and early '80s, in part to having new leadership and a different philosophy about sport.

Competition was heightening and travel was becoming much greater as the 1982 season began. The women's team was on the road six straight weekends in the fall.

Land will be one of the stalwarts of this year's team. She compiled a 20-6 doubles record and a 10-6 singles record encompassing regional and national competition. The fall season ended with a 10-7 record, with four meets decided 5-4 against UNI. The team beat Luther and Coe, Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Chicago Circle. UNI again beats ISU. Land, Knudsen, Maria McDonald and Nelson all won singles matches and Knudsen-McDonald and Land-



Nancy Land is the only women's player to qualify for nationals.

Nelson picked up doubles victories. After losing to Luther, a perennial strong foe, UNI is now 7-3. The Panthers competed in the Gateway Conference Tournament in Normal, Ill. to finish the season.

The 1983-84 season saw four returning players -- Land, Knudsen, Robin Ross and McDonald -- and three freshmen recruits that were highly touted high school players -- Tami Williams, Renee Kern and Joni Easton. UNI also added a new assistant coach, Carol Phillips. Phillips was a faculty member in the women's physical education department.

The team finished last at the Gateway Conference Tournament after a disappointing 13-18 season. It seems that the fall season always ended with a meet where it was cold and/or rainy. This year was no exception. The Panthers finished the season in 40-degree weather in Eau Claire. They beat Carleton College, St. Benedict, and then lost to Eau Claire. The team ended the fall season with a 7-8 record. McDonald and Ross both had 10-4 records.

The spring 1984 season saw matches against Luther, Augustana, UW-Eau Claire, ISU, Central, North Dakota State, St. Ambrose, Mankato, Gustavus Adolphus, Drake, and the Gateway Conference Tournament. The women ended the spring season with a 5-8 record. At the Gateway Tournament, UNI had two doubles teams finish in third place and in singles, McDonald was in the consolation finals, but lost to Southern Illinois. The team finished in eighth place. The squad was young with three freshmen, two sophomores and one junior.

The Mid-'80s Forward

Beginning in the fall of 1984, Phillips was appointed head women's coach. She had played tennis at The Ohio State University and was part of a Big Ten Championship team in 1972. She then was an assistant coach at Washington State for two years while pursuing a master's degree in physical education. Phillips began teaching at UNI in 1975.



Carol Phillips

The 1984 campaign began with Iowa State. UNI had lost to ISU three times last season. As the Gateway Conference became more established, UNI began scheduling more conference meets to see teams it would face in the tournament. As of the end of September, the team was already 10-2 after defeating St. Ambrose, Eastern Illinois and St. Louis. The team lost to Western Illinois 5-4. On Sept. 19, UNI beat ISU for the second time this season. The team ended the fall with an impressive 22-2 record after wins over Drake and Luther.

After the successful 22-2 fall season with wins over major college teams like Drake, Iowa State and Luther, UNI is eliminating scholarships for women's golf, tennis and swimming and allocating them to women's basketball, softball and volleyball. Part of the decision was based on the Gateway Conference naming those three sports "the designated sports". Athletics Director Bob Bowsby indicated that the primary goal was to enhance the image of UNI and there is a need for success in high visibility sports. This started the decline of the three women's sports success for some years.

The spring 1985 schedule did not have as many matches, but the quality of the opponents improved. Part of the thinking was that if there would be some wins over conference opponents, UNI could get a better seed at the conference tournament. The team started just where it left off in the fall with victories over Luther and ISU, while losing to ISU for the first time in four outings. It beat conference foes Illinois State and Bradley. The team finished fifth in the Gateway Tournament, the best finish in school history to this point. Southern Illinois won, followed by Wichita State, Southwest Missouri State and Drake. McDonald finished second as did the no. 2 doubles team of Kern and Tami Williams. Land, the only senior, lost in the semi-finals to the top seed. It was a great finish for the team, but it highlighted the loss of scholarships to come.

Fall 1985 saw the return of six starters from the previous year -- Suzy Dupont, Kern, Williams, Joni Eaton, McDonald and Jenny Feye. At the fall Gateway Tournament, Williams and Kern won the consolation doubles, Dupont made it to the semi-finals of consolation and Dupont and Feye made it to the semi-finals of consolation doubles. No team scores were kept, but this gave UNI an opportunity to play conference players that they didn't get to play on a regular basis because of travel distances. This ended a fall season of 9-7.

The team started the spring season defeating Drake, Mankato, Wisconsin-La Crosse and St. Ambrose, followed by losses to Drake and Iowa State. The women went into the conference tournament with a spring record of 4-7, 0-5 in conference matches. They finished ninth in the conference tournament, but Dupont won the consolation singles and Feye lost in the championship semi-finals. Conference teams continue to get stronger with more scholarship money than UNI, making the competition less even.

With the de-emphasis on women's tennis, golf and swimming it became more difficult to be competitive with other Gateway Conference teams, but in the fall of 1986 the team finished really strong with a fifth place at the conference tournament. UNI defeated Eastern Illinois and Bradley 5-4. UNI was then defeated by Wichita State 8-1. WSU had won the tournament the year before.

The start for the 1986-87 season was ominous. The Panthers lost to Marquette, Toledo, Bradley and ISU before defeating St. Ambrose. In their next conference match they lost to Drake 9-0. The team finished the fall season 0-2 in conference matches and 5-7 overall.

Again in January 1987 there is discussion about the de-emphasis of certain sports followed by limited scholarship aid. Level three sports were considered to have marginal interest. These sports include baseball, men's and women's swimming, tennis and golf. The men's sports receive no scholarship money and the women's teams receive \$2,500 per year. UNI had one of the lowest budgets amongst the Gateway Conference schools. Level three coaches were professors that were given release time for coaching so the athletic administration did not see that the emphasis on these sports should be as great. The debate continued, but the reality was that other Gateway Conference teams, at least in tennis, were getting more scholarship support and so UNI fell behind in the ability to recruit players that could compete at this level. There was also a lag in the expertise of the coaches, who were primarily educators, to do the recruiting and have the time to keep the teams competitive as other teams became more "big time".

Spring 1987 saw the Panther women go to Hawaii for spring break. The competition was extremely tough but the experience was good for the level of competition UNI will face this year. Phillips projected a

top five finish in the Gateway Tournament in spite of the tough competition. In its first conference competition the team lost 9-0 to both Southwest Missouri State and Creighton. The Panthers hosted the Gateway Tournament April 30-May 1. Unfortunately the team finished 10th. The Panthers fell to Illinois State 7-2 followed by a loss to Southwest Missouri State 9-0 and finally to Eastern Illinois 6-3. Western Illinois won the tournament over Wichita State. It was a disappointing finish but Kern and Williams were bright spots as they recorded three of the four wins in singles for the Panthers. This concluded the season with a 3-10 overall mark.

Fall 1987 saw a new coach take over the reins of the women's tennis team. Phillips went back to teaching full time in the physical education department and Kathy Konigsmark took over the coaching duties. Konigsmark graduated from Mason City High School with nine varsity letters in tennis, volleyball and basketball. She then attended North Iowa Area Community College where she became state Region JuCo tennis champion in both singles and doubles. She then attended UNI where she competed in the top six in both singles and doubles. She graduated with an elementary education degree and then coached basketball and volleyball in Minnesota and Hampton, Iowa.



Kathy Konigsmark

This is Konigsmark's first tennis coaching position. She continued to play on a USTA Volvo Tennis Team in Waterloo while she taught third grade in Waterloo. She inherited four returning players and a strong recruit in Kelly Yuza from Cedar Rapids. The Panthers started the season with the Big Four Meet in Waterloo. Iowa dominated the meet, but three UNI players were singled out by Konigsmark as doing well -- Missy Brooks at no. 1, Julie Anderson at no. 2 and Carolyn Smith, no. 3.

UNI started the conference season with two losses to Western Illinois and Bradley. Konigsmark felt the tough competition would help the team later on in the season with conference play. The fall season ended with the annual fall Gateway Conference Singles Tournament. The team had no wins during the weekend. Konigsmark felt her team was out-talented, considering

how young her team was. The fall was spent improving and getting experience that she hoped would help them in the spring with conference play. With the lack of scholarship money, women's tennis remains competitive with teams within the state that have similar funding like St. Ambrose, Wartburg and Central, but it continued to struggle with conference foes that had much greater funding. The season ended 3-22.

The Aug. 26, 1988 Northern Iowan had an announcement requesting any interested players to meet on the tennis courts west of Bender Hall. It still was difficult to recruit enough players to field as good a team as was needed to be competitive. Three players did transfer in with some experience which should help. The goals were to avoid last place in the conference, reach a .500 mark as a team and improve individually. In the Sept. 2, 1988 NI there is an article about the lack of scholarships for Level III sports and the dissatisfaction with coaches of these sports. Coaches indicate that it is difficult to get quality players without some scholarship money so it is very difficult to compete at the Division I level with other conference teams. Most of the players are from Iowa or surrounding states as there is no draw for out-of-state players to come to UNI and pay out-of-state tuition to play tennis or other Level III sports. The primary reasoning for this situation is to support the teams that generate the most revenue, even though no sports pay for themselves, and create the most interest among the fans and media. Tennis was not considered one of these sports.

Women's tennis continued to be competitive with other Iowa schools with no scholarship money, winning meets against Central College, Grand View and Wartburg. During the early season Kim Walsh was a shining star, winning all three matches at the Western Illinois Invitational. The fall season ended with the Gateway Tournament where the Panthers recorded a 3-4 record, better than last season's 2-8 finish. Simpson and Carolyn Smith played the best at the tourney. Walsh and Mitzi Hetherington registered the only doubles win.

To begin the spring 1989 season, the team only had four players that had seen intercollegiate competition. The lack of depth made it difficult to compete in the strong Gateway Conference. UNI continued to compete against teams that had scholarship players that were ranked nationally in conference matches. The matches that UNI was competitive in were against

area schools like Graceland, Central, Concordia, St. Ambrose, St. Cloud, and Nebraska Wesleyan. Konigsmark was always positive in interviews and tried to set realistic goals, such as finishing eighth in the Gateway Tournament after finishing 10th the past two years. The amount of newspaper coverage, pictures and headlines increased during this time.

The spring saw a record of 3-4 and a last place finish in the Gateway Championship. UNI was beaten by Bradley 9-0 in the first round. Konigsmark indicated once again that many of the players from the other conference teams were from foreign countries. No coach ever said that UNI women did not compete well or give it their all, they just competed against better players. The lack of internal competition because of a low number of players being out for the team also does not push current players quite as much as a larger number of team members would have.

The fall 1989 season saw only two seasoned players on the team, Walsh of Dubuque and Darla Brendemuehl of Wisconsin. The rest were freshmen, including Jonelle Hankner of Waterloo Columbus, who won state doubles her junior and senior years. The season started with wins over Loras, Graceland and Central. The Big 4 Meet was canceled after the first day because of inclement weather. UNI had lost the first day. It placed second among six teams at the Wisconsin-La Crosse Invitational. A team record of 7-2 was compiled after beating Wartburg and Cornell.

The team did extremely well at the conference tournament. No team scores were kept, but McElwain placed fourth, Amy Keller fifth and Jesse seventh in singles. Keller and Jesse placed fourth in doubles.

In the February, 1990 Northern Iowan the team was still announcing try outs. Spring 1990 saw the team dropping matches to Wisconsin-Green Bay, Luther, Iowa State, St. Ambrose and Eastern Illinois before defeating Augustana. UNI posted a 1-8 mark after losing to Drake and Southwest (MN) State. Konigsmark remained positive about the effort put forth. In the Gateway Tournament the team lost to Indiana State 6-0, Southwest Missouri State 6-3 and Bradley 7-3. A young team riddled with injuries helped account for the lack of success.

Fall 1990 began with five returning players, including Hankner, Walsh, Jesse, McElwain and Marcy Daniel. The season was up and down as the Panthers

lost to Division I and Gateway Conference opponents while defeating smaller in-state schools. At the fall conference tournament, Hankner progressed to the finals of the consolation at no. 3 singles. Players then looked forward to a spring break trip to Orange Lake Resort in Florida.

The spring season looked bright as two former high school doubles champions led the team, Gronoski and Hankner. Joining them were Jesse, McElwain and Daniel. The team started the season with wins over Northwest Missouri and Missouri-Kansas City before losing to four conference teams -- Creighton, Illinois State, Western Illinois and Drake. Konigsmark indicated these conference teams played many more matches during the winter, giving them quite an advantage. The spring season ended with a 3-6 record. UNI finished 10th at the Gateway Tournament. The format had become whichever team won five matches first won the meet. All matches were not played. Konigsmark indicated UNI never got to doubles play, which was its strength. UNI lost to Indiana State, Bradley and Eastern Illinois. She said personal goals would be the most important as more conference matches are scheduled and the team cannot compete for wins with these teams. Gronoski won two-of-three matches for the best winning record on the team. She had a 5-4 singles record while Hankner had a 3-4 record.

At the end of the spring 1990 season, Konigsmark resigned as coach to spend more time pursuing her administration career. Because of a hiring freeze no one could be brought in from outside the University to fill the position, but Sandra Williamson, Assistant Athletics Director, indicated a quality coach was found just before the season began. Dr. Wanda Green, a UNI faculty member in physical education, accepted the position to keep the women's tennis program from being dropped for lack of a coach. Green had previously coached UNI women's basketball from 1968-1978 and field hockey from 1973-1983 when the program was dropped. She was inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame for her previous coaching success. She was a tennis player herself, competing in USTA Adult tennis.

The fall season began with eight members on the team, including seven returnees. Green saw improvement as victories and expected a number.

The start of the season was the Big Four Tournament. UNI lost every match. Those teams were extreme-

ly tough competition, especially as a beginning to a new season with a new coach. Jesse and Tiffany Dammer won first-round matches at the fall Gateway Conference meet. Several of the other matches did go three sets or to tie breakers so the team was competitive in many of the matches. The team finished with a 3-4 fall record.

The spring season began with losses to Southwest Missouri State and Bradley. The next weekend UNI lost to Eastern Illinois 6-3 with a number of close matches, then defeated St. Ambrose, a perennial tough opponent, 5-4 with a three-set win at no.1 doubles.

Doubles play continued to be the strength of the team during the spring season, also. The season concluded with the Gateway Tournament at which UNI had finished last for a number of years. This year, after numerous small personal "victories" by improving their games, the Panthers finished ninth after being picked 10th. The team won four of six singles matches to defeat Eastern Illinois 5-4. Drake set a record by sweeping every singles and doubles honor and having the Conference Coach of the Year, Jeff Vaage, a former UNI tennis athlete. UNI ended with a 5-11 spring record.

Green said at the end of the season, "You can look at records all you want, but you have to look at the levels of ability that you're playing, the competition you're playing against and a lot of factors other than just wins and losses. Based on that, I think (our) performance was high. The players never quit no matter what situation they were in. They never quit playing; they never quit trying and that's success". (Northern Iowan, May 1, 1992)

Hanker indicated that "we got our first win and it was the last opportunity for us to get a conference win. The best part of (the win) was that everybody contributed. It was fun."

This year concluded competition in the Gateway Conference. The following year, UNI joined the Missouri Valley Conference.

The Next Era – Missouri Valley Tennis

Fall 1992 once again saw a new coach for the women's team. As Wanda Green filled in for a year to keep the program after a hiring freeze last year, an instructor in physical education, Nancy Clark, was appointed the new coach. Walsh was the only player to graduate from last year's team so there is experience

to begin this season. UNI had a limited fall season with meets at the Eastern Illinois Invitational, versus St. Ambrose and Wartburg, at the MVC Tournament, and the Western Illinois Doubles Invitational.

At WIU, Daniel and Dammer, no. 2 doubles, went 2-0 to finish third in a field of 16. Hankner and Jesse, playing no. 1, finished fourth after going 2-1. UNI was only one of four teams to place two teams within the top five. Jesse ended with a 7-4 doubles record and Hankner ended with a 6-4 mark. Jesse also had the best singles record, going 4-3 at no. 1. The only team victories during the fall were against Grandview and St. Ambrose.

The spring season started with only eight players on the roster and began with three losses, all 9-0. Unfortunately, the indoor practice facility is a tennis court set up on a wooden floor in the West Gym. The surface does not react like a tennis court as the ball skids on the surface and is very fast. There is only one court so to get everyone ample practice time is very difficult. This has been the case for a number of years. The majority of the schedule is also on the road. UNI played at the UW-La Crosse Invitational and with three more losses, it went 0-11 with three more weekends on the road. At the Missouri Valley Tournament, the Panthers lost to Indiana State and Southern Illinois to finish in last place again.

The fall 1993 season saw the first of many foreign players -- Martina Zoffl from Austria. The Panthers participated in the Ball State Invitational that also included Eastern Michigan, Northern Illinois, DePaul, Toledo and Illinois State. Clark indicated UNI was the only team without full ride scholarships. One doubles team reached the no. 1 consolation finals. Dammer and her partner reached the no. 2 doubles consolation final also after an upset win over NIU. The Panthers finished the fall 2-7 with wins over Wartburg and St. Ambrose, but without a win at the individual MVC Tournament.

The spring season began early with a loss to Indiana State and was followed by a spring break trip to Hilton Head, S.C. The team played four matches and the competition was tough. UNI lost to Connecticut,



Nancy Clark

Wichita State and Millersville, but posted a win over Troy State. It finished the season with a 3-17 overall record, 0-3 in the conference and last at the MVC Tournament.

Clark began the 1994-95 season with two scholarship players from Illinois and Minnesota, Erica Fisher and Alisa Buseth. Both players found a good combination of Division I sports and an emphasis on education. This marks an era for Clark in which she had no scholarships with which to recruit. She also had three returning starters. Her hope was that the recruits would allow last year's top players to move down in the lineup and that everyone would be more successful.

While the beginning of the season started with losses, the losses were closer than in years past -- more often 5-4 -- so the team began to believe it could win. At the Eastern Illinois Invitational, Olson and Castenson made it to the semi-finals in singles. Fisher and Olson made it to the quarterfinals. Buseth and Castenson and Cari Houghton and Danielle Farr lost in the semifinals of doubles. Farr has posted a 10-3 singles record and led the team in the fall. With high hopes the team went to the Missouri Valley fall tournament. Olson got into the winner's bracket before losing to Drake's Meredith Lavelle, who went on to win the no. 4 match. Olson ended the fall season with a 12-4 singles record.

Spring break brought a second trip to Hilton Head for six matches. The trip was part reward and part work. The team started with losses to Hawaii and Western Illinois, but defeated Detroit Mercy and Chicago State.

As in previous years UNI lost its opening matches to Illinois State, Creighton and Bradley to finish last at the MVC Tournament. The entire team will be back for the next season.

Fall 1995 was another disappointing season. Gina Pena was a bright spot, finishing fifth at the Eastern Illinois Invitational to lead the team. In the Missouri Valley Tournament, she moved all the way to the finals of the consolation round. For a freshman to make it to the finals was a great accomplishment, according to

Clark. Everyone else lost in the first round. No team scores were kept.

The 1996 spring season is relatively short. UNI played five matches in Hilton Head, then two matches at Evansville, Chicago State at UNI and the MVC Tournament. The Panthers recorded a 1-9 record. At the MVC Tournament, the Panthers defeated Southwest Missouri State in the first round, setting up a worst case scenario of eighth place, but the team went on to lose to both Creighton and Evansville to tie for ninth with Bradley. Pena recorded the best winning record, 5-8 in singles and 13-10 in doubles. Senior Farr recorded the second best winning percentage, going 3-8 in singles and 5-6 in doubles.

A bright spot was the signing of two recruits. Melanie Becker of Cedar Rapids, a three-time All-Metro performer and 1995 state doubles finalist with a record of 39-12 over three years of high school tennis, will join UNI. Also, Heather Mowery transferred from Iowa. She was undefeated in matches against Missouri Valley teams with a mark of 18-0 in singles. While attending Cedar Rapids Kennedy High School, she compiled 90 singles and doubles wins. Clark hoped these new additions would help replace Castenson and Farr, who graduated after a 2-11 spring season.

Clark began the 1996-97 season indicating this could be the best women's team since she began to coach at UNI. With four returning players and three promising freshmen the team was optimistic. The women began with a 2-3 record, defeating Chicago State and Missouri-Kansas City and dropping matches to Creighton, Colorado State and Oral Roberts. As with earlier seasons, the Panthers recorded wins over lower division schools, but still struggled with conference foes. The fall season concluded with a 3-7 record. Mowery and Becker were bright spots.

Unfortunately, the spring season began the same way as the fall season with a loss to Colorado State. The campaign started with optimism after a winter of working indoors and seeing improvement in each player. After a 0-5 fall season, the team headed to Hawaii for spring break and matches against Hawaii, Hawaii-Pacific and Chaminade. The team went 0-3 in Hawaii and ended the spring season with a 2-11 mark. At the Missouri Valley Tournament, the women finished a disappointing 10th after losing to Bradley 5-4. In the first round, Southwest Missouri State defeated UNI

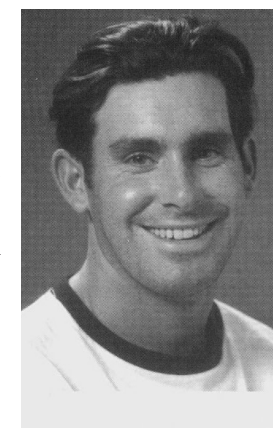
and in the second round Southern Illinois won. Playing Bradley to stay out of last place, UNI won four of six singles matches, but could not pull out the doubles.

The 1997-98 fall season began with a win against Wisconsin-Green Bay and a doubles tournament. Becker and Kendra Lindeman won the no. 2 flight doubles. The women went on to defeat Western Illinois handily in Cedar Falls. UNI swept doubles play and won four of six singles matches. The women wrapped up a successful fall with the MVC Tournament in St. Louis. Both Lindeman and Olson finished fifth in their respective flights. Most of the players won at least one match and many of the matches were decided by a tiebreaker. This was the best showing during Clark's time as the coach, over six years.

Things were looking up for UNI women's tennis. The Panthers continued the upswing starting the spring season with wins over Mankato State and Luther. The women headed to Hilton Head for spring action during which they defeated Western Kentucky soundly and Wisconsin-Eau Claire by a score of 6-3. Amie Crowley was featured in the Northern Iowan as an up and coming freshman. She definitely contributed by going 3-3 early in the season.

As the team began more conference play the competition picked up. UNI defeated Bradley, but then lost to Evansville and Indiana State. Mowery, Crowley and Becker continued to be successful in their matches. Becker and Lindeman went 3-0 over the weekend. They finished with a 12-7 match record for the spring which was much improved from previous years. Becker, Mowery, Olson, and Lisa Shanley were selected to the MVC all-academic team. The Panthers finished sixth at the conference tournament.

To begin the 1998 fall season, a new coach was appointed to lead both the men's and women's teams. After six years, Clark stepped down and her assistant from the 1997-98 season, Eric Rebhuhn, took the helm. Rebhuhn competed at Concordia College where he won over 150 matches on a team that was ranked nationally three of his four years.



Eric Rebhuhn

The team continued where it left off in the spring with a decisive win over Western Illinois. It continued its winning ways by defeating Northern Illinois the next weekend before a meet with St. Louis was rained out. Success continued at the MVC fall tournament where Becker and Lindeman lost in the semi-finals, but came back to claim third place. Lindeman had the highest finish, placing second in the singles. Shanley and Claudia Rodriguez combined for three fourth-place finishes.

The spring season began with great optimism with a prediction that the team could finish as high as third at the MVC Tournament. The Panthers began with a tough 5-4 loss to the Missouri Tigers. Things began to improve as they defeated Denver and the Air Force Academy before falling to Colorado State. They began to record wins over conference teams, beating Evansville and Creighton, then Bradley before losing to Illinois State.

At this point in the season the women are tied for third in the conference standings. The next weekend they beat Wichita State and Southwest Missouri State while losing to Drake. The spring mark was 14-11 overall with a 6-5 Missouri Valley mark. UNI hosted the MVC tournament and finished fourth. They defeated Southern Illinois then lost tough matches to Indiana State and Illinois State. Lindeman finished the season with a 21-9 record at no. 3. She had the top career winning percentage with a .789 (45-12) after the season. Becker was ninth on the career win list with 43. Crowley was fifth on the career winning percentage charts with a .647 (43-32).

Needless to say the women were excited to start the 1999 fall season after their fourth-place finish in the MVC tournament in the spring. Camille Sesanker came to UNI from Trinidad. At the MVC fall tournament, Becker finished fourth at the no. 2 position and Crowley fourth at no. 4. Jennifer Faust finished fifth at no. 6 for the best results. The no. 2 doubles team of Jessica Landes and Crowley finished fourth and no. 3 Sesanker and Faust finished fifth.

For the first time two players from UNI are attending the Rolex Invitational Tournament. Lindeman and Landes played in Columbus, Ohio Nov. 5-7. Spring season matches began earlier and earlier as the years progressed and as a result more matches were played. This season began on Feb. 5 with a loss to Northern Illinois 5-4.



Kendra Lindeman



Jessica Landes

After a convincing win over Western Illinois, Landes received Missouri Valley Player of the Week honors. After a four-match win streak, the 72nd-ranked Drake Bulldogs defeated UNI 8-1. Carrie Amsbaugh had the lone win. Crowley was selected as the MVC's Scholar Athlete of the Week as she maintained a 3.35 GPA in marketing and went 4-0 over two weekends of play.

The losing record continued as the Panthers lost to Wichita State in a tough fought 5-4 defeat and then to top-ranked Southwest Missouri State. A victory over Evansville was recorded the following weekend after a loss to Southern Illinois.

The following weekend UNI was defeated by Illinois State and Indiana State prior to going into the conference tournament. The team finished the season with a 9-16 record and a fourth-place finish at the MVC tournament.

The fall 2000 season began with a strong outing at the Bilikin Classic in St. Louis. Landes and Lindeman teamed up to finish fourth in doubles with a 2-1 record, the best record that weekend, although all of the matches were well played and many were close in a 10-team field, including Illinois State, Southwest Missouri State, Creighton, Southern Illinois, Memphis, Indiana State and Iowa State. This was a good tune up for the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament. Amsbaugh made it to the finals at no. 5 singles before falling 4-6, 7-5, 0-6; Crowley took fourth at no. 2 singles; and Amsbaugh and Fleur Muysson captured fourth at no. 2 doubles.

The team finished the season with an invitational at Drake and then the Midwest Regionals in Ann Arbor, Mich., Nov. 1-5. At Drake, Amsbaugh once again competed well by making it to the semifinals of the "B" singles event. Doubles is where the team shined most. In the "A" flight, Lindeman and Landes defeated

ISU and then defeated Missouri before losing to Drake. It was a good finish to the season.

The spring season began in grand style as the team made a road trip to Oklahoma, playing Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Oklahoma City University and Oral Roberts. The Panthers went 1-3. Amsbaugh went 3-0 in singles and Kylene Wong and Lindeman both finished 2-1 in singles while Muysson went 2-2. By April 20, the team was 15-5, second in the MVC standings with a 6-1 record and was propelled into a national ranking of 68. It defeated 57th-ranked Southwest Missouri State 4-3.

Going into the MVC Tournament, the women held a 17-5 record and a second seed. It marks just the fourth time in 18 seasons that the women weren't last in the Valley. This year is the highest seed the team had ever had. The team had come a long way from being last in the Missouri Valley Conference.

Unfortunately, the team couldn't live up to its season record and ranking. It finished seventh at the MVC Tournament. It did finish with a 18-7 overall record and a conference record of 8-1. Wong, who played no. 1 singles, accumulated a 16-4 record and a 18-7 doubles record. She also set a record for singles winning percentage at .800, placing her fourth all time. This season was led by Lindeman from Cedar Rapids and Crowley from Iowa City, both four-year letter winners. Crowley won more than 50 matches during her career. Amsbaugh and Landes were juniors and Wong, from New York City, and Korkoi Quaye, from Ndola, Zambia, vied for the sixth position. The team had players from Zambia, Holland and Australia which began a strong dependence on foreign players that continues to today.



2000-01 women's tennis team with Coach David Wolden.

Fall 2001 saw the arrival of another new coach. As with previous years both the men's and women's team had the same coach. David Wolden joined UNI after coaching at Longwood College in Farmville, Va. Rebhuhn, who coached from 1998-2001, went on to coach at St. John's University in New York. The women compiled a 41-34 mark under his direction.

Under Wolden's leadership, Longwood went from a 4-9 record in 1997 to a 24-3 record in 2000-2001. He was named the 2000 Wilson ITA NCAA Division II East Region Women's Tennis Coach of the Year.

The season began with an invitational at Bowling Green, Ohio. The Panthers claimed the no. 3 doubles title with Quaye and Mercedes Pollmeier winning a tie-breaker in the finals, 9-8. Amsbaugh played in the finals of no. 3 singles, losing 2-6, 6-3 and 1-6. Pollmeier earned a third-place finish at no. 5 singles. At the fall MVC Tournament, Amsbaugh claimed the no. 5 singles title, pulling out a three-set match against Missouri State's Laura Miller 6-4, 3-6, 6-3. She also earned a third-place finish with Wong at no. 2 doubles. Archana Reddy and Kelly Maifield claimed a fourth at no. 2 doubles.

The seasons and opponents keep expanding. The women kicked off spring 2002 playing Eastern Michigan, Notre Dame and Northern Illinois, ending the weekend 1-2, defeating only NIU. A bright spot was Wong who defeated 58th-ranked Becky Varnum of Notre Dame, 6-2, 5-7, and in an 18-point tie-breaker, she won 10-8. The conference season kicked off with wins against Bradley and Indiana State, but with a tough loss to Illinois State 4-3. These wins followed with wins against Evansville, Creighton and Southern Illinois to begin the spring on a winning note.

The Panthers entered the conference tournament tied for fourth in the standings with a 6-3 league record. UNI defeated Illinois State in the first round before bowing out in the semis against Southwest Missouri State. The format was now playing the three doubles matches first, using a pro-set, and the score recording one point for whichever team won the

doubles. In the articles in the Northern Iowan there are many more pictures that highlight players than there had been previously.

At the end of the season the athletics department, in an effort to save money in tough budget years, decided to drop men's and women's tennis and swimming. After Trial Lawyers for Public Justice indicated an intent to file a lawsuit on behalf of UNI women athletes against the University, contending non-compliance with Title IX, the women's tennis and swimming programs were reinstated in July. The programs cost \$150,000 which then needed to be raised by the athletic scholarship club. In editorials there continued to be discussion about Title IX, creating the cuts in men's sports and putting a burden on athletic department budgets. This had been and continues to be an ongoing discussion. Unfortunately, the tennis team did not have a coach and no fall season was played as a result.

The Kirtane Era

In early December, Sachin Kirtane was hired as the new women's tennis coach. Kirtane had been an assistant men's and women's coach at Valdosta State where he completed both his undergraduate and master's degrees. He helped bring Valdosta into national Division II rankings and looked



Sachin Kirtane

to do the same for UNI. From 1994-1998, he was a scholarship player at VSU, participating in the Division II National Tournament. He won the Golf South Conference Championship in 1995. He was also named the Most Valuable Player in 1996 and competed professionally from 1992-1993.

Kirtane's UNI career began a little rocky with a 7-0 loss to Ball State. One must remember however, that the team did not practice formally nor play the fall season because of the issues with tennis during the summer. Things would look up for the team, however. On April 1 it beat Western Illinois 5-2. Going into the April 15th weekend the team was 1-8 before posting wins over Bradley and Chicago State. The season ended

with a 3-10 spring record. The team finished ninth at the MVC Tournament. Kirtane indicated, however, that the team always competed well and fought to the last point. This has been a consistent thread throughout the tenure of UNI women's tennis. Regardless of how successful or unsuccessful the team was, coaches always said the players exhibited heart on the court. They never got down on themselves or gave up. After the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament sophomore Jamie Noyce was named to the MVC Scholar Athlete team as an honorable mention selection. She was the no. 2 singles player and teamed with Reddy at no. 1 doubles.

The fall 2003 season began with wins by Noyce and Marcia Willis claiming titles in the Western Illinois Tournament with wins over Truman State, Creighton and WIU. Noyce went 4-0 and Willis recorded a 3-1 record. It may be a difficult season as the team only had six players so there was no room for injury or any substitutions to be made. At the fall MVC Individual Championship, freshman Agnese Pukse, a native of Latvia, led the way tying for fifth place and finishing with a 2-1 record. Noyce and Meredith Esbeck finished seventh, and Quaye and Willis both finished 0-2. By mid-April, the Panthers were 7-9 overall and 1-6 in the conference. The team finished the spring season losing matches to Evansville and Southern Illinois, dropping to 1-7 in the conference standings and 7-10 overall. The team finished ninth at the MVC Tournament.



Meghana Paritala

It is a new year and it began on a high note. At the Creighton Invitational, UNI swept all three flights to take home three championships plus two consolation crowns, with all of the wins coming against host team Creighton. All but one of the wins were by freshmen with Meghana Paritala winning flight A, Carolina Hannes winning flight B and consolation champion

Mariana Muraca and Samantha Schnobel in doubles. This was followed by the MVC Individual Championship. Muraca and Esbeck took second place in flights 5 and 6, both losing to Illinois State players in the finals. Paritala finished fifth in Flight 1 and Hannes took fifth in the fourth flight. This was quite an improvement when at last year's tournament the highest finish was fifth.

The fall season ended on a high note when it was announced that Kirtane was selected as one of four inductees into the VSU Athletic Hall of Fame. He indicated he came to UNI because he liked every single person he met. He fit right in as he believed that players should be student-athletes and that doing well scholastically was important.

By the end of February the team stood 5-0, but with no conference matches yet under its belt. To begin March the Panthers stood 7-0 overall to hold down second place in the conference standings behind Creighton which had one conference win. By April 1 the team stood 10-1 before the heart of the conference season. The last time the team reached double-digit wins was the 2000-01 season and with the latest victory, guaranteed itself a winning season for the first time in three years. Paritala stood 11-0 in doubles and 10-1 in singles. She had been named MVC Player of the Week earlier in the season. Noyce also had the best season of her career with a 9-2 singles and 11-0 doubles record.

The Panthers headed into the MVC Tournament on a roll. They won their final three regular season matches, defeating Wichita State, Southwest Missouri and Iowa State to post their best record since 2001. The team was in fourth place in the conference with a 6-3 Valley mark and a 17-3 overall record, its best record since going 18-7 in 2001, and with its best winning percentage since going 30-6 in 1985. The team went on to conference with high expectations. It finished the season losing in the final match of the MVC Championship and just missing an automatic NCAA bid. All-MVC first team honors were recorded by Esbeck, followed by All-MVC Select Team member Paritala and honorable mention selections Sara Kendall, Muraca and Pukse. Things appeared to be on the upswing for UNI women's tennis.

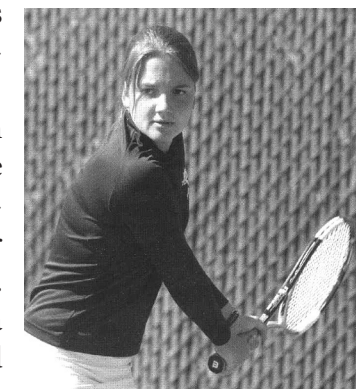
The fall season started on a high note. Sophomore Paritala advanced to the finals in the Stokstad Invitational. The next week the Panthers continued

their winning ways as Paritala brought home the Flight A championship and Kendall and Esbeck dueled for the Flight B championship, with Esbeck coming out on top. Hannes took third place and Schnobel took fifth in Flight B. For the weekend, the team went 19-7 in singles and 3-1 in doubles. At the MVC Individual Championship things were thrown for a bit of a loop when Muraca was too ill to play and the lineup had to be moved up. Paritala lost in the semi-final and eventually finished fourth, Hannes took fifth in Flight 3, Esbeck ended up sixth, and Kendall in fourth place. In Flight 2 doubles, Hannes and Esbeck finished fourth and in Flight 3 doubles, Schnobel and Kendall finished third. After last season's second-place finish at the MVC Tournament, the Panthers are picked to finish third in the conference according to the preseason coaches poll.

The hopeful spring season began with wins over Western Illinois and Wisconsin-Green Bay. The Panthers continued to roll by defeating Chicago State, Eastern Illinois, South Dakota State, and Northern Illinois, beginning the season 7-0. An interesting article in the Northern Iowan on Feb. 3, 2006 asked why the athletic department didn't market all sports better and why more students and community didn't support all successful teams. As the team became more successful and more articles appeared in the NI, the interest seemed to increase. By the end of April the Panthers stood 1-1 in conference play, having just defeated Creighton and posting a mark of 11-2 overall.

The Panthers went into the conference tournament seeded sixth after posting a mark of 4-5 in MVC play. The team finished 14-6 overall with a 9-2 home record. Esbeck was named MVC all-conference at the no. 6 singles position. She had a 20-6 overall singles record. Paritala was named to the MVC Singles All-Select team having posted a 22-8 mark at no. 1. The Panthers lost to Illinois State at the MVC Tournament to finish the season.

The UNI women earned the Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-Academic team award for the third year in a row. Also, Hannes, Muraca and Schnobel were named ITA Scholar Athletes for



Carolina Hannes

the fall 2005 and spring 2006 seasons. To receive all-academic honors a team must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.20 or above and all eligible student-athletes who appear on the eligibility form must have completed one or more varsity matches. Individuals must have been a varsity letter winner, have a GPA of at least 3.50 for the current academic year and have been enrolled for at least two semesters.

The 2006-07 season began with the signing of Sampada Kanade from Mumbai, India to play for the Panthers. Kanade was consistently ranked in the top 10 of India's juniors. The team returned seven of eight players from last year's 14-7 team. At the first tournament of the year, Paritala won the no. 1 singles position after finishing second last year. Hannes clinched first place in the B Flight consolation singles. The last match of the fall was the MVC Individual Tournament. Taynara Moraes and Paritala clinched first place in the no. 3 Flight doubles. Paritala also clinched third place at no. 1 singles, Kanade placed second at no. 3 singles and Hannes finished fifth at no. 5 singles. Moraes clinched fourth place in Flight 4 and Muraca placed second in the no. 6 Flight. Schnobel placed third at no. 7 singles.

The spring season began with many successes. The Panthers stood 6-0 at the end of February having just defeated Eastern Illinois and Western Illinois. At mid-season, they had just lost to 27th-ranked Wichita State, but overall they stood 13-4 and 2-1 in the conference. The top performer thus far is Paritala with a 19-8 singles record and a 41-12 two-year record at no. 1. Moraes at no. 4 had also contributed greatly with a 18-8 record. The Panthers finished the season with a 17-5 overall mark and a 6-2 conference record, good enough to finish second in the standings. Muraca was named MVC Athlete of the Week when she went 3-0 in singles at no. 5 and 2-1 in doubles. Prior to the conference tournament, Muraca was named MVC Scholar Athlete first team for the second time. Hannes was recognized as an honorable mention MVC Scholar Athlete. At the MVC Tournament where the Panthers were seeded second they were defeated by sixth seed Southern Illinois 4-0. The team finished the season 17-6 overall and 6-2 in MVC play.

Kirtane signed a new recruit to begin the fall season. Diana Mendez from Bogota, Columbia was ranked fourth in Columbia's under-18 junior rankings. For the fourth year in a row UNI was recog-

nized with the ITA All-Academic award and Muraca and Schnobel received similar individual honors. The season started with the Stokstad Invitational where Paritala was the defending no. 1 singles champion. This time she lost in the second round. Freshman recruit Mendez lost in the semifinals in Class B and Hannes played her way into the Class B consolation finals. At the next tournament, Ashton Schwerin and Mendez won the Star Doubles Flight at the Minnesota Invitational. At the MVC Individual Tournament, the Panthers sent two singles and two doubles teams to the finals. All lost in the final matches and because of inclement weather, third- and fourth-place matches were cancelled. Hannes lost at no. 5, Mendez lost at no. 6, and the duo of Kanade and Moraes lost their bid at no. 1 doubles against a team that won its third MVC doubles crown.

During the off-season Kirtane signed two more players to Letters of Intent. Talia Jang-Stewart of Calgary, Alberta was a top junior Canadian player and it was felt she would be a good fit because of her strong academic credentials as well as her tennis ability. Lisa Gonzales-Garrido from Vinaro, Spain also joined the Panther squad. She had been ranked as high as 120 in the open rankings in Spain. She also played tournaments across Europe so she was expected to add great depth to the UNI squad.

UNI started the spring season with a loss at the Hawkeye Invitational against extremely strong competition but bounced back and defeated Missouri-Kansas City and Western Illinois to propel the spring season. The Panthers started conference play with a win over Drake, but then lost to Indiana State and Southern Illinois. After a 16-9 overall record and a 5-6 conference record the Panthers were seeded seventh and lost to no. 1 seed Wichita State in the final round. The second-place finish ties for the program's best in MVC tournament play. The team became the first no. 7 seed to compete for the MVC championship. WSU won its 10th conference title and third in the last four years. The team returns all except Moraes next year. She ended her season ranked seventh in career all-time doubles victories with 69 and she was ranked sixth in all-time singles with 72 wins.

UNI continued to sign foreign players by adding Alix Bex from Belgium for the 2009-2010 season. Bex is a 6-2 left-hander who should start for the Panthers her

freshman year. She was a top-ranked junior in Belgium with extensive tournament experience.

Kirtane was named to the NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Tennis Committee for a four-year term. This committee selects the 64 teams and the singles and doubles players invited to the NCAA Championships. This appointment gave UNI as well as the Missouri Valley a voice nationally. Kirtane also became UNI's all-time win leader when he surpassed Mazula's record. In eight seasons, Kirtane tallied 90 victories. The team received recognition as an Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-Academic team for the sixth consecutive year. Gonzales-Garrido, Kanade (second award, also 2008), Kunzelmann, Mendez and Jang-Stewart were named individual winners.

After playing at the Minnesota Invitational and the University of Illinois-Chicago Invitational with mixed results, the Panthers headed to the MVC Individual Tournament in Evansville. After two days the Panthers found one singles and one doubles team in the finals -- Kunzelmann at no. 4 singles and Kunzelmann and Kanade at no. 2 doubles -- but both lost. It was a good individual finish for both players.

Kirtane continued actively recruiting to build an even stronger UNI team. In November he signed two student-athletes to National Letters of Intent -- Chelsea Moore of Camanche, Iowa and Krissy Lankelma from Marshalltown. These are the first Iowa recruits in several years. Lankelma was ranked as high as no. 11 in the Missouri Valley and was the Iowa Junior Player of the Year in 2009. She held an overall high school record of 75-6. As a junior she won the state title with a 24-0 record. Moore won the 1A state singles title as a freshman in 2007 and 2008 and was runner up in 2009.

The Panthers started conference play with wins over Drake and Creighton followed by a loss to Wichita State. They continued conference play losing to Southern Illinois before topping Evansville. They ended the regular season with a loss to Illinois State and a win over Bradley. At the conference tournament, Kanade and Kunzelmann were named to the 2010 MVC Scholar Athlete First Team while Gonzales-Garrido received honorable mention accolades. Phoebe Walker earned an at-large spot on the Valley's All-Select squad. She registered a 12-8 (2-5 MVC) record at no. 1 singles.

After defeating Evansville in the first round of the MVC Tournament the Panthers once again lost to

no. 1 seed Wichita State. As a fourth seed UNI lost in the semi-final match. UNI returns all except Kanade next year. She ended her career with 69 wins, tying for seventh in career wins.

At the conclusion of the season UNI was recognized by the NCAA for multi-year Academic Progress Rate scores. It posted APR scores in the top 10 percent of all tennis squads. This is the fifth year the NCAA has recognized programs and UNI has been recognized all five years. For the seventh year in a row UNI also earned the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's All-Academic Team honor. Kanade is a three-time individual winner and Gonzales-Garrido, Kunzelmann and Jang-Stewart are two-time ITA Scholar Athlete awardees.

2010-2011 began with the Drake Invitational where UNI has had some success. This year was a banner year for the team as it won all five singles brackets contested. Walker won the A Flight, Kunzelmann had to defeat fellow teammate Lankelma to win the Flight B section, and Moore also faced fellow teammate Katy Delagardelle to conclude the Flight C section. Gonzales-Garrido won the Flight A consolation round while Stefannia Sampaio had to default in the finals. The Panthers followed up this weekend with the UNI Invitational against Iowa, Iowa State, Missouri, Minnesota, Drake, North and South Dakota, South Dakota State, Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Bradley.

Walker at no. 1 lost to Iowa in the finals. Moore was eliminated in the semifinals of the Gold Flight and Kunzelmann lost in the finals. Lankelma lost in the semifinals of the Silver Flight. In doubles, Kunzelmann and Moore were defeated in the finals of the Gold Flight. Next up was the MVC Individual Championship where the Panthers came up a little short of the target. Lankelma at no. 4 was the lone finalist, but was defeated in the final. Lankelma and Sampaio were defeated in the finals also at no. 2 doubles.

To start the spring season Lara Okicki, one of the top junior players from Slovenia, joined the team. Also for the first time three doubles teams are in the top 90 of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association women's doubles rankings. Kunzelmann and Lankelma are ranked 68th after posting a 4-0 mark in the fall. Kunzelmann and Moore are ranked 90th after a mark of 5-2. Laia Gonzalez and Walker tied for the 90th ranking after tallying a 7-2 mark.

The spring season began with a match against Iowa at the Black Hawk Tennis Club in Waterloo. Kunzelmann at the no. 2 position had the lone win. In another interstate match UNI lost a close decision to Iowa State 4-3. The Panthers won two of the three doubles matches to win the doubles point, but in singles Walker, Gonzalez-Gorrindo, Lankelma and Moore all lost in singles. Okicki and Kunzelmann won, but the team fell one match short.

During spring break the team headed to New York. The Panthers defeated Quinnipiac 5-2 and Army 7-0 to move to 9-5 thus far. In early April they defeated Drake 5-2 after which Gonzalez-Garrido was named the MVC Athlete of the Week. She held a 10-6 singles spring record and a 14-2 record in doubles with Walker. By April 17 the women held a 5-0 MVC record having defeated Drake, Illinois State, Bradley, Southern Illinois and Evansville. Going into the last weekend of MVC play they defeated Creighton to go 6-0 in the conference. They were tied with Wichita State for first place in the conference standings. This set up a shootout in Waterloo with the no. 1 seed in the MVC Tournament going to the victor. UNI won the doubles point winning two out of three doubles matches, but in singles the Panthers could only muster one singles win with Kunzelmann at no. 4 spot.

Kirtane said it was a great battle and he felt this would give the team confidence going into the MVC Championship. In the first round UNI cruised past Creighton and met Illinois State in the semifinals. The no. 2 ranked Panthers fell to no. 6 Illinois State 4-2. The no. 3 doubles team of Kunzelmann and Lankelma won, but the team lost the doubles point. The two singles winners were Gonzalez at the no. 2 position and Moore at no. 5.

Kirtane took home Coach of the Year honors while Gonzalez-Garrido, Kunzelmann and Moore earned spots on the all-conference team. Walker was selected to the All-Select team. Doubles teams Walker/Gonzalez-Garrido and Lankelma/Kunzelmann earned all-conference honors. UNI completed the season with a 15-8 record, 6-1 in the MVC. Gonzalez-Garrido and Kunzelmann were also named to the MVC Scholar Athlete first team. Kunzelmann ended the season with a 19-5 record and owns the highest career winning percentage of 74 percent. She is tied for sixth on the all-time single season's list with 27 wins. Gonzalez-Garrido

sits at sixth place on the all-time doubles wins. Kunzelmann also was named to the College Sports Information Directors of America Academic All-District VII Women's At-Large University Division Team. She posted a season record of 27-8. By making the 10-member team, she advanced to the national ballot for Academic All-America consideration.

It's a Wrap

As women's tennis at UNI continues there is a lot to live up to. There is a tradition of high academic performance as well as tennis expertise. A number of historical changes can be noted. Major changes have occurred in the amount of practice permitted from six hours for two months in the spring to year-round training and practice. The length of the season was another major change over the years; the number of matches has obviously increased by leaps and bounds; the players began as all from Iowa, then players from Iowa and surrounding states and finally to an almost entirely international team; the scoring of tennis matches also

changed as doubles moved to pro sets and counted for only one point in the match rather than three points; conference affiliation also changed over the years; and of course there have been multiple coaches with the first ones coming from the women's physical education department.

Another change has been in the area of facilities. The first tennis courts the women used were in the center of main campus with big trees in the back drop and Prexis's Pond to the south. When the business building was planned these beautiful courts were torn out and new courts were built on the north edge of campus by the Towers Dorms. These courts were never as nice as the original courts because there were low spots and the finish didn't last. The team has moved matches to Byrnes Park in Waterloo or in inclement weather, to the Black Hawk Tennis Center.

Some may say not all of the changes have been positive, but athletics evolve over time and each team must evolve also to stay competitive in the league. Women's tennis is definitely in a positive position in the Missouri Valley and has received national recognition.

Men's and Women's Track and Field/Cross Country

David Whitsett

Men's Track and Cross Country

Early History (1892-1927)

The very beginnings of physical education at the Iowa State Normal School (ISNS) were in 1876 when the institution began participating in town ball (that's what baseball was often called then), soccer, and football as well as in track and field events. However, for our purposes, it might be more useful to mark the origins of track and field as occurring in 1892, when approximately 40 male students at ISNS organized what they called the ISNS Athletic Association. Their goal was to generate improved teams in football, baseball and track & field at the school. This should probably be considered the birth of track and field at ISNS. The Athletic Association held its first track meet as part of a field day later that spring at what was known then as "Dr. Pettit's grounds and track." This was actually a horse racing track which was part of the Cedar Valley Fair Grounds located about one-half mile east of campus, approximately where Peet Junior High School stands today. The spring field day track meet became an annual event and included such events as 50, 100, 220 and 440 yard dashes, a one-mile run and various jumping and throwing field events. Of course, the school had no coaches at the time so the students trained and coached themselves. Two years later, in 1894, the ISNS faculty formed an Athletics Board to supervise the school's athletic activities and thus athletics became, for the first time, a formally recognized part of the institution's activities. Also in 1894, ISNS became a member of the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Association and this year marked the beginning of the school's participation in competitive track and field with other institutions such as Fayette, Lenox and Ellsworth Colleges.

According to Lang's Centennial History of UNI, "In the spring of 1904, systematic work began at

the Normal in order to train participants to participate in events during the spring track season." When the Iowa Intercollegiate Field Meet took place, college and university participants expressed surprise to find the Normal team had accumulated more points than several of the four-year colleges. It had scored sufficiently to "scare the Big Four--Drake, Ames, Iowa City and Grinnell....One reason for the good showing was the work of sprinter Frank 'Red' Hamilton and half-miler Don Campbell." The 1905 ISNS yearbook identifies Hamilton as "the greatest college sprinter in Iowa," and indeed he was. "Reddy," as he was called, held the ISNS records in the 100, 220 and 400 yard dashes as well as the broad jump. Although the team had several outstanding performers, it was Hamilton's frequent winning performances that were in great part responsible for the fact that ISNS dominated track meets in these years among the normal schools of Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois and Kansas.

Even though inter-collegiate football was suspended at the Normal School in 1905, inter-school contests continued in basketball, baseball and track. The spring of 1906 brought a remarkable string of achievements by the ISNS track team. First, it captured its conference track title, winning 10 of 14 individual events. Hamilton was again the star performer, excelling in the dashes, low hurdles, broad jump and shot put, but he had a lot of help from G.B. Engleman in the high jump, W.C. Wood in the pole vault and Carl Merner in the weights, among others. Just one week later, the team placed third in a meet which included all the higher education institutions in the state of Iowa, finishing ahead of Iowa State and Drake. This was especially significant because ISNS was still a two-year school while the others were four-year institutions. ISNS then received an invitation to participate in the "Big Nine" meet in Chicago, where



Frank "Red" Hamilton

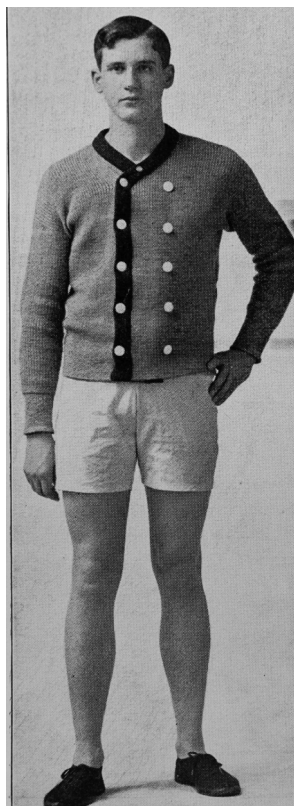
Hamilton surprised most observers by winning the 100 and 220 yard dash events. The Normal's point total in this meet was exceeded only by the Universities of Michigan and Chicago. This was Hamilton's final appearance for ISNS because his performance at the meet resulted in his being solicited by several trainers to attend their schools; he entered Northwestern University where he began medical studies.

Hamilton's departure certainly weakened the ISNS team but track activity did not diminish. Evidence for this is that, in 1907 the school began the practice of awarding athletic "letters" for outstanding track performance. An "N" (for Normal) was awarded to any student who set a new ISNS record or who garnered five team points in dual meets or one team point in the state meet. Among the first "lettermen" was Carl Merner, identified in the 1907 ISNS yearbook as "Normal's best all-around athlete since the departure of the invincible "Reddy." Merner set school records in the hammer throw and discus and led the team in the dashes and hurdles.

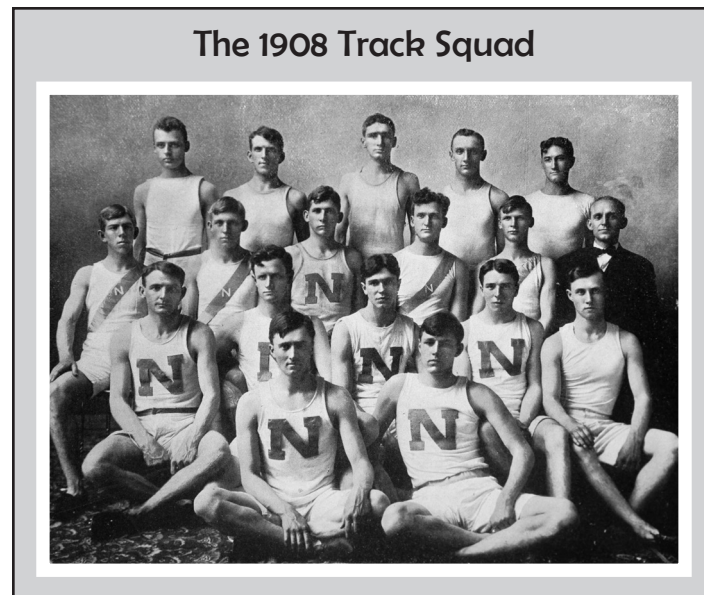
In May of 1908, the school initiated an annual invitation track meet in which Coe and Cornell Colleges competed against the home squad. In that first edition of the meet the ISNS team, coached by C.B. Simmons, tied with Coe and outscored Cornell.

Another indication of continuing interest in running activities was the founding of the Normal Cross Country Club, whose members participated in local and intercollegiate meets. When the school's first gymnasium (the East Gym) was dedicated on June 5, 1905, ISNS had its first indoor running track, which was included in the building's facilities. A quarter-mile cinder track was also constructed that year.

In this era, most teacher training institutions such as the Iowa State Teachers College (the name was changed in 1909 when the school became a four-year



Carl Merner



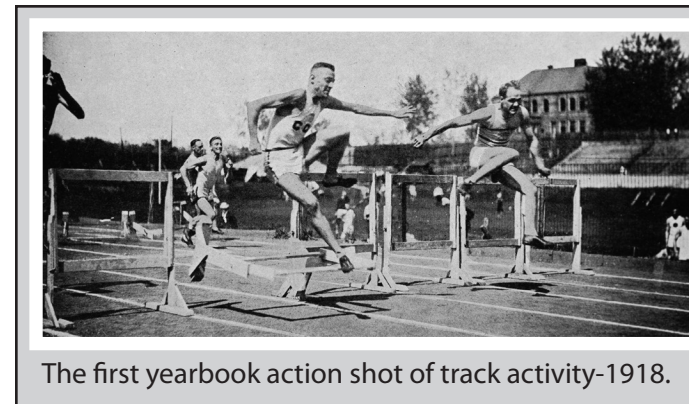
The 1908 Track Squad



The new outdoor cinder track.

institution) did not have independent intercollegiate athletic teams as many other institutions did. Rather the teams were made up of regular students who were required to participate in a variety of sports as part of their teacher preparation. The way this worked can be illustrated by the fact that in 1915 the faculty made athletics a part of the curriculum so that any male student who had not completed the required credit in physical education was, "assigned to the football squad so that he could be qualified to manage such games for high schools. In succeeding terms the same system applied to basketball and track." (Lang, p.395).

The 1912 ISTC track team consisted of only nine men but, even with such a small group, it did quite well. Led by team captain W.C. Schluter's performances in the mile run, the team scored well in its meets and one

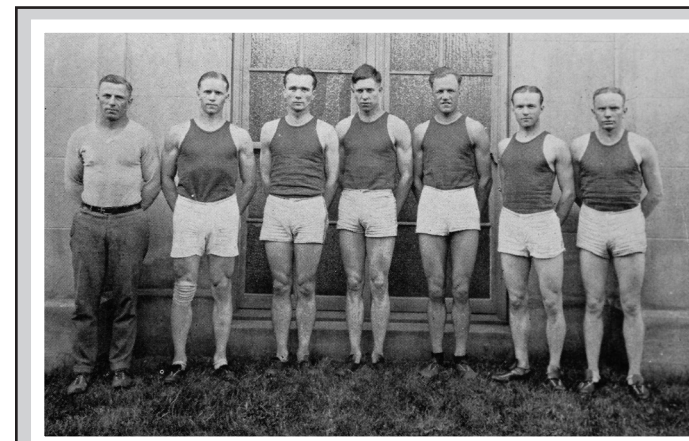


The first yearbook action shot of track activity-1918.

of Hamilton's school records was finally broken when Myron Begaman cleared 21-7 in the broad jump. In March of 1913, ISTC led the formation of the Hawkeye Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. In addition to ISTC, Ellsworth, St. Joseph, Parsons, Charles City, St. Ambrose, Central, Buena Vista, Upper Iowa, Penn, Luther, Iowa Wesleyan and Tabor Colleges became members of the new organization. Lang reports (p. 469) that, "In the first Hawkeye Conference track meet, ISTC garnered three banners and twenty-four medals to claim the championship."

The ISTC yearbooks are a rich source of information on the history of the school's track and field programs, and beginning with the 1918 book, there are often action photos of the teams' meets.

The 1918 yearbook also documents the effects of World War I on ISTC's track program. It reports that on March 22nd of 1917, Coach Berkstresser issued his first call for candidates and about 50 men responded, but on April 6th war was declared and "the number of track men dwindled down, joining the army and leaving to



Coach Paul Bender with his crack relay team of Miller, Churchill, Perry, Fottal, Ransom and Elson.

work on farms, until there were hardly any prospects of a winning team and all dual meets were cancelled." For the next three years, ISTC had no track teams, but in 1920 the program resumed and rebuilding began. In 1921, an experienced athlete and coach, Mr. Paul Bender joined the ISTC staff and, in addition to other assignments in football and wrestling, took charge of the track program, which had a revival under his direction and won the conference championship in 1925. Bender benefited from a major curricular development at ISTC. At the beginning of the 1923 academic year, the school began offering a four-year course in Men's Physical Education and this attracted potential athletes from all parts of the state, which resulted in a larger male enrollment than ever before.

Also in 1925, the West (Men's) Gymnasium was built and this facility, along with its adjacent athletic field just west of the building, provided offices, classrooms, recreational areas and, most important for track and field, a new quarter-mile cinder track.

The Dickinson Years (1927-1962)

One of the most significant developments in the history of ISTC track and field occurred in 1927 when Arthur D. Dickinson became head track coach. This was the first time ISTC had ever had a track coach whose primary responsibility was to the track program. Dickinson had been hired to coach the basketball team in 1924 and had achieved great success with that program. He now turned the bulk of his attention to track and field and, as we will see, built an outstanding program



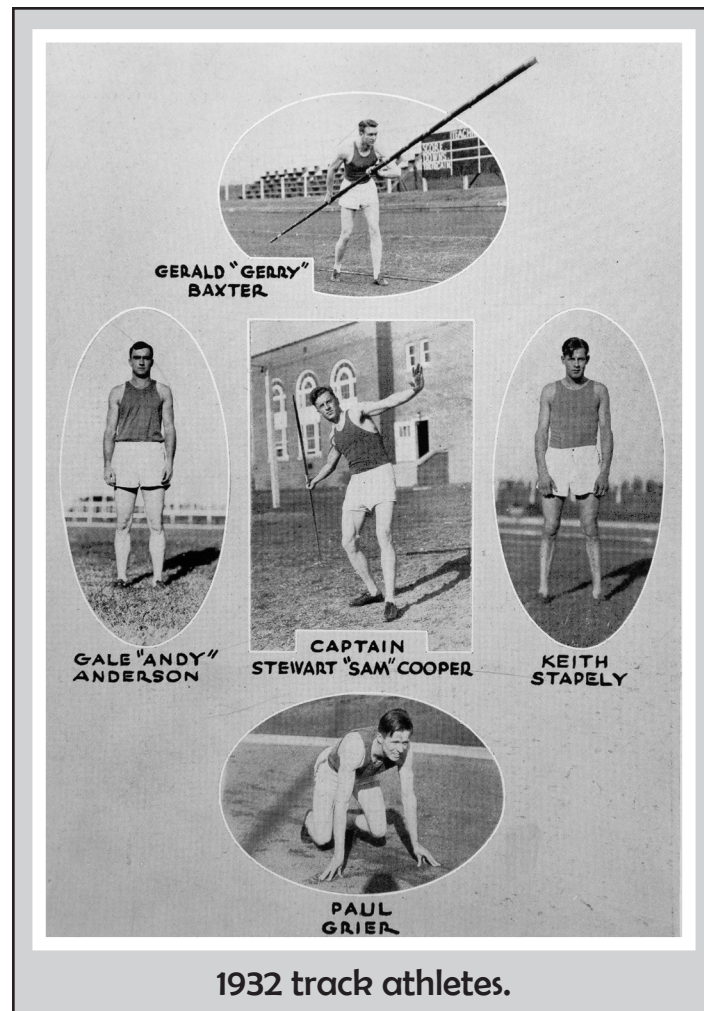
Coach Arthur D. Dickinson (center)

with the help of Bender who assisted him and focused on the field events while continuing to coach football as well. Dickinson was born in Shellsburg, Iowa in 1896. After starring in baseball and basketball at Shellsburg High, he came to ISTC and won nine letters in baseball, basketball and track before graduating in 1917. He served in the U.S. army before beginning his coaching career in Washington, Iowa in 1920. He then coached at Marshalltown High School before returning to ISTC in 1924.

The 1927 ISTC yearbook shows that the Dickinson years got off to a rousing start. It says, "The track season was one of the most successful in the history of our school. At the Drake Relays the Teacher half-mile relay team won their section while the mile relay team placed fourth in their section. At the Hamline Relays the Tutor half-mile relay team broke the relay record in that event, and the medley relay team also broke the relay record in their race." Over the succeeding years Dickinson and his assistants, "... produced track teams that won conference championships in both the Iowa Collegiate Conference and North Central Conference. In one period of ten years, his teams won eleven championships, including both conference championships in 1935. Their victories in dual meets outnumbered losses by a ratio of more than 4 to 1. Along with wrestling, track became 'a top sport' at the College." (Lang, Vol. II, p.89)

Coach Dickinson's son, Art, (a member of his Dad's team in the late 1940s) recalls that his father used painting as a "stress reliever" all during his years as a coach. "He painted mostly in oils and was very good," says his son. "I remember how hard he worked at his coaching. For example, he would spend hours taking sequences of photos of jumpers and throwers to show us how we could improve. As a teenager, I naturally vacillated between thinking he was a hero and thinking he was too hard on me, but there is no doubt in my mind now that he was outstanding both as a coach and as a father." Today Coach Dickinson's paintings hang on the walls of both his son's and daughter's homes as well as in the home of his successor, Coach Jack Jennett.

In 1929, The Berg Drug Company of Cedar Falls began presenting "Most Valuable Player Awards" for each of the four major sports of football, baseball, basketball and track at ISTC. The first track award was won by the multi-talented Red Luke, who according



to the Old Gold, "could do most anything in track and field." In 1929 and 1930, the ISTC track team captured both the indoor and outdoor Iowa Conference titles. In 1931, it again won the outdoor title (over 13 other teams) and probably would have won the indoor title as well if snow-blocked roads had not prevented them from getting to Des Moines for the event.

Dickinson was also coaching the cross-country teams during these years with equal success. For example, the 1932 yearbook says, "Continuing their usual custom, Coach A.D. Dickinson's hill and dale men kept their perfect record intact against Iowa Conference foes during the fall of 1931 defeating Penn and Simpson. It was the third consecutive year that the cross-country aggregation has maintained a perfect record against Iowa Conference teams."

In the 1934 yearbook write-up on track and field, there are two especially notable details. One is that the teams are sometimes referred to as the Panthers, whereas in previous years they were invariably called the Tutors.

Some say the idea of referring to ISTC's teams as "panthers" came from a member of the football team. For some years they were sometimes called "Tutors" and sometimes "Panthers" but slowly, the latter name became the more common one. Another first for 1934 is that, for the first time, reference is made of track athletes having transferred to ISTC from "junior colleges." Specifically, it was noted that, "Orville Nichols, with a Pacific Coast record of 48.7 in the double furlong and Roland White, a number one pole-vaulter and broad-jumper, added greatly to the strength of the Panther team." Nichols turned out to be an especially versatile contributor to the team, excelling at dashes, relays and javelin and garnering the "Most Valuable" award.

The Iowa State Teachers College Relays event had been in existence since 1922, but had been limited to high school students during the early years. In 1934, a college division was added as part of the Relays and the event began attracting several hundred athletes each year and thus became a very useful recruiting tool for ISTC. This was particularly significant for the track program because the rules of the North Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, which ISTC joined in 1934, declared that, "Athletic directors or coaches shall not by the distribution of literature, or by personal interview of their own seeking, endeavor to recruit athletes. It is legitimate for them, in speeches or in response to inquiries by writing or in casual conversation, to point



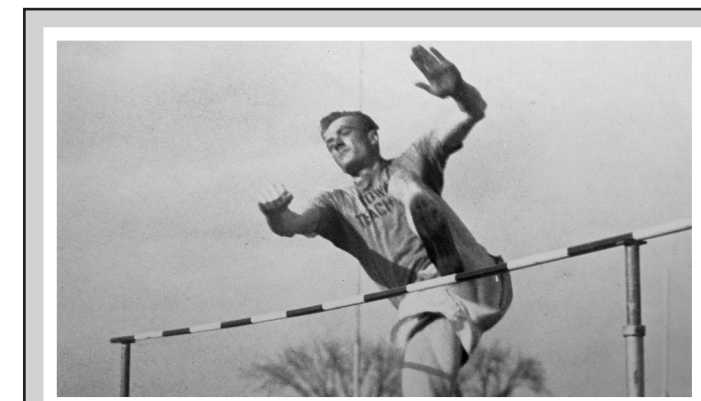
Orville Nichols

out what they believe to be the advantages of attending the institution which they represent, but further they shall not go."

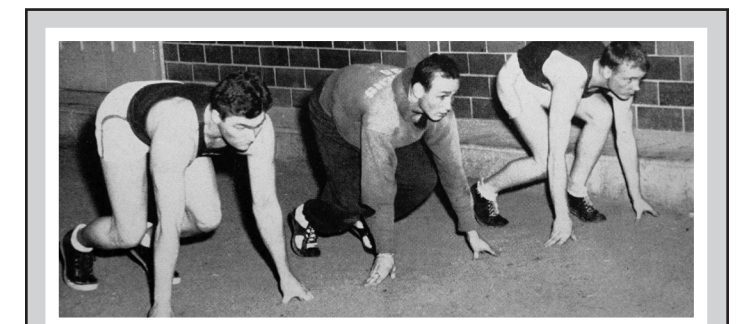
The string of Iowa Conference championships won by ISTC was finally broken in 1937, but they soon returned to the top, winning the conference titles again in 1939, '40 and '41.

The program was aided by the completion of an indoor track as part of the new O.R. Latham field which allowed Dickinson's men to get very valuable early spring practice and conditioning work that had been difficult or impossible in prior years. This was a packed dirt track which was under the west side grandstands of the field. It was unusual in that it consisted of two straights each about 60 yards long and two very tight U-turns rather than the more traditionally-shaped, quarter-mile surface typical of outdoor tracks. It was poorly lit, often damp and musty but was, nevertheless, used for indoor meets even though it afforded almost no room for anyone to watch the competition.

This track later became the scene of one of the most recounted incidents in the history of ISTC's track program. Here's what took place in the early spring of 1954. Beginning in 1947, the area above the track was converted into a men's dormitory which became known as Stadium Hall. It consisted of 20 rooms each housing five students. One night, when the dorm director was gone, the residents decided to divide into two teams, the "north and the south," and have a water fight. The fight was conducted using two hoses which they dragged up the stairs from the track below. For over 30 minutes the teams squirted streams of water at each other and, of course, the water ended up running off the dorm's concrete floors down onto the track.



High jumper Henry Loats displaying the hurdle method, a precursor to the scissors method.



Collinge, Lee and Abney working out on the indoor track.

Naturally, since it was a dirt surface, it did not handle the deluge very well. Around 8 a.m. the next morning, Coach Dickinson arrived as he usually did and found his track a sea of mud. He was incensed, especially because it was indoor track season and his athletes needed to practice. After an investigation of the incident conducted by Dean Paul Bender (Dean of Men), it was concluded that the ringleaders of the water fight could not be identified and, consequently, nobody was ever punished.

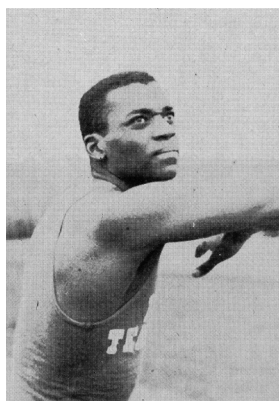
Several inter-collegiate meets were also held on the outdoor track in O.R. Latham Stadium. The stadium was originally called the ISTC Stadium, but, when ISTC President O.R. Latham died suddenly on July 9, 1940, the decision was made to name the stadium in his honor and so, at homecoming on Oct. 26, 1940 the stadium was dedicated as the O.R. Latham Stadium. He had been the college's third president and, as a strong believer in the value of intercollegiate athletics, had been instrumental in seeing that the stadium project was brought to a successful completion.

The 1941 season was a particularly strong one for ISTC. The team won the Iowa conference meet with a total of 78 points, which was more than double that of its nearest competitor. However, the late 1941 onset of U.S. involvement in WWII dealt a devastating blow to most college athletic programs and ISTC track and field was no exception. After a disappointing 1942 season in which a depleted team finished third in the conference meet (which was won by newcomer Augustana), all track activity at ISTC was discontinued for the duration of the war.

The track program resumed again in the spring of 1946, when, on Coach Dickinson's first day of practice, more than 40 men showed up, led by Johnny Clark, who was later the holder of the ISTC 440 yard dash record at 49.2 seconds. The ISTC Relays, which had been open during the war only to high school entrants, were now once again opened to college athletes for the first time since 1942 and, in the 23rd running of the event, the Relays received a near record number of entries. More than a dozen colleges and over 40 high schools sent teams. This meet provided ISTC with some fine competition to help the team prepare for the resumption of North Central Conference activity which was slated to take place in 1947.

Nineteen-forty-seven was a very significant year in the history of ISTC track and field for two reasons. First, the annual Teachers College Relays were the highlight of the spring sports program on campus. Seventeen colleges and 35 high schools sent a record total of 1,069 athletes to make the 1947 relays the largest in the 24-year history of the event. Rain and cold weather could not dampen the enthusiasm of either the fans or the competitors.

The 1947 season was a milestone one for the track program for another reason which was that the program welcomed its first black athlete. His name was Dave Williams and he became a consistent winner in the shot and discus for ISTC. Incidentally, Williams' workout partner was Art Dickinson (yes, the coach's son) who was an ISTC student from '46 to '50, and a discus and javelin competitor on his dad's team. Williams was closely followed by a second black athlete, George Potter, who was a sprinter and member of the relay teams on the 1948 squad.



Dave Williams

After failing to capture the North Central Conference title in the prior two years, Coach Dickinson's men returned to the top position in 1949 in spite of the fact that their leading scorer, Don Green, missed the conference meet due to an attack of appendicitis. In addition, the team was able to tie Minnesota for first place in the ISTC Relays, took first place overall at the Dakota Relays and won the mile relay at the Drake Relays.

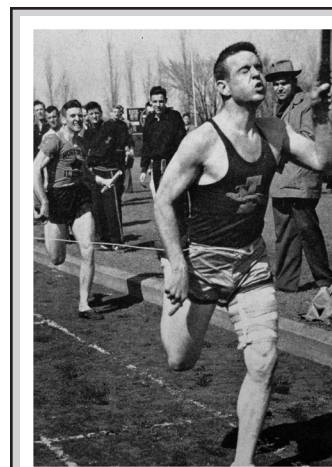


The men who made up the Teacher's College relay teams: Jim Saunders, Dick Purdy, Ed Herrmann, George Potter and Doug Pinkham.

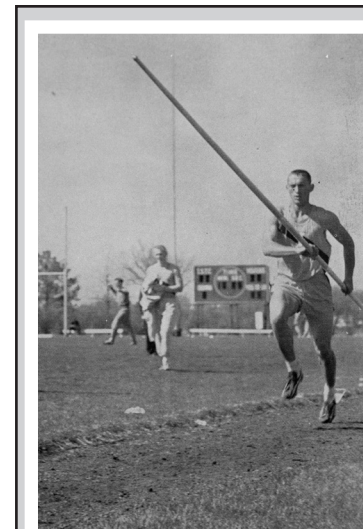
Although the conference title escaped ISTC in 1950, the dual meet success continued when the team won all seven of its regularly scheduled meets to finish undefeated for the second straight year. In 1951, ISTC regained the North Central Conference title, nipping South Dakota by just one-half point. Green led the team in scoring for the third straight year and Coach Dickinson was chosen the outstanding Coach of the Year in the conference.

The program continued to be a conference stand-out all during the 1950s under Dickinson's leadership. In 1956 for example, the cross-country team was undefeated in five meets and the track team was also undefeated and won the North Central Conference title. Both the cross-country and track teams went undefeated again in 1957 but the conference meet was cancelled due to inclement weather so no NCC conference champion was named. In 1958, Dickinson again led his men to the conference cross-country crown, while the track team took second in the conference. Both remained undefeated in dual meets. In both '56 and '57, the team's outstanding athlete was Ron Sturch, who was both a pole-vaulter and a sprinter.

In the early 1960s, Dickinson's team kept its undefeated dual meet streak going (by 1961, it was over 30 in a row) and set a great many new school records in both indoor and outdoor events. In 1961, ISTC changed its name to the State College of Iowa (SCI). The next year Coach Dickinson reluctantly resigned as



Don Green anchors the TC 440 relay team.



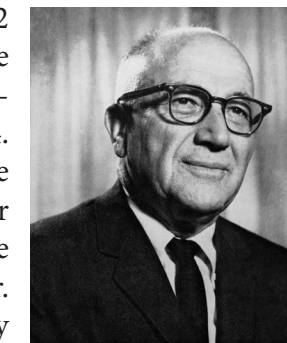
Ron Sturch, TC's versatile trackman



Undefeated Cross Country Team

L-R: Roger Burkhart, LeRoy Crawford, Charles Neman, Darrell Conway, Jim Gardner, Arnie Westphal, Rudy Kubik, John Peterson.

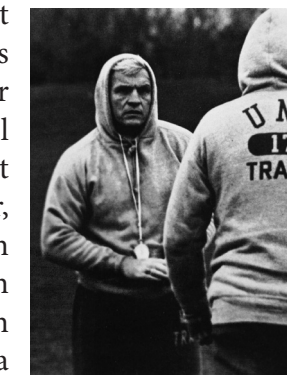
head track coach due to his failing health. He had led the program since 1927 and in those 34 years, his teams never finished lower than third in their conference; they were first 18 times, second 12 times and third four times. He had accumulated a phenomenal dual meet record of 128-14. When he stepped down, the SCI Relays, the school's premier track event, was renamed the Dickinson Relays in his honor. Coach Dickinson passed away in 1966.



Coach Art Dickinson

The Jennett Years (1962-1976)

John H. "Jack" Jennett succeeded Dickinson as SCI's head track coach in 1962. After an outstanding high school career at Sac City, Jennett went to Drake for his collegiate career, where he won three letters in football and three in track. In his senior year, he was captain of the football team and was a Central Collegiate Conference finalist in the pole vault. Upon his graduation from Drake in 1953 he spent a year as a graduate assistant with the school's football team and then went to Lake City as head football and track coach in 1954. His track team won both the Class B indoor and outdoor state

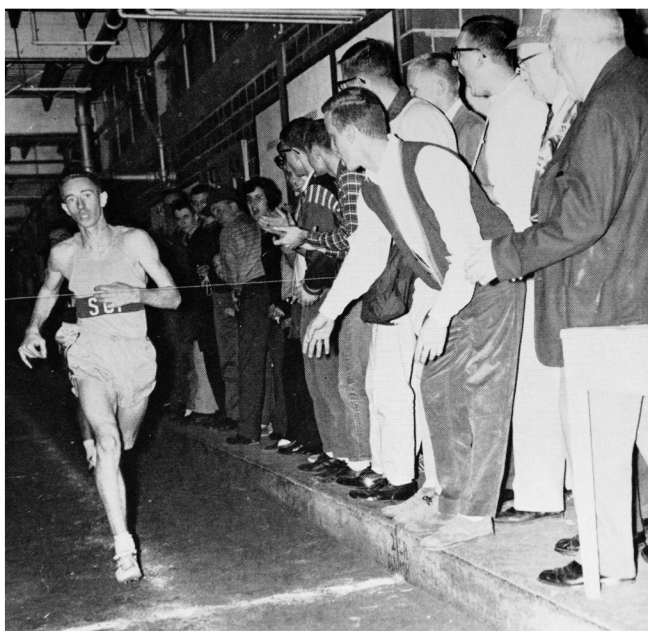


Coach Jack Jennett

titles in 1955. He then moved to Morningside College as head track coach. In 1961, he moved on to Buena Vista College as head football and track coach and then, in the summer of 1962, he returned to Drake to complete his master's degree in Physical Education before coming on to SCI later that year.

Jennett's first year as SCI coach was a fine one. His team was undefeated in dual meets with eight wins and one tie. It finished second in the North Central Conference and in the NCAA Midwest Regional meet and was victorious over eight other schools in the SCI Invitational indoor meet which was held on the indoor track of the SCI campus school.

The indoor track that was under the O.R. Latham grandstand was, once again, the scene of a couple of interesting stories. Jennett says that the smell that everybody seems to remember about it came from the oil that was spread over it each season to keep the dust down. Whenever any new runners joined the track team, Coach Jennett would tutor them in how to run the sharp U-turns at the ends of the track. He always showed them how to use the steeply banked turns to launch themselves into the straights. One of the team members of that era (he chooses to remain anonymous) remembers that some of the SCI runners learned how to run the visitors into the oil tank when negotiating the southeast corner.



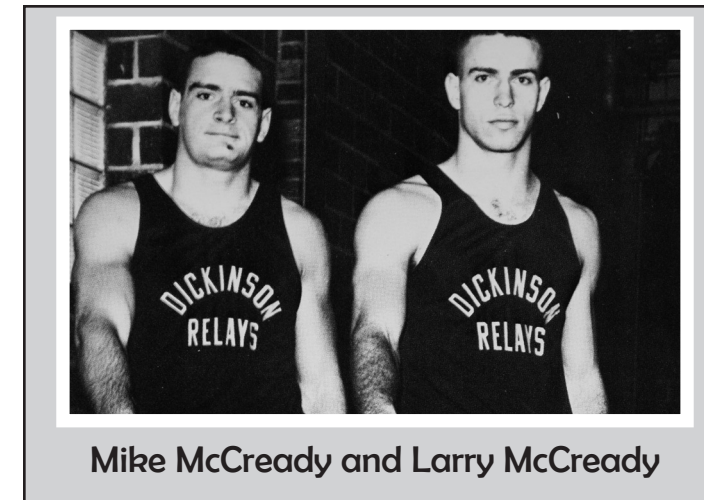
Jay Prichard completes the two mile run under the stadium.

There was no doubt that the design of the track provided a substantial home-field advantage. Jennett recalls that it was only about 147 yards around and that it was used for events up to two miles during indoor meets. The aforementioned anonymous team member from the mid-'60s says that Jennett used to make sure the windows were open on the front straight side to keep it cold during meets and that the back straight was kept as warm as possible so that the visiting distance runners would have to contend with the dramatic temperature variations on each lap. The SCI men were, of course, used to such conditions since they trained in them all the time. It should be noted that Jennett claims that it was not him, but the maintenance people who were in charge of such things, so, he says, "Even if it was true, I had nothing to do with it."

Jennett's second year as head track coach (1964) was even better than his first one had been. His team won NCC titles in indoor and outdoor track and finished third in the NCAA College Division national championships. His '64 cross-country team had what the Old Gold yearbook called "the greatest year in SCI cross-country history", going undefeated in eight meets and winning the NCC title. In addition, the 41st running of the newly re-named Dickinson Relays was a huge success, attracting over 900 athletes from 70 teams, including 12 colleges.

Sometime in the mid-'60s (nobody seems to be sure just what year it was) Coach Jennett had to resort to an unusual form of transportation to get his team to an invitational meet in South Dakota. On the way to the meet, the team bus broke down along Highway 20 near Jennett's home town of Sac City. Fortunately, Jennett knew a farmer who had a large stock truck and he was able to get the truck to transport his team to the meet. The arrival of the SCI team in such an unusual conveyance caused quite a stir at the meet. Fortunately, the bus was repaired in time to transport the team back to Cedar Falls.

In 1967, SCI became the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) and Jennett's track team began its university years with NCC championships in both the indoor and outdoor seasons and won the NCAA Midwest Regional meet. The team's outstanding member, Larry McCready, set a school individual scoring record in just his second season by compiling a total of 524 points. The previous record was 502 1/2 points compiled over



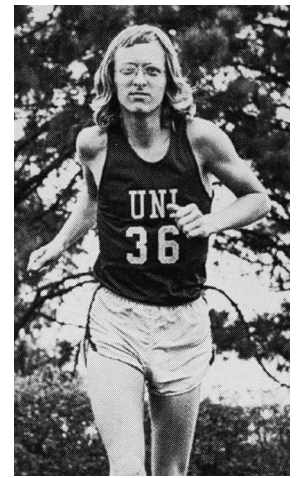
Mike McCready and Larry McCready

a three-year span by Esfandiar "Hank" Sattari, who was an Iranian exchange student who graduated in 1964. McCready's overall point total in his SCI career was 804 which, when he was inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame in 1990, was still the school record. In 1968 and again in 1969, McCready became the school's first ever Division II track all-American when he placed second (both years) in the 120-yard hurdles at the NCAA championships.

Larry's adoptive brother, Mike, (both were adopted sons of the same Dubuque couple) also became an all-American and won the national shot put title (college division) in 1971 with a throw of 57-8 3/4". He also took national runner-up honors in the discus that year and in the shot put in 1970. Mike also became an all-American wrestler and is still the only UNI athlete to gain all-American status in two different sports.

Of course, many of Jennett's athletes were also out for other sports and, occasionally this led to disagreements among the coaches about training regimens. For example, one of the athletes that Coach Jennett remembers best was Kenny Hillman, who was a 6-8 shot-putter who also played on Coach Norm Stewart's basketball team. Jennett wanted Hillman to work out in the weight room to develop more strength for throwing, but Stewart, who believed that weight work was a bad idea for basketball players, decreed that Hillman was not to participate in weight room activities. Jennett says that he tried to convince Stewart to let Hillman use the weights but that Stewart held fast to his position. Jennett's solution was to have Hillman wait until the end of basketball season, and then to spend "lots of time in the weight room."

Jennett had a number of outstanding distance runners. One of them was Rich Twedt, a six-time all-American by the time of his graduation in 1973, who for many years held almost every Panther cross-country record and who ran the mile and two-mile events in track.



Rich Twedt

Another of Jennett's standout distance men was Dennis Schultz who, between 1970 and '74 ran his way into school history. He was a two-time all-American who ran cross-country as well as the 880 and 1000 yard runs. In 1974 he won the NCAA Division II mile championship in a time of 4:09.84, which (when he was inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame in 1996) was still the third fastest mile in school history. By the time he graduated his 4:03.07 was the fastest mile ever run by a UNI athlete.

Many of Shultz's exploits involved breaking school records that had been set a few years before by another of Jennett's talented distance runners, Wayne Carpenter. When he graduated in 1970, Carpenter held the school records in the 1000 yard run (2:17.7) and the mile (4:08.6). His mile time garnered him all-American honors as well. Carpenter was also an outstanding student, graduating Magna Cum Laude with a degree in mathematics and earning a postgraduate scholarship from the NCAA.

By 1976 Jennett-coached teams had accumulated 12 North Central Conference crowns (6 outdoor, 5 indoor and 1 cross-country). In addition, he had coached 19 athletes to all-American honors in track and six more in cross-country. And he did it all with no full-time assistant coaches. He had only volunteer grad-assistants. Nineteen seventy-five was the 52nd year for the Dickinson Relays and it was the last year it was held as a combined high school and college event. UNI was moving its indoor track program into the newly constructed UNI-Dome and, along with that development, it was decided to make the Relays an all high school event, which it remains today. Coach Jennett resigned in 1976 and with his program's outstanding record, combined with UNI's new indoor track in the

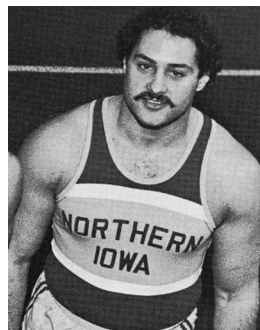
Dome, the Northern Iowa coaching position immediately became one of the most sought-after in the nation.

The King Years (1976-1984)

After an extensive search, the job was filled by Lynn H. King, who became just the third full-time head track and cross-country coach in UNI's history. King, a Cedar Falls native, graduated from Cedar Falls High in 1964 and from UNI in 1969, completing a B.A. in Physical Education. He had been a four-year member of Jennett's track team, a co-captain his senior year and was a two-year starter for the Panther football team. When he graduated from UNI, King entered the U.S. Army, where he served as an MP. He then returned to UNI and was a grad assistant under Jennett until completing his master's degree in 1972, whereupon he became head track coach at Rochester (MN) Junior College. In his four years at Rochester, his teams won the Minnesota Junior College Athletic Association track championships twice and never placed lower than third. In 1975, he was named the National Junior College cross country Coach of the Year after his team placed second in the Region XII JC championships. In the spring of his last year at Rochester, King led his team to the Five-State Region Track Championships. It won 10 events and set regional records in three of those. That success made him a very attractive candidate for the UNI job. When he was selected, he said that his goal was to continue the rich tradition of UNI's track and field history and to develop it into a nationally recognized program. He was greeted with great enthusiasm upon his arrival in Cedar Falls.

That enthusiasm was justified almost immediately as King's debut year produced second place North Central Conference finishes in both the indoor and outdoor seasons. In addition, he coached several all-Americans that year, all of whom returned for the 1978 competition. These included Bob Friedman (1500 meter run), John Holler (shot put), Brent Geringer (discus), Bill Glassmaker (800 meter run) and Bill Lawson (decathlon).

When King had been at UNI only two days, future nation-



Brent Geringer

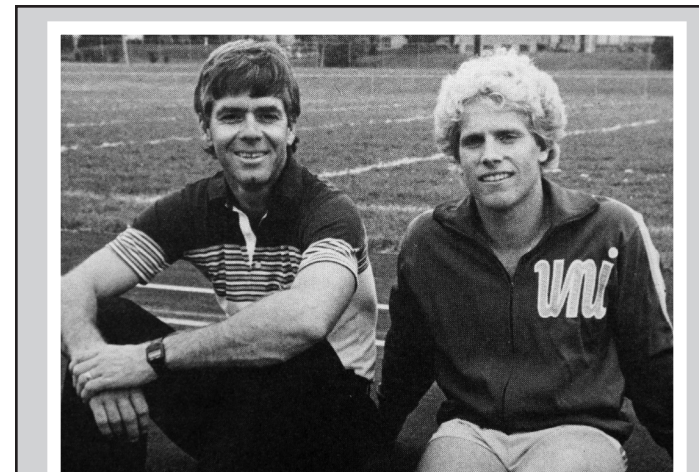
al champion thrower Geringer stomped into his office and complained that he wanted to lift weights and said "the weights are all locked up in a box." King went with him over to what were then UNI's meager weight facilities and, sure enough, there was a large wooden box with a padlock on it. King found a hacksaw, cut open the box, put on a new lock and gave the key to Geringer. "We never had that problem again," recalls King.

In 1978, UNI became part of the newly formed Association of Mid-Continent Universities (AMCU) Conference. The new league consisted of UNI, Akron, Cleveland State, Eastern Illinois, Illinois at Chicago, Northern Illinois, Southwest Missouri, Valparaiso, Western Illinois and Wisconsin-Green Bay. King's success continued that year when UNI won both the indoor and outdoor conference crowns, set 22 school records, had seven all-Americans (including UNI's first ever university division national champion and Olympic trials qualifier, Geringer, in the discus) and finished ninth at the NCAA Division II nationals, qualifying 19 squad members for the meet.

King recalls that in the late 1970s, the nation was in the midst of a distance running boom and he decided it would generate some local interest in running if UNI would sponsor a marathon. Thus, the UNI Marathon was born. The course he chose began on campus and went north through downtown Cedar Falls and continued north along old route 218 toward Janesville. One year an all-American UNI distance runner named Kim Sprain took off at the beginning of the race and built up a substantial lead by the time he got to the bridge across the Cedar River in downtown Cedar Falls only to be stymied by a train that was slowly crossing the road. He had to stop and wait and was overtaken by several other runners! Undaunted, he took off again and eventually won the marathon anyway.

As a result of Sprain's experience, King changed the route of the marathon the next year. It still began on campus, but it went west on 27th Street out towards Dike and looped back. "No train crossings out that way," King commented.

King's squad had another good year in 1979, finishing in fifth place at the nationals. In 1980, King added UNI's first full-time assistant track and field coach to his staff. His name was Chris Bucknam and he was recruited from Northern Michigan University where he had been working on his master's degree in



Head Coach Lynn King and Assistant Coach Chris Bucknam.

Physical Education. He would later become the most successful track and field coach in the history of UNI. Much more on Bucknam later but the story of how he was chosen as King's new assistant is an interesting one so here it is.

While King was considering candidates for the job as his assistant, he received a phone call from former UNI wrestling great Bill Dotson who had moved on to Northern Michigan to coach wrestling there. "Beets," as he was known, speaking in his trademark growl, made it clear to King that he knew who King should hire. "There's a kid here you gotta hire," he said. "He needs a job bad and he'd be great at UNI. And besides, if you don't hire him, I'll come down there and kick your butt," said Beets. So King met with Bucknam at the Drake Relays and, while interviewing him in the stands during the meet, decided that he liked him a lot and offered him the job. Bucknam accepted immediately and arrived shortly thereafter in Cedar Falls and found an apartment. King and his wife, Jan, soon learned that Bucknam had no furniture, not even a bed. So the Kings went to an auction, bought a bed and dresser and a few other items and, while Bucknam was out, they put the furniture in his place. It was quite some time before Bucknam even knew who his benefactors were.

King's 1980 team had some outstanding members, including Bill Lawson, who was one of the top athletes ever to compete for UNI in any sport. He was a four-time all-American in the demanding decathlon, finished second nationally in that event as a junior and was the team's high-point man. Other returning

all-Americans in 1980 were Tim Jamerson in the pole vault, Sprain in cross-country and Jim Erredge in the 1,500/5,000 and 10,000 meter runs.

Nevertheless, 1980 was not the kind of year King wanted. The team placed in the lower echelon of the Division II nationals, which after the fifth place in '79, was not what the coach had in mind. He attributed the poor showing to having a couple of field event performers take redshirt years and injuries to at least four other key team members. In spite of all this, King and his squad moved up to the NCAA's Division I beginning in the 1981 season and began competing in the Mid-Continent Conference (MCC). In its first year there, it performed well, finishing second in the conference to Eastern Illinois and setting a number of school records.

When asked about some of the mentally and physically toughest athletes he ever had at UNI, King again mentioned Sprain. He recalled that he once walked by Sprain's locker after the cross-country runners had done a long workout and noticed that both of Sprain's feet were bloody and that he had been running in a very worn and poor quality pair of running shoes. "He never said a thing about it," King recalled, "never complained." King also learned that day that for at least a year, Sprain had been living in his car, from which he had removed the back seat to make room for sleeping and for his clothes, "... and he had never said anything about that either. He was one of the toughest kids we ever had," said King. After that they found some additional scholarship money for him.

When recalling tough competitors, King also talked a lot about Lawson. He remembers that he had first tried to recruit Lawson to come to school at Rochester and did not succeed in getting him. Later, when King came to UNI he found Lawson was there and he recalls that Lawson greeted him by saying, "If you weren't good enough to recruit me, what makes you think you're good enough to coach me?"

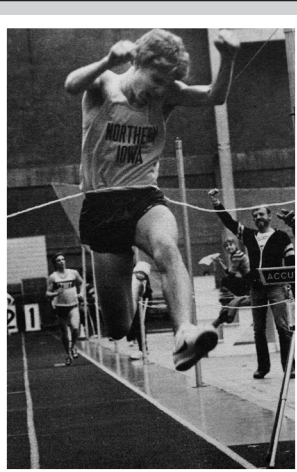
King loved Lawson's attitude and determination. He recalled one time at a meet in Minnesota when, as often happened, the meet was coming down to the triple jump and relays. As Lawson was warming up for his jump, King knew his heels were killing him, but he told Lawson the team needed a first in the triple to have a chance. "He got that look in his eyes that told me he was going to give it everything," recalls King, "and he put it all on the line and jumped over two feet farther

than he had before and took first place. That's just the kind of competitor he was."

In 1982, King achieved some of the goals he had set when arriving at UNI several years before. His cross-country team took the AMCU title for the first time. In addition, the track team ran away with the MCC outdoor championships, out-distancing second-place Eastern Illinois by 32 points. The throwers, including Matt Haven, Arnie Doden and Bill Shea were significant point-getters in the meet. In the following year (1983) UNI took the MCC title for the third time and won the Big Four Cross-Country Meet, winning over Iowa State, Iowa and Drake. Dan Fick was a standout for the cross-country team, finishing first or second overall in four meets.

In 1984, King capped off his years as UNI's head coach very successfully when his teams won the indoor and outdoor MCC championships, and tied for the conference cross-country title as well. After coaching the track and cross-country teams for nine seasons, King resigned at the end of the academic year to become UNI's new assistant athletic director, a post he held until 1989, when he moved on to athletic director positions at Wisconsin-Oshkosh, then at Drake University and finally at the University of the Pacific where he remains today.

As UNI's head coach, he had led the Panthers to 11 conference championships, produced 122 individual conference champions and 25 all-Americans (including two national champions), and received conference Coach of the Year honors 11 times. Once again, the UNI job drew applicants from across the nation, but in the end, the job was won by the man who had been King's assistant coach for five years, Chris Bucknam. King, in an interview conducted for this book in 2010, said, "The best thing I ever did for UNI was to recommend Chris Bucknam as the guy to take over my job."



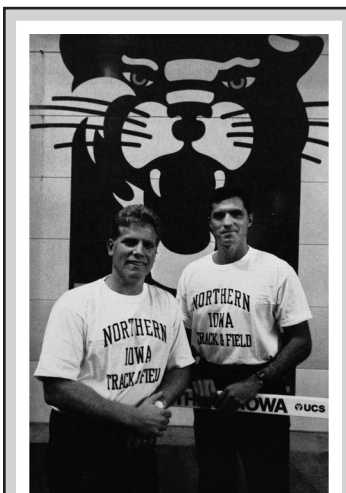
Dan Fick breaks the nine-minute mark in the two-mile run with a clocking of 8:58.5 in the UNI-Dome.

The Bucknam Years (1985-2008)

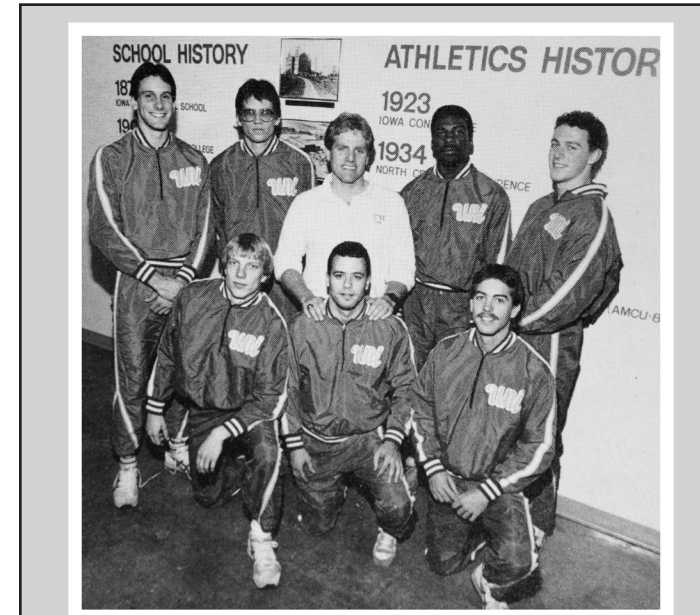
A native of Beverly, Mass., Bucknam attended Norwich University in Northfield, Vt., where he was a four-time letter winner in track, specializing in middle and long distance running events. He was elected a co-captain his senior year and graduated from Norwich with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education. He earned his master's in P.E. at UNI in 1982 during his tenure as King's assistant coach. Upon learning that he had been selected to be King's successor, Bucknam said, "I feel very honored that I have been included in the coaching ranks along with A.D. Dickinson, Jack Jennett and Lynn King, all of whom have had outstanding coaching careers at UNI. I have inherited a very strong program--one which is in excellent shape. We, of course, will try to continue the success, not only at the conference level, but regionally also. We have athletes now who are national contenders."

Over his 25-year tenure as UNI's head coach, Bucknam definitely delivered on his promise and he wasted no time getting started. Almost immediately, he named Lawson, UNI's four-time all-American decathlete and triple jumper, as his assistant coach. Lawson had graduated from UNI in 1980 and had spent three years in Rochester, Minn. at John Marshall High School as a track, cross-country and basketball coach. His final year as a competitor at UNI had been Bucknam's first as assistant coach so they knew each other well.

In their first year as UNI's coaching duo, Bucknam and Lawson's team won the AMCU conference title by 59 points over its nearest competition. It finished first in 10 of the 20 events and second in nine others. In addition, team members set a number of school records and Bucknam was selected for the first of many times as conference Coach of the Year.



The Bucknam and Lawson duo.



Coach Bucknam with key returning champions. Front L-R: Brooks Glasnapp, Brad Bartelt, Steve Gearhart. Back L-R: Jeff Burris, Dan Hostager, Wayne Simon, Eric White.

Although several of Bucknam's outstanding athletes graduated after the '85 year, he and Lawson managed to recruit a good many very talented new men and, after something of a rebuilding year in 1986, UNI returned to the top of the AMCU conference in '87 when it won the outdoor conference title and finished second indoors. Bucknam again garnered conference Coach of the Year honors and he was particularly proud of his 800 meter runner, Jeff Burris, who became UNI's first indoor track and field athlete to qualify for the NCAA Division I nationals. Burris' qualifying time was a Dome-record 1:49:80.

Lawson and Bucknam are convinced that one of the most valuable aspects of their program over the years was a game called "pass-goal football" that they played with their athletes almost every Friday afternoon. It was Friday "practice" for both the cross-country runners and the track and field team and it had been a part of the program since the days when Jennett was the coach. (Jennett used to have his cross-country guys run to George Wyth Park, play the game and then run back to campus.) Bucknam and Lawson usually played it on the campus school field or in the Dome. The game was "a great way to toughen 'em up" according to Lawson, because it required almost constant running. Here's how it was played. It was a touch football game and each

team got four pass plays to go the length of the field and score. You got one point for a touchdown and the first team to get 10 points was the winner. There were no huddles and no time outs. On defense, you could not rush the passer so a play could last a long time. If you failed to score in four plays, the ball went over to the other team. If you did score, you lined up on the 40-yard line and kicked off whether the other team was ready or not. Lawson and Bucknam were usually the quarterbacks and as Lawson says, "You did NOT want to drop a pass or you'd be seen as a loser for the whole next week."

The rest of the 1980s proved to be a period of unprecedented success for the UNI program. Standout performances by such athletes as Burris, Dan Hostager, Jim Turner, Troy Becker, Brooks Glassnapp and others highlighted the remainder of Bucknam's first half-decade. A fine finish to the '80s was provided in 1989 when Burris and Hostager became all-Americans by placing in the 800 and 3000 respectively.

By 1990, it was clear that Bucknam had carried the Panther tradition of excellence in track and field to new heights. During his first five years, UNI had won seven conference crowns--three each in indoor track and cross-country and an outdoor title and his teams had never finished lower than third in any conference meet.

Beginning in 1991, the UNI athletic program became a member of the Missouri Valley Conference (MVC). The other conference members included Southern Illinois, Illinois State, Indiana State, Southwest Missouri, Wichita State, Drake, Bradley and Tulsa. This move was, of course, of major importance to all UNI sports, but in no sport was it taken more seriously than in track and field. As Bucknam said at the time, "This move to the Missouri Valley is monumental for our program....it's the best thing that could have happened to us. We have done everything we could in the Mid-Continent Conference and it is time for us to have a stronger conference affiliation. Yes, it makes the going tougher for us, but that's the kind of atmosphere we want...The number of national qualifiers coming out of the Valley is very comparable to the Big Eight and Big Ten. This is exactly where Northern Iowa track and field needs to be. We are firmly committed to winning conference championships in the Missouri Valley."

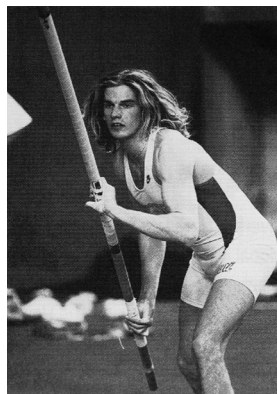
In its first year in the MVC, UNI track and field finished fourth in the conference and the next year, 1992, just as Bucknam had predicted, the UNI men won their first Missouri Valley crown when the cross-country team won the conference title. In addition, Bucknam's men finished second in the MVC outdoor standings and Bucknam was chosen MVC Coach of the Year.

In 1993, UNI's track and field success continued. A new arrival from Hungary, Miklos Arpasi, made an immediate impact in the 400 and 800 as well as the mile relay. He was the first of several athletes from Eastern Europe that Bucknam and Lawson were able to attract to UNI. There were also outstanding sprint and hurdle performances by Jason McCleary, Kenny Shedd, Cole Honeck and Gregg Garn. Jason Sweet and Johnny Westbrook earned all-America honors by placing in the 55-meter hurdles at the NCAA championships. In addition, Joey Woody arrived from Iowa City High and began his amazing career at UNI by setting the school record in the 400 (50:50) and qualifying for the NCAA nationals in both the 400 and 800 meter runs. But this was just the beginning for Woody. He was destined to become perhaps the greatest track athlete UNI had ever produced.

UNI built even further on its success in subsequent years. In '94, the track and field team won both the indoor and outdoor MVC titles. Indoors, Tim Suchan set the UNI high jump record at 7-4 1/2, which was second best in the nation that year; McCleary won the 55 hurdles and Matt Cassilas won the shot put. Outdoors, Woody was the conference winner in the 400 and the 110 hurdles and was named MVC Outdoor Athlete of the Year and Athlete of the Meet at the prestigious Drake Relays. The following year ('95) UNI again won the MVC indoor crown and was second outdoors with Woody achieving all-American status in the 400 hurdles as well as breaking school records in the 600 and



Joey Woody



Juri Rován

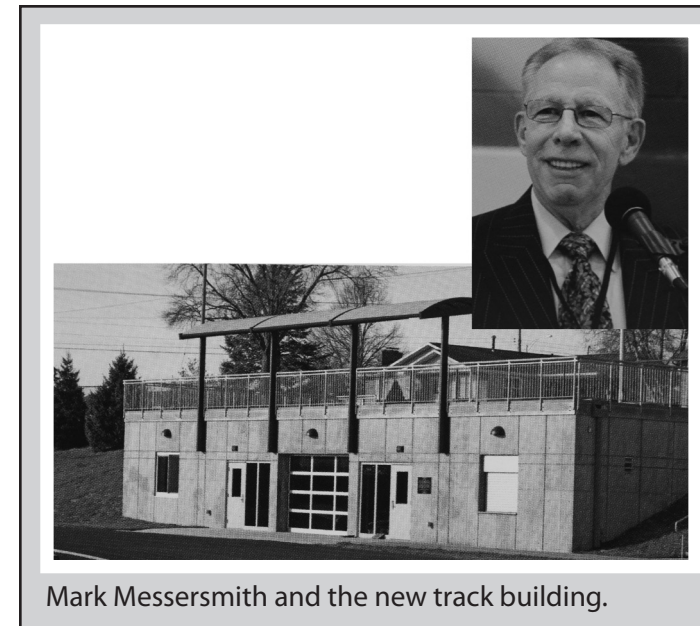
800 and Slovenian pole-vaulter, Juri Rován, qualifying for the NCAA nationals.

In 1997, the UNI program achieved what, up to that time, was the school's most prominent achievement in track and field by placing 17th at the NCAA Outdoor Championships. "That top 20 finish was huge for our program," said Bucknam, when he was interviewed that year. "It sends the message to the University and Missouri Valley Conference that we are a national caliber program. We've been highly rated in some relays, we've had all-Americans and we've had national qualifiers in nearly every event. We're not a one-dimensional team and this is not your ordinary program. This is a national caliber program and we try to conduct it that way."

Beginning in 1998, Bucknam's responsibilities expanded considerably when the UNI men's and women's track and field programs were combined under his leadership.

We will be describing the entire history of the UNI women's program in a later section of this chapter, so in this section we will focus on the men's program.

By 1999, the track and field men's coaching staff was expanded by the addition of three new assistant coaches: Woody who focused on the hurdlers, long sprinters and middle distance runners; Bob Edwards (former standout UNI pole-vaulter) worked with the pole-vaulters, and former UNI four-time all-conference cross-country runner and six-time 5,000 and 10,000 meter all-conference runner Kyle Kepler worked with the distance runners. Another significant development for the program was the long-awaited opening of the new outdoor track complex. Located just across Hudson Road from the Dome, the complex has a 400 meter, eight-lane track with a state-of-the-art polyurethane surface. (See photo in the first chapter.) The track surrounds a field event area that features a steeplechase water jump, two sand-pits each for the long and triple jumps, dual throw rings for the weights, a discus/hammer cage and four takeoffs for the pole vault, long jump and triple jump. In its inaugural season, the facility was the site of the first annual Northern Iowa Open and the MVC championships, which the Panther men's team won. A few years later, the outdoor track facility was dedicated as the Mark Messersmith Track and Field Complex. Messersmith, who had been a track and cross-country athlete during his undergraduate years



Mark Messersmith and the new track building.

at UNI (1963-66), was recognized for his generous gift which provided for continued improvements to the facility. The benefits of Messersmith's contribution were even more fully realized in 2010 when construction was completed on a new building at the track complex which includes space to host meets and store equipment. It provides the opportunity for UNI to host future events, starting with the 2011 Missouri Valley Conference Outdoor Championships.

It would be hard to overestimate the value of the new outdoor facility to UNI's track and field program. Bucknam had been trying to work around the lack of an outdoor track for several years. For example he recalls the time that one of his freshman runners, Greg Garn, walked into the track office at the beginning of the season and said he was going to go over to the track early and warm up and would see him there. He wanted to know where the track was. Bucknam had to say, "Well, I might have forgotten to tell you when we recruited you, but we don't have our own track. You'll have to wait until 4:30 and then we can use the Cedar Falls High School track after their team is done." So, as Bucknam says, "The new track made a huge difference to us."

The Panthers began the new millennium with what was perhaps the best track and field season in school history. The highlights of the 2000-01 year included runaway wins at both the Valley indoor and outdoor meets, six all-American performances by five different athletes at the NCAA Indoor Championships, an all-American effort by pole-vaulter Jake Pauli

at the NCAA Outdoor meet and a thrilling upset win over Stanford in the 4x1600 at the Drake Relays. In the U.S. Track Coach Association's final power rankings, UNI was eighth on the indoor list and 18th outdoors, which put the Panthers in the company of perennial powerhouses such as Florida, Tennessee, Nebraska and Arkansas.

Bucknam remembers how the win over Stanford at the Drake Relays came to be. In planning his team's entries for the meet, he was not even going to enter a 4x1600 team. The last time UNI had won any kind of relay at Drake was way back in 1951 and Bucknam said, "We had never even finished in the top 10 at Drake in that event, and Stanford had announced they were coming to Des Moines to run the relays." But Rob Brock (a nine-time state champion from Dubuque) came into the office and told Bucknam that he should enter them in the 4x1600. "We can win it, coach! We can beat Stanford. You gotta put us in it," said Brock. UNI had won the 4x1500 at both the Tennessee and Florida Relays earlier in the season, so they knew they were strong, but Bucknam also knew that running against Stanford was a whole different thing. "But Brock had even figured out which guys should run and in which order," says Bucknam. "He said Levi Timar should lead off, Nate Nemeth second, he (Brock) would run third and Balazs Csillag should anchor. He was so sure about it that he convinced me and we entered it exactly as he had said."

Bucknam remembers that when the 4x1600 was called, he sat way up near the top of the stands to watch



Balazs Csillag anchoring the UNI team to the win over Stanford.

it. "In the first 1600, Levi ran a 4:07 to give us a one second lead, then Mate ran a 4:08 that kept us within a second of Stanford, then Brock took over and ran a 4:04 to keep us right there with them. When he handed off to Balazs, we were right behind Stanford. Balazs ran an amazing 4:01, staying right on their heels until the last 90 meters and then he went around the Stanford guy and out-leaned him at the wire and we beat 'em! (by .05 of a second, 16:21:53 to 16:21:58) It was just like Brock said it would be and, if it wasn't for him, we wouldn't even have entered."

The excellent performance in 2000-01 came in spite of the fact that Bucknam's long-time assistant Lawson had moved on to join the University of Oregon's track program. (Lawson later moved on to become the head track and field coach at Kent State University in Ohio.) Fortunately for the UNI program, Coach Bucknam was able to convince former standout UNI sprinter and hurdler Doug Case to return to his alma mater as Assistant Head Coach. Case, a native of Marshalltown, had graduated from UNI in 1987 after setting eight school records from 1982-86 and had coached at Wartburg College for a year before becoming an assistant track and cross-country coach at Arkansas State where he helped guide the men's and women's programs to nine Sun Belt Conference titles. Prior to his return to UNI, he had spent the previous two seasons as the head men's track coach at Drake University.

The 2001 season saw UNI gain national notoriety once more when Pauli won the NCAA indoor pole vault title. He had thus achieved all-American status three times, becoming UNI's all-time best pole-vaulter. Aside from Pauli's heroics, it was also another good year for UNI even though injuries and some redshirting contributed to just a second-place finish in the MVC outdoor season after UNI had won the conference indoors.

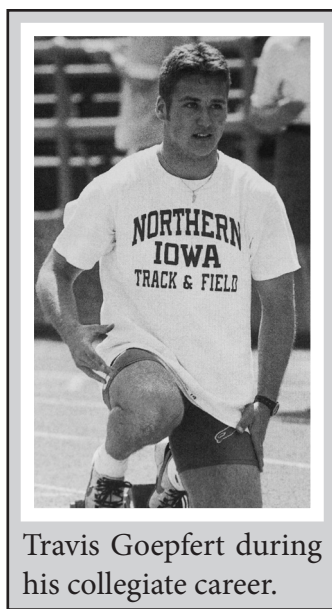
In 2002, the UNI program moved to an even higher level when the Panthers placed 12th at the NCAA Indoor Championships with five all-Americans. On the way to this honor, Bucknam's men picked up the MVC indoor title as well.

The UNI men captured the 2003 MVC indoor title and beginning with that year, in his 21st year as UNI's head coach, Bucknam's title became Head Track and Field Coach and Director of Running Programs which reflected both his broadened responsibilities

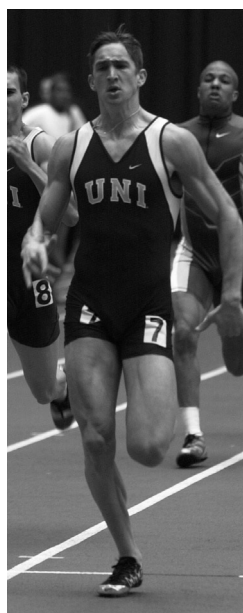
and his success. With Case continuing as Associate Head Coach and Kepler as Assistant Track Coach and now head cross-country coach, the staff was now expanded to include Travis Geopfert as a new assistant coach. A 2002 UNI grad, he had been a three-time MVC champion, claiming titles in the 1998 decathlon, the 1999 4x100 relay, and the 2000 distance medley relay team that had gone on to the NCAA championships, earning all-America honors.

Bucknam says, "One of the most important reasons for our success in the 2000-2006 years was the fact that several of our kids actually volunteered to give back some or all of their scholarship money so we could use it to recruit more quality athletes. We never asked any of them to do it, they just did it on their own. They said their families could afford to pay their tuition and they wanted us to use the money to make our team even better. I will never forget that."

An important aspect of Bucknam's development of the UNI program was his expansion of the geographic base from which he and his staff recruited team members. Iowa athletes had always been the basis of the UNI program and that, of course, continued. But, increasingly over the Bucknam years, athletes from other states, and even other countries, had also played a role in the program's success. To illustrate, the 2004 men's roster included competitors from the states of Missouri, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas, as well as from Canada, Finland, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Hungary. But UNI also had outstanding performers from right here at home during these years. For example, Cedar Falls native



Travis Geopfert during his collegiate career.



Dirk Homewood

Dirk Homewood became an MVC legend as he earned nine Valley championships and three all-America honors as a sprinter between 2001 and 2005.

Bucknam and Lawson have lots of good stories about recruiting. Here are a couple of them. They remember that they got Pauli to commit to UNI during an outdoor barbecue near Redeker Dining Center on campus. It was a beautiful, sunny day and lots of attractive, young coeds were there. Pauli was having a great time and Lawson told him it was "like this all the time here." Bucknam recalls, "Lawson had succeeded in keeping UNI in the hunt for Pauli and it was down to us, Illinois and Wisconsin. Those schools wanted Pauli to be a decathlete and he wanted to specialize in vaulting. Even though Lawson was a decathlete and wanted Pauli to be one as well, he was willing to do anything to get him so he promised him if he came to UNI he could compete in 'whatever he wanted.' Pauli committed then and there with a grin on his face and a hamburger in his hand and we knew we had just got the guy who could be the best pole-vaulter in UNI history. And that's exactly what he turned out to be."

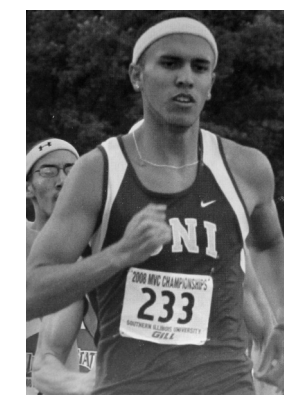
Another good recruiting story involves how Bucknam and Lawson managed to get Woody to come to UNI. Bucknam remembers that they were at Woody's home to meet with him and his parents. He had told them beforehand that he was not prepared to commit that day, but Bucknam told him they were coming to visit him anyway. They were prepared to offer him a full scholarship, but they knew that he was being heavily recruited by other schools including Wisconsin (which had offered him a 70% scholarship), Iowa State and Nebraska. Bucknam and Lawson both felt that if they didn't get him that day they would probably lose him. They talked with the family and Woody's high school coach for over two hours. Then they made their offer and stepped outside to let the family talk it over. Lawson suggested that he and Bucknam, both in business suits, "pitch pennies" against the curb in front of the Woody house to see if they were going to get him. Lawson loved to play games like that. "If I get closest to the curb, we're getting him," said Lawson. Just as Lawson's penny landed right next to the curb, Woody opened the door and told them to come back in. "After another half hour of talking, Woody said, 'O.K., let's do it' and he signed with us! Two minutes later, while we were still there, Woody got a phone call from Wisconsin offering him a full ride and

we got to hear him tell them that he had just committed to UNI", recalls Bucknam. "It was a great day for our program."

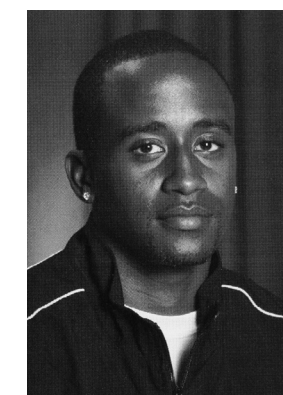
The program's success continued unabated as the Panthers captured the MVC indoor title in 2004, 2005 and 2006 making it a dominating seven times in a row and, in 2005, they won the MVC outdoor title as well. But the best was yet to come. In 2007, for the very first time, UNI climbed into the top 10 at the NCAA Indoor Championships, achieving a ninth-place finish. Other achievements that made '07 a year to remember included an eighth consecutive MVC indoor crown; a school-record five firsts at the Drake Relays; nine events qualifying for the NCAA indoor championships and 10 for the outdoor championships; nine Panthers combining for 19 all-America performances at the NCAAs; three relay teams scoring among the top six in NCAA competition; and a no. 5 rating in Track & Field News annual relay rankings.

Bucknam attributes a great deal of the success his teams had to his assistant coaches. "Without Lawson, Case and Geopfert, we could never have achieved any of what we did," he says. "Lawson's hard work, intensity and willingness to 'think big', Case's ability to see the potential in an athlete and then develop it and Geopfert's amazing recruiting skills were absolutely essential to our program's success. Without them, everything would have been different."

The 2008 season was a landmark one for UNI in more than one respect. The Panther men swept the MVC indoor and outdoor championships, crowned nine all-Americans and finished ninth (again) at the NCAA Indoor Championships and 11th at the NCAA outdoor nationals. In addition, they took home two Drake Relays titles. Tyler Mulder became just the third Panther in school history to clinch a Division I Nation-



Tyler Mulder



Terrance Reid

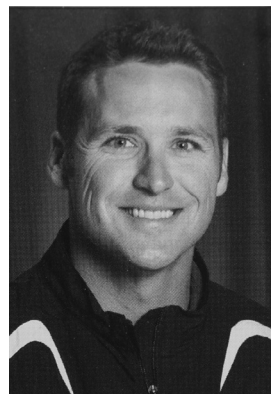
al Championship when he won the 800 meter title in a time of 1:49:20, also earning his sixth all-American citation and Terrance Reid became the most decorated male athlete in UNI track and field history, earning a total of seven all-American honors in the 4x400 relays and the distance medley.

This was also a significant year for UNI track because it was the last for Coach Bucknam as well as for Associate Head Coach Case. Bucknam concluded his 25 years as the Panther leader in 2008. His huge success at UNI had, naturally, attracted the attention of a great many other institutions which had very prominent track and field programs. The University of Arkansas, winner of many NCAA track and field titles, was among those schools and was able to lure Bucknam southward to become its head coach. Case went along with him. Bucknam's contributions to UNI's track and field program were monumental and he left a very strong contingent of athletes to his successor, Goepfert, who took over as head coach beginning in 2009.

The Recent Years, Steve Goepfert and Dan Steele Era (2009 - Present)

Goepfert, originally from Panora, Iowa, had served for the five previous years as UNI's associate head coach and recruiting coordinator before taking over as head coach in 2009. He had been honored as the Midwest Assistant Coach of the Year in 2008, and at that time Bucknam had described Goepfert's contributions as follows. "Travis has proven to be one of the premier jumps and multi-events coaches in the country and his UNI athletes are consistently finishing in the nation's top 10. He has also helped to elevate our entire program as our recruiting coordinator. His ability to recruit top-notch, blue-chip athletes is second to none."

Goepfert's staff included Mark Napier as field events coach. Napier was a Florida State grad where he was captain of the track team and competed in decathlon, hammer throw and triple jump. His coaching expe-



Coach Travis Goepfert

rience included a very successful three years at Oklahoma State and outstanding 12-year tenure at Wisconsin before his arrival in 2008 at UNI. Former UNI track and field all-American Dave Paulsen took over the coaching of the distance runners, while Eric Hanenberger, who had been a volunteer assistant coach and strength/conditioning coordinator for UNI's track program the previous four years, took on the coaching of the throwers.

Goepfert and his assistants and track athletes had a good year in their first season together. The men's team won its 10th consecutive MVC indoor title and its third straight outdoor conference title. UNI had over a dozen individual conference winners and 21 all-conference performances. Five men qualified for the NCAA national meet including Cory Goos in the 400 hurdles and 400 meter run, Ehi Oamen and Julian Morris in the high jump, Greg Offerman in the 400 hurdles and Thibault Vandendalee in cross-country and the distance medley relay.

However, Goepfert's tenure as UNI's coach was to be very short. The very next year Bucknam was able to make arrangements to add Goepfert to his Arkansas staff and so, in 2010, the UNI head coaching position was once again open. At first that seemed like it might be a problem for the program but it turned out well because UNI was able to attract a truly outstanding new coach, Dan Steele.

Steele came to Cedar Falls following seven years at the nationally recognized track program at the University of Oregon, where he had been its Associate Director of Track and Field. Steele was a good fit for UNI for several reasons, not the least of which was that he had led the combined men's and women's track programs at Oregon, which was the assignment at UNI as well. In fact, in 2009 both his men's and women's Oregon teams had won the Pac-10 Conference titles. In addition, his men's team had won the 2009 NCAA Indoor National Championship and he was named the 2009 NCAA Indoor Coach of the Year. Originally from the Quad Cities area, Steele earned his bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois University in 1992 where he captured the NCAA title in the 400 hurdles as a senior and was a two-time all-American and Drake Relays champion.

Steele succeeded in assembling an outstanding staff to help him run the UNI programs, keeping Paulsen on as cross-country coach and adding Dan

O'Mara, who had coached the throwers at Iowa State University for 15 years and where he had produced 22 Big 12 champs, 21 all-Americans and eight Olympic trials qualifiers. In college, O'Mara had been an all-American discus man at Kansas State and conference champion in discus and shot put.

In addition, Steele added one of the nation's most outstanding hurdlers, Danny Harris, to his staff. Harris came to UNI from Iowa State, where he was an assistant track and field coach. He was a Silver Medalist in the 400 meter hurdles in the 1984 Olympics, where, at age 18, he set the World Junior Record of 48:02 which still stands today. As a collegian at Iowa State, Harris went undefeated in 37 consecutive 400 hurdles races and was the NCAA champion three times. He also ended Edwin Moses' 107-race winning streak in Madrid in 1987 and went on to win the Silver Medal at the World Championships that year in Rome.

Steele's new Associate Head Coach is Shelli Sayers, who comes from Roanoke College in Salem, Va., where she has been an assistant track and field coach since 2004. Sayers was chosen South/Southwest Women's Assistant Coach of the Year three consecutive times from 2008 through 2010. A 2000 Roanoke grad, she was an 11-time all-conference performer and a conference champion in the 100 and 400 hurdles.

The track season didn't stop here. With Coach Steele at the helm, the Panthers will work for more records, conference championships and NCAA qualifiers. The 2009 media guide contains a lot of the current records, but as records are set, they are also meant to be challenged and broken, so stay tuned to Panther track and field, and Panther cross-country.



Coach Dan Steele

Women's Track and Cross Country

Early History (before coaches) (1892-1974)

As we related earlier in the men's section of this chapter, an Athletic Association was formed at ISNS in 1892, but the students that formed this association were all male. However, as Lang reports in his history of the school, "Sports were not a male monopoly at the Normal School. In the fall of 1897, basketball for women made its debut...When the [ISNS] tennis association was consolidated with the Athletic Association, women were 'cordially invited to join' upon payment of the usual twenty-five cent membership fee. Women were received 'on an equal footing' and given 'like powers and privileges with the ballot and with field meets.'"

However, since no women's names appeared in the 1901 yearbook as members of the consolidated Athletic Association, the extent to which they actually participated remains unclear. What is known is that women were included in the annual spring field meets in the early 1900s, including in some running events. An article in the college newspaper, *The Normal Eye*, on May 9, 1903 recounts the results of all of the track and field events in the spring field meet. After listing all the men's performances, the article concludes with a single paragraph headed, "The girls take part." It reads, in its entirety, as follows: "The 50 yard dash between four girls garbed in bloomers baggy attracted much attention. The time was 8 seconds. The winner was Etta Merner, Miss Vonderachook second, Miss Trumbaur third and Miss Frank fourth."

The 1922 college yearbook reports that, "Athletics for the women of Iowa State Teachers College have reached a goal that renders inadequate the present equipment. A greater interest is shown each year and each year more students go beyond required work and enter into sports for sport's sake...the affair receiving the most attention is the midwinter demonstration. In this 1000 girls take part, demonstrating for the public many physical training activities. Among the interesting events in the spring is a track meet for all students completing their first year of physical training work."



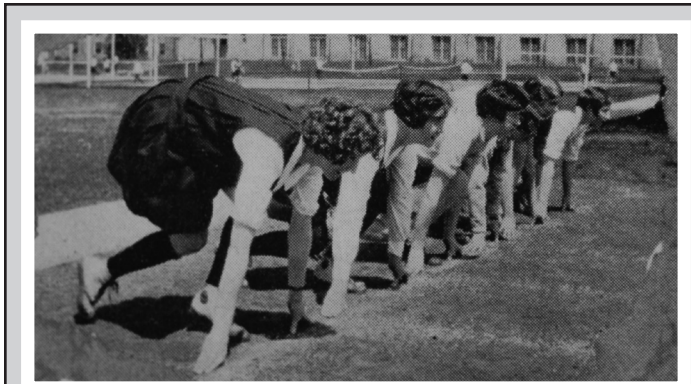
Sport managers were designated to organize the women's intramural sport program.

The 1923 Old Gold reports the formation of the Women's Athletic Association to "foster among the women of ISTC interest and participation in athletics, to increase physical efficiency and to develop a higher degree of sportsmanship as well as school and class spirit." Consisting of 32 charter members, the Association included students who were designated "sport managers" for 11 different intramural sports and one of them was Frances Horak, who was the sport manager for track. Perhaps we should identify this as the very beginning of women's track and field at ISTC, albeit at the intramural level. There was, however, an emphasis on competition in that letters and points were awarded to the women based on their participation and performance.

In 1925, the Old Gold began including a separate section on women's athletics and in the 1928 yearbook, it is reported that the 1927 Iowa State Conven-



Attendees at 1927 Iowa State Convention of Women's Athletic Associations. Margaret Porter and Ruth Zieke represented I.S.T.C.



The first photograph ever printed depicting a 1930 women's running event.

tion of Women's Athletic Associations was held on the ISTC campus. It was attended by representatives from Cornell, Buena Vista, Simpson, Ames, Iowa University, Des Moines University, Upper Iowa, Drake, Grinnell, Coe and Iowa Wesleyan.

On May 20, 1927, according to the Normal Eye, there was a women's track meet held on campus, but no details are included and no other such events are listed in the campus newspapers. The yearbooks began including photos of various women's athletic events and, in the Old Gold for 1930 one finds the first yearbook photo of a women's running event.

The 1933 Old Gold section on women's athletics begins with a very interesting comment. It says, "Gone are the days when a girl was subjected to criticism if she participated in any sort of physical activities. Women's athletics has definitely taken its place in the school curriculum." The 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote

had been passed in 1920 and the effects on our society were still developing over a decade later. For example, the 1934 Old Gold section on women's athletics begins, "The era of women's suffrage has resulted in her almost unlimited participation in all fields of industry, thought and physical activity...the Women's Athletic Department, as one of the most recent additions to the college...endeavors to advance the physical educa-

tion of the college woman. It provides for her recreation a variety of sports, games and athletic contests." Then, in the 1935 yearbook, the section on women's athletics begins with this line: "Modern women, freed from the shackles imposed upon them by Victorianism, now find their objectives in life markedly similar to those of men. They, too, must learn the lessons of health and cooperation. Iowa State Teachers College provides for these lessons in a multitude of sports and physical activities designed particularly for women."

The development of women's athletics at ISTC is indicated by the fact that, in the fall of 1934, the Women's Athletic Association (WAA) was reorganized into a group consisting of clubs for the various sports, with the president of each club serving as a member of the WAA council, which planned each year's activities. However, it was also decided that the awarding of letters and points would be discontinued and the women now "played for the love of the sport." In the later 1930s and into the years of WWII, the yearbooks no longer had a separate section labeled "Women's Athletics," but they did contain sections on Women's Physical Education. However, with specific reference to track and field, there is no mention of such activities in the physical education sections.

Of course, as we reported earlier, the war caused almost all sports activities to be discontinued for its duration. In 1946, the resumption of men's intercollegiate sports was accompanied by a renewed interest in women's intramural activities, which, though they had continued throughout the war, had been somewhat curtailed. The 1947 yearbook contains a feature on the Women's Recreation Association (WRA), which is described as follows: "A keen spirit of competition and a love of athletics help promote the program of the Women's Recreation Association. Organized for the purpose of creating interest in athletics, this group also aims to develop sportsmanship and physical fitness among girl students." However, the WRA sponsored intramurals in only five sports and track was not one of them. All through the remainder of the 1940s, as well as the '50s and into the '60s the situation remained the same, that is, there were no women's sports other than intramurals and the intramurals still did not include track and field. Field hockey, tennis, swimming, volleyball, softball and basketball became varsity women's sports during the 1960s. In June of 1972, Title

IX was passed which resulted in increased emphasis on women's collegiate sports and, finally, in the fall of 1974, when four new women's sports were added, track and field became an intercollegiate women's sport at UNI.

The Huddleston (and Gruber) Years (1974-1983)

Sharon Huddleston was hired to be the first head coach of women's track and field in the history of UNI. She received her B.S. and M. Ed. degrees at Stephen F. Austin University in Texas, where she was a four-year member of the track and field team. In 1968, she was invited to join the Texas Track Club (TTC), an AAU club in Abilene. With the TTC, she competed for five years in cross-country, 400 meter dash, 100m hurdles, high jump and javelin at the national and international levels. Huddleston's coaching career began in 1969 at Midwestern University in Texas. After one year, she returned to Stephen F. Austin State University and led her team to a second-place finish in the state the first year, and a state championship the second year. From there she moved on to the University of Wisconsin to study biomechanics. At UW she took a course in sport psychology with Dr. William Morgan and found that it was the field she truly wanted to pursue. Soon after that, she was recruited by UNI and came to Cedar Falls as head track, volleyball and gymnastics coach. All three were to be new women's sports at UNI and Huddleston was excited by the challenge. Her responsibilities would also include teaching 12 credit hours per semester, about which she was also enthusiastic. That may sound like a very heavy load, but she now says by way of explanation, "I was young and full of energy, so it was exciting."

Huddleston's first season as track and field coach was to begin in the spring of 1975, so while still coaching volleyball and gymnastics, she began looking for athletes for her new track team.

In the college newspaper, The Northern Iowan, of Feb. 21 of that year, the following notice was included: "Track



Sharon Huddleston

& Field--Women interested in intercollegiate track and field should meet Monday, Feb. 24 in Women's Gym 113 at 5 p.m. If unable to attend, contact Coach Sharon Huddleston at E Gym 103 or by calling 273-2730."

Over 100 women showed up to try out. Most, but not all, had high school track experience. Huddleston held indoor tryouts in the East Gym and was pleased by the tenacity and determination of some of her candidates. She remembers being particularly impressed early on by runner Sue Yeggy and thrower Helen Walker.

The first competition for the new women's team came in March at the Iowa Women's Collegiate Invitational indoor track and field meet in Iowa City. UNI's team consisted entirely of freshmen. Iowa State University's very experienced team won all but one event. UNI took only 13 competitors to the meet and was therefore unable to enter several of the events. However, there were a few bright spots for the Panthers, including a good performance by freshman Yeggy in the mile, a third-place finish by Carol Abbott in the 880-yard run and the fact that Joyce Bernhardt and Keena Heller both qualified for the finals in the 220-yard dash. Coach Huddleston said that the team's next meet would be in April and that she expected to have more athletes ready for that meet. True to her word, Huddleston took 20 competitors to the April 5th meet and UNI scored 19 points, including wins in the 60 hurdles by Bernhardt and in the mile by Yeggy. Overall, the team placed in six of the 13 events. UNI women's track and field was off and running.

Huddleston recalls that she launched the program with very little financial support. For example, she recruited faculty members as volunteer drivers to take the team to meets. It usually required three or four vehicles to handle the whole team. The food allowance was just \$2/meal so most of the team brought sack lunches so they could splurge and have \$4 to spend on supper. If an overnight stay was necessary, it was always four or five to a room to hold down expenses.

Later in April, UNI narrowly missed getting second in the Drake University women's invitational track meet. Iowa State again dominated with 116 1/2 points, Central College took second with 49, UNI had 47 1/2, Iowa 30, William Penn 26 and Drake 7. Just a week later UNI competed again and finished fourth of eight teams at the State Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) track champion-

ship. It was paced by Walker who placed second in the discus and third in the shot. Four members of the team qualified for the Region 6 AIAW Championships in Wichita, Kan. Yeggy qualified in the mile, Walker qualified in both the shot put and the discus, Becky Caspers' 11.65 time qualified her in the 100 dash and Bernhardt's 100 meter hurdles time of 16.4 was .6 seconds under the qualifying time.

The following spring, on April 10, 1976, the first ever UNI invitational women's track meet was held in the newly completed UNI-Dome. The meet included teams from the University of Iowa, Graceland, Grinnell and Luther and was won by Graceland. Top place winners for UNI were Yeggy, who took second in the mile; Ann Bader, who was second in the long jump and third in the 60 meter dash, Walker; third in the high jump; Sue Buffington, second in the 60 hurdles; and Sarla Haines, second in the 880. The 1976 season ended with the AIAW meet, which was held at Drake in April. Ten teams competed and Iowa State's veteran team once again overwhelmed all the others, outdistancing second-place Graceland by over 100 points. UNI finished in sixth place, ahead of Luther, Grinnell, Simpson and Drake.

Coach Huddleston's team entered its third season in 1977 with 28 athletes, including 11 returning from the prior year. In the second UNI Women's Indoor Invitational Meet on April 2, the home team scored just 13 points, which placed it well behind the winning University of Iowa team, which compiled 67 1/2 points. UNI had a much better day at its first outdoor meet in Iowa City at the end of April, where it qualified six women for competition at the Regionals including the 440 relay team, plus Charlesetta Dawson in the high jump and Bader in the long jump. Huddleston was pleased with her team's progress, saying "We're really starting to come down in our times...for our first outdoor meet, I think we did very well at Iowa." The following week in its next meet at Eastern Illinois, UNI took third of the five teams competing and qualified two more team members for the regional meet, including Buffington in the 100 hurdles and Cheryl Barber in the javelin. Another highlight of the meet for UNI was a first place in the pentathlon by Jan Messerschmidt. By season's end, the young UNI team had competed in eight meets and qualified a total of 10 members for the

regional AIAW meet. Huddleston also produced UNI's first woman track national qualifier in Buffington.

During these early years in the UNI program's history, the team was operating at a significant disadvantage in that most of the schools with which it was competing had track programs that trained for the full academic year, while UNI's program did not begin until the spring. Nevertheless, the program continued to develop under Huddleston's leadership in the '78 season when the team had six members reach the finals in the regional championships in Emporia, Kan. They were: LeAnn Erickson in the javelin, Paula Vanderbeek in the 3,000, Messerschmidt in the pentathlon and the relay team of Wendy Sumner, Walker, Tracy Wentzien and Deb Schmeling.

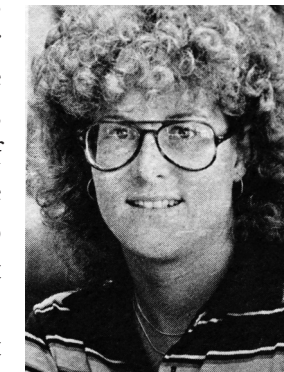
After the '78 season, Huddleston took a two-year leave of absence to complete her doctoral degree in sports psychology at the University of Iowa. She was replaced for those two years by Carol Gruber, who had previously been an assistant track and field coach at Whittier College in California and at USC. A native of Long Beach, Gruber had earned her bachelor's degree from California State and was doing graduate work at the University of Iowa, from which she was recruited to take the two-year temporary position at UNI, coaching track and field as well as volleyball.

Gruber's squad finished third in its first meet at Iowa in February and then hosted its only indoor meet of the '79 season in March. Teams from University of Iowa, Central College, Drake, Mankato State and Northern Illinois competed. Gruber was convinced that her inexperienced team needed lots of competition, so she scheduled meets at Simpson, Central, Northern Illi-

nois, Central once again and Wisconsin-River Falls on subsequent weekends before the AIAW championships, which were set for early May.

The spring of 1979 brought particularly harsh weather to Iowa, which hampered most of the spring sports, including the women's track program, but some fine performances were turned anyway. For example, at Central, Shirley Walker took five seconds off her best previous mile time, running a 5:20, and Sue Tarr reduced her two-mile time by an amazing 44 seconds. In early April, at the second Central College meet, the UNI team placed third among the nine teams competing and qualified three team members for the regional meet to be held in Wichita in May. Gruber said, "I'm happy with our showing...I think our field and relay events are improving a lot and could qualify for regionals with some hard work."

At Northern Illinois, UNI placed second of the nine teams competing, and then, at Wisconsin-River Falls at the end of April, the UNI women's team won an invitational meet for the first time in the program's history, scoring 109 points. UNI took six individual first places, along with four seconds and four thirds. Gruber said, "This has got to be the best effort put forth by the team all season." She named Shirley Walker the most valuable member of the team for the week for her



Carol Gruber



1979 Women's Team:

Kneeling l-r: Georgia Norris, Paula Vanderbeek, Terri Leisinger, Janet Francke, Sue Tarr, Julie Bartlett; Second row: Deb Householder (Mgr.), Janelle McBride, Colleen Howard, Linda Hurt, Stacy Roberts, Linda Iliff, Sheryl Sigmund, Barb Miller, Carol Krabbenhoeft, Kathy Kenney, Kathy Kessler; Third row: Donna McGohan, Michelle Bohlken, Nita Marsh, Joan Sexton, Tracy Wentzien, Mary Beth Linehan, Shirley Walker, Brenda Coggins, Kathy Broderick, Deb Schmeling, Cindy Larson (Mgr.)

showing in the two-mile run and the two-mile relay. By season's end the UNI team had qualified 11 athletes in nine events for the AIAW regionals at Wichita State. Once again, Walker was the team's standout, qualifying in four events including the mile, the two mile, the 1500 and the 3,000.

In Gruber's second season as head coach, the team continued to progress. For example, in March at the UNI Invitational meet in the Dome, the team finished second among the seven teams competing, including its first win over the University of Iowa, which finished third. The following week, UNI finished second to Western Illinois in a triangular meet but then, in the Drake Invitational, the team had a poor day, finishing ninth of 10 teams. The exception was Messerschmidt who had her best day ever, winning the pentathlon with a score of 3,381. She won all five events of the pentathlon and set personal bests in all of them. The team bounced back in spectacular fashion in late April at the Northern Illinois Invitational, which it won with 161 points, nearly doubling the 82 points of second-place Northern Illinois. UNI followed that performance the next week with a fourth-place finish among the 12 teams competing in the Wisconsin-River Falls invitational and then it was on to the AIAW Division II state meet in Pella, where UNI took the team title with an impressive 258 points and set several meet and school records. It concluded the season by finishing ninth of 25 Division II schools at the AIAW regional meet, while setting three school and two state meet records. There were no UNI yearbooks published during most of the 1970s, but when publication resumed in 1979 the book included, for the first time, a section on the women's track and field program. They offered several photographs, but with no names attached.

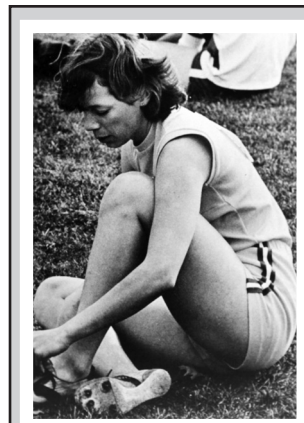
Huddleston completed her doctoral degree and her two-year leave and returned to her head coaching position at UNI for the 1980 season. Added to her responsibilities was the coaching of the newly formed women's cross-country team. In 1979, a women's cross-country club had been initiated by a number of women's track team members who wanted to stay in shape between track seasons. Vern Fish, who was a graduate student in biology, served as the club's coach. Now, just a year later, the club had become a UNI varsity sport. Huddleston said, "We'll be competing against both Division I and II teams and I feel we will be highly

competitive." She was proved exactly right when the team won its opener over Northern Illinois in early September. Stacy Roberts set a course record and Kris Skov finished second. Just a week later, UNI took third among six teams in the Iowa Invitational in Iowa City. Once again, Roberts led the UNI runners in a time of 20:08, followed closely by Skov in 20:21, June Day in 20:21, Donna Grosbeck in 20:23 and Jeannie Edson in 20:25.

"We did really well," said Coach Huddleston. "When you can place runners in a bunch like we did, you tend to push the other teams' scores up." (Low scores are good in cross-country.)

One of Huddleston's coaching challenges was finding the right balance between motivating those athletes that seemed to need it and controlling the over-enthusiasm of those that were so intense that they risked peaking early or even getting injured. Two athletes that fit into that latter category were Messerschmidt and Roberts. For example, once while practicing high jumping, Messerschmidt, ignoring her coach's warning to "wait until I adjust that pit," overshot the landing area and knocked herself out cold. "Roberts, one of the most hard-working and gritty athletes I ever coached," says Huddleston, sometimes trained so hard that she peaked too early in the season in spite of her coach's advice. Nevertheless, Huddleston admired the drive and determination of such competitors.

At the Grinnell Invitational at the end of September, the UNI team ran to a second-place finish among seven teams. With 58 women competing, UNI placed all seven of its runners in the top 20, with Roberts once again leading the team in a school-record time over the two-mile course of 12:20. Running on the UNI golf course in its only home meet of the year, the UNI squad dominated with a score of 15, the lowest possible score in a cross-country meet. The competition was provided by Wartburg, Loras and Rochester (MN) Community College. Skov came in first, setting a school record for the three-mile distance of 18:14.



Women's track was becoming a part of the yearbook landscape.

Skov set another school record, this one for the 5,000 meter distance, of 19:18, in the team's next meet in Iowa City. On what Coach Huddleston described as a course "designed like a European one," UNI excelled the following week in Kansas City. Instead of it being a relatively smooth surface such as the golf courses they usually ran on, this course was a 2.5 mile trek through dense woods, complete with logs and other obstacles that had to be hurdled. In spite of all that, UNI placed all of its eight runners in the top 20 of the 45-woman field. Donna Grosbeck led the way, finishing second overall in a time of 14:40. On Oct. 31, the Panthers traveled to Ames for the AIAW Regional Championships where the course surface was more conventional, but longer at 5,000 meters. The team finished a very respectable fourth overall and Skov became UNI's first women's cross-country national qualifier when she broke her own school record by 17 seconds, finishing in 19:01. In the national meet in Seattle in November where 43 schools were represented, Skov captured 52nd place out of a field of 175 runners. Her time was 19:19. Huddleston commented, "I think we learned a lot from this meet. Kris didn't feel she pushed herself and that's something she needs to learn to do against this level of competition."

The track and cross-country teams began the 1981 academic year with great expectations. Huddleston said of her track team, "This is the strongest team yet for UNI." The coach predicted that the team would send six to eight women to the national meet, which would be a record for the UNI women's team and that is exactly what took place. UNI sent eight qualifiers to the nationals.

The 1981 cross-country season was marred by a tragic accident which took the life of UNI team member Stacy Miller. The team was on its way to a meet in Des Moines when a car ran a stop sign at an intersection on Iowa route 14 north of Grundy Center and hit the van which was being driven by Coach Huddleston. She, along with several members of the team, sustained injuries requiring hospitalization and Miller was killed. Huddleston remembers the aftermath of the accident this way. "I was ready to quit. I didn't want to coach again when I came to. But the athletes changed my mind. They never had any doubt they would finish the season." The team and the season did go on. The very next weekend the five uninjured team members ran in a



Cross-Country Team

Left to right, Row 1: Jane Day, Sandy Elsberry, Karla Federspiel, Cindy McGohan.

Row 2: Stacy Miller, Kris Skov, Kim Kaiser, Terry Leisinger (not pictured, Stacy Roberts).

meet at Central College. They ran for their dead teammate and injured friends, cutting several seconds off their personal bests. Even though they now had only five team members instead of the usual seven, they ended the season beating 41 of the 58 teams they ran against. Skov and Sandy Elsberry led them to a fifth place Division II team finish at the AIAW Region 6 meet, both of them qualifying for the nationals.

The spring '82 women's track season was highlighted by the performances of Maren Seehusen in the shot put. With a pair of throws, the longest of which was 43-3 3/4, the UNI shot putter broke her own school record, shattering the school mark by nearly a foot and qualifying for the AIAW Division II Nationals. Other national qualifiers in '82, each of whom had at least one UNI track record, included Joe Ann Jackson, Karla Federspiel, Jess Romig, Mary Jaycox and Chris Ropa in the sprints; Sheila Soehner in the long jump, and Day (middle distance) and Elsberry (distance). Another highlight of the year was that UNI hosted the 1982 AIAW National Indoor Track and Field Championships in the Dome on March 12 and 13. This year also marked the founding of the Gateway Conference, which was established as an all-women's NCAA-sanctioned orga-

nization sponsoring nine Division I women's sports including cross-country and track and field. Along with UNI, it consisted of Drake, Bradley, Indiana State, Wichita State, Illinois State, Southern Illinois, Eastern Illinois, Southwest Missouri State and Western Illinois.

Huddleston remembers shot putter Maren Seehusen as an exceptionally coachable and hard-working athlete. The coach remembers Seehusen as, "tall, strong and talented and very motivated to become a national qualifier." But it became evident that to throw far enough to qualify nationally as a shot putter, she was going to have to completely change her technique. She had been using a spin like she used in the discus event, but Huddleston realized that Seehusen was going to have to develop an approach involving hopping across the circle in order to increase her distance. Seehusen volunteered to take a couple of summer courses so she could stay on campus and work on developing the new technique. They worked together all summer, with Huddleston sitting on the ground in front of the throwing circle as Seehusen put the shot over the coach's head. Huddleston remembers that, "She added significantly to her distance that summer but still missed qualifying by just six inches. So we just kept working at it and by the following year, she had added over two feet to her throws and she qualified for nationals. She just never gave up."

Beginning in the fall of 1983, the UNI women's athletic program made the jump from AIAW Division II to NCAA Division I. As Coach Huddleston said at the time, "Because the Panther women have never run Division I, it's difficult to tell how we will stand...I think it's a good move for the women, but it will take a while to get the teams up to a good competitive level." The cross-country team returned six runners from the previous year including national qualifier Elsberry, who set a school record at the Norse-



UNI's Shirley Walker keeps pace with the front two runners in the field.

man Invitational at Decorah in September, where UNI finished fifth out of 17 teams. "I was really pleased with the overall performance of the team", said Huddleston. "This is probably the toughest course in the state of Iowa."

Nineteen eighty-three was Coach Huddleston's last as head of the women's track and field program. Since becoming the program's first coach in 1974, she had succeeded in qualifying 64 athletes for AIAW regional championships and 13 for the AIAW nationals. Six of those 13 national qualifiers had achieved all-American status. She remembers that, "Although I really liked the coaching, I could tell I was just exhausted and needed to step down and just focus on the teaching and research." Reluctantly, she told the administrators of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services (HPELS) of her decision. She remained at UNI as a professor in the school of HPELS and was replaced by Mary Kay Grosso as head coach of track and field.

Grosso's Year (1984-1985)

Mary Kay Grosso came to UNI from Illinois State University where she had coached the women's track and field and cross-country teams to both conference and state titles. She did her undergraduate work at Illinois State and was a member of the Redbird track and cross-country teams in each of her four years there. She was a national cross-country qualifier her senior year. In 1980, she earned her master's degree from Marshall University while serving as an assistant track coach.

Grosso began her work with the cross-country team. She had five returning letter-winners including Elsberry, Federspiel, Stacie Scheer, Mary Pound and Cindy McGohan. UNI competed with several experienced Division I schools and Grosso pronounced herself pleased with the overall season. "We set up individual goals and team goals and I think we accomplished them," she said. In the track season, although the team as a whole was not an outstanding one, there were some good individual performances. Seehusen continued to excel in the shot put and school



Coach Mary Kay Grosso

records were set in the 10k by Scheer, in the 3,000 and 5,000 by Elsberry, in the triple jump by Rhonda Butt and in the discus by Jennifer VanEtten. Grosso moved on after just one year and she was succeeded in May of 1985 as head women's track and field and cross-country coach by Lea Ann Shaddox.

Shaddox Years (1985-1998)

Lea Ann Shaddox came from the University of Iowa where she had completed her master's degree in Physical Education while serving as an assistant coach for the track and cross-country programs. A native of Bernard, Iowa, Shaddox did her undergraduate work at UNI, after which she taught and coached cross-country and track for seven years at Marquette High School in West Point, Iowa. In the fall of '85, she guided the UNI cross-country women to their best showing ever in the Gateway Conference championships, finishing fourth of 10 teams. In her first year as head track and field coach, Shaddox was assisted by former UNI thrower Deb Vangellow and by Pat VanRossum, who came to UNI from his position as assistant track and field coach at the University of Tennessee.

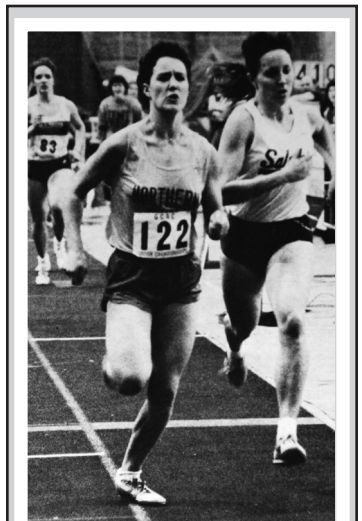
Shaddox faced significant challenges her first year as head track and field coach. Little or no recruiting had been done the year before and since she began in May, it was too late to do much recruiting for the following fall so she began with a small number of athletes. As a result, her first-year track teams had their ups and downs. The highlight for her indoor team was a second-place finish at the UNI Invitational in the Dome. In the outdoor season, the best team performance came with a third-place finish out of the nine teams competing at the Augustana Invitational. She decided she needed an assistant who specialized in the throws and so she added Teri Soldan, whom she had known during her time at Iowa. Soldan, a native of Richmond, Mich., completed her masters at Iowa in 1986, during which time she also assisted with the track program. As a Hawkeye undergrad, she competed in the javelin, shot and discus.



Coach Lea Ann Shaddox

The following fall, the cross-country team was paced early-on by Kari Kleber, who placed 21st out of 210 runners at the Midwest Collegiate meet in Kenosha, Wis. Shaddox and her staff worked hard during the '87 indoor and outdoor track seasons to develop their young team. The throwers and distance runners came on strong and significant improvements among some new sprinters contributed as well to UNI's improved finish in the Gateway Conference. Though still in the lower half of the conference with a seventh-place finish, the team had achieved its goal of improving on its last place finish the year before. The highlight of the conference meet for UNI was a win in the 4x880 relay, in which the team broke the school and conference record. Darsi Evans, Barb Clark, Denise Organ and Natalie Sueppel ran a 9:06.60 to set the mark. All four of these women had originally been recruited by Huddleston and over their years together they had become a strong and cohesive group. Coach Shaddox remembers them as "gritty and determined and very hard workers." Several other school records were also set at the conference meet including the 2-mile relay, the distance medley and the javelin.

Shaddox remembers that, in trying to develop her program, she felt it would be important for her athletes to experience annual spring break trips to southern meets but the funds for such trips were simply not available from the university. So, she recalls that the coaches and team members all participated in various fund-raising activities to pay for the trips. "We had bake sales, t-shirt sales, anything we could," she says, "and we still had to stay four-in-a-room, but we got it done. We went to Alabama, Florida, Arizona and even one year to Jamaica. The mom of one of our athletes, Heather Sellers, was a travel agent, and she got us some deals that helped out a lot."



Karen Smith finishes strong in an indoor meet in the Dome.

The 1987 cross-country team was “definitely the strongest team we’ve ever had,” according to Shaddox. Her six returning runners, led by senior Clark, were pushed hard by freshman Cherie Fisher from Charles City. They finished fifth of the 10 teams in the Gateway. The ‘88 indoor track team finished second at the UNI Open and seventh again in the Gateway Conference. Outdoors UNI was eighth in the conference. The year was highlighted by a school record in the 600 set by Black and by the performances of the shot putters, Lisa Tatman and Donna Wheeler, who finished ranked one and two in the conference.

By the 1991 indoor season, Shaddox had her team where she hoped it would be. UNI achieved its best ever finish of third in the Gateway and Shaddox was chosen Coach of the Year in the conference. Winners in the conference meet included Black in the 600, Kathy Allen in the 1000, Sherry Shedd in the 55 meter dash and the mile relay team of Jill Isaacson, Erika Jeschke, Dyan Fluhrer and Black.

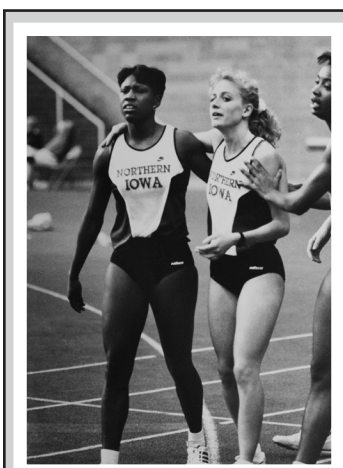


Sherry Shedd finishing ahead of the rest in her specialty, the 55 meter dash. Julie Davis can be seen in lane six.

One of Shaddox’s best memories of her years as UNI’s head coach came at the Drake Relays in 1991 when both Shedd and her brother Kenny (who competed for UNI’s men’s track team) were entered in the open 400 meter events. Shaddox says, “The weather was terrible, cold and windy, and Sherry’s race came first and she gutted it out and took the win. It was shortly thereafter when the men ran the 400 meters and Kenny did the same thing winning his race and they both dedicated their wins to their parents, who were there that day.”

Beginning with the 1992-93 academic year, UNI moved to the Missouri Valley Conference. Shaddox was optimistic about her cross-country team’s chances in the new league and she was right. UNI finished fourth in its first year of competition in the Valley. This was also the year in which the UNI women’s track team had its first-ever national qualifier when Shantel Twiggs made the 100 meter dash field at the NCAA Outdoor Championships. The next year, Twiggs also became the program’s first Division I all-American when she finished 11th in the 55 meter dash. By the time she finished her UNI career in 1994, the St. Louis trackster was a three-time all-American, had qualified for the NCAA’s eight times in the 55, 100 and 200 dashes and owned the school records in 11 different events. She went on to take Gold in the 4x100 relay at the 1995 Pan Am games and, in 2005, she was the first female track athlete to be inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame. In the middle distances, Paula Nemmers won the MVC indoor 800 title, in which she also set the all-time UNI record. She was followed closely by newcomer Emily Montgomery from Woodbury, Minn. whose time in the 800 was second only to Nemmers on the all-time UNI indoor list.

Shaddox remembers that the successful recruiting of Twiggs was an unusual process. Twiggs did not really explode onto the scene as a high school athlete until the Missouri state meet at the end of her senior year. Shaddox had been recruiting her with repeated phone calls even before that, but Twiggs’ performance at the state meet resulted in her recruitment by several schools, including Big 10 and Big 8 institutions. Twiggs finally chose UNI, committing very late in the year and in spite of the fact that she had never even visited the campus. On the day she arrived, she walked into Shaddox’s office and announced that she intended



Shantell Twiggs and Dyan Fluhrer were top sprinters for the Panther track team in independent events and on relay teams.

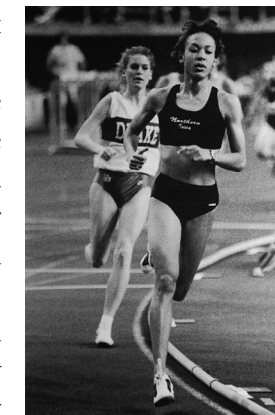
to become “UNI’s first national qualifier and all-American.” Shaddox remembers that the way she said it, “... wasn’t arrogant at all, she just said it in a matter-of-fact way and I really liked hearing it. And, of course, she did it.”

Over the next few years, UNI’s teams continued to finish near the middle of the MVC in cross-country, indoor and outdoor events. Team standouts included Diana Leftridge, a transfer from Iowa State, who excelled in the jumps and relays and Montgomery, UNI’s top cross-country runner and middle distance track competitor. Leftridge was named MVC Indoor Field Athlete of the Year in ‘95 and finished seventh at the NCAA indoor championships to win all-America honors. The opening of UNI’s new outdoor track facility in 1997 was another milestone in the development of the program.



Marchelle Short and Julie Mazzechelli provided a lot of punch to the success of the team.

A major development in UNI’s College of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services (HPELS) took place in the late 1990s which had significant implications for the women’s track and field program. HPELS leader, Dr. Christopher Edginton, wanted to separate the college’s faculty from intercollegiate coaching and one step in doing that was to move Shaddox into full-time teaching. He approached her and told her about the opportunity. Although she



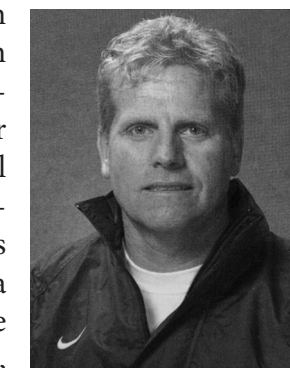
Emily Montgomery

loved coaching, she also had a good deal of teaching experience and enjoyed it as well and she could see that such a move would be a good one for her growing family (she and her husband, Jerry now had two children). She accepted the offer. However, budget constraints meant that hiring a new coach for the women’s track program was not going to happen. The solution was to combine the men’s and women’s programs and so, beginning in the fall of 1998, the women’s program was placed under the direction of the men’s head coach, Chris Bucknam.

The Bucknam Years (1998-2008)

Upon taking over the program, Bucknam commented, “Taking over the women’s program has been quite a challenge for us just in terms of the number of athletes involved...what we try to teach is not what’s here and now, but what’s down the road. We have a vision of where we want this program to go, both on the women’s and men’s side, and we want our athletes to have that same vision now or three years down the road. We want them to expect the best.” The combining of the programs was reflected in the fact that henceforth the men and women shared one media guide. Bucknam also added Twiggs to his staff as a full-time assistant coach to work with the short sprinters and as a recruiter. “Shantel has been an outstanding addition to our staff,” said Bucknam. “She has all the tools. She has a strong knowledge base, great enthusiasm and she has been a stand-out competitor on both the national and international levels.” Twiggs added a great deal to the UNI program as a coach and later moved on to become the head track and field coach at the University of Nevada.

The 1998-99 year began with UNI’s best ever finish in the MVC cross-country conference, a second place. The year also saw a number of school records set by the women tracksters, including indoor marks in the 55 hurdles by Brenna Fleishman (who was also the MVC title winner in the event), the 400 by Jill Bakewell and the 20-pound weight by Melissa Yerk. The UNI outdoor school record in the 100 hurdles was broken three times in ‘98 by three different team members. Dee Wear set



Coach Chris Bucknam

the mark at 14:50, it was later broken by Tiffany Ratzlaff with a time of 14:33 and then Fleishman moved it still lower to 14:13. The other school outdoor record was set at 163-11 inches by Yerk in the hammer throw.

A landmark for the women's cross-country program was reached in the fall of 2000 when UNI won the MVC title for the first time. Senior Kari Thilges led the Panthers in a time of 18:12 for the 5,000 meter course, finishing second overall and leading a pack of five UNI runners, all of whom placed in the top 14. Rita Fiala finished in fourth place overall, just 13 seconds behind Thilges, followed



Jill Bakewell (100) and Nikki Nelson were sprint specialists.

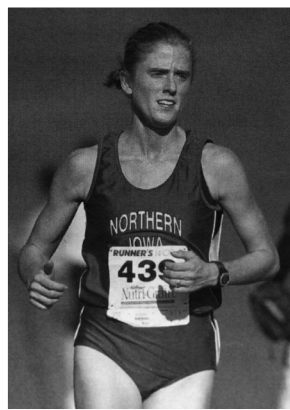
closely by freshman Elly Glass who was fifth, senior Teresa Grothus, in 12th, and freshman Wendy Shaw in 14th. "We were bound and determined this year to be aggressive from the start," said Bucknam. "Last year, we came up a little short. Today, we got out aggressively for the first two kilometers and the race was basically over by that time." Bucknam gave a lot of the credit for the win to assistant coach Kyle Kepler.

The continued development of the track and field program was indicated by the fact that a number of UNI school records were set both indoor and outdoor in 2000-01. Indoors, marks in the 60 dash, the 400, the 5000 and the pole vault were achieved and outdoors in the 400 intermediate hurdles, the 4x400 relay and the high jump. For the 2001-02 year, Bucknam and assistant Doug Case were envisioning a women's program that could parallel UNI's achievements on the men's side. Bucknam said, "When we talk about our women's program, we want to put our athletes' names up on our board and be able to underline some national qualifiers." "We've added some real quality women this year," said Case. "I think overall everyone has improved. We revamped our fall program and we've got a different emphasis on speed at all levels....we feel like they are absolutely ready to go. We want them to feel strong and feel good about themselves, and we think that's how they feel." During the outdoor '01 season, UNI had eight all-conference performers, among them two MVC champions, but the team finished fifth, which was not good enough for Bucknam. "We're trying so hard to contend for a conference title with the women's team," he said, "and we won't be satisfied until we can do that on a consistent basis."

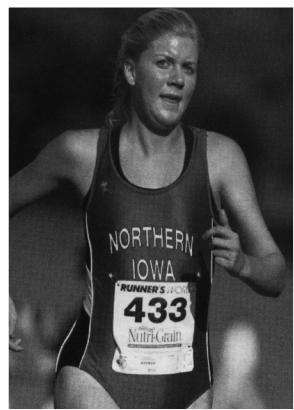
In 2002, a good many of Bucknam's goals for his track team were attained. The women won the MVC indoor title for the first time and scored over 100 points at the conference outdoor meet for the first time, finishing second.

Of course, Bucknam wanted even more. "We want to rake in championships like the men have done," he said. "We want to dominate, but it takes time." In pursuit of that objective, Bucknam and his staff were busy expanding the geographic reach of their recruiting for women athletes just as they had earlier done with the men's program. As a result, the 2003-04 women's roster included team members from the states of Nebraska, Wisconsin and Kansas in addition to Iowa and from

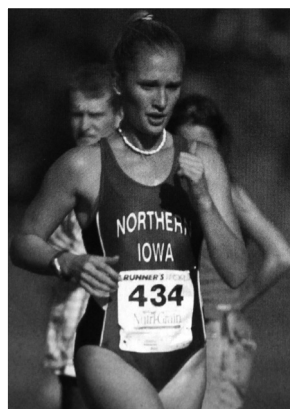
Cross-Country Runners



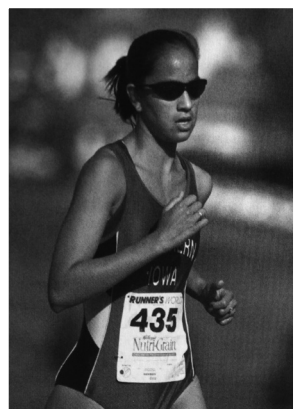
Kari Thilges (439)



Rita Fiala (433)



Teresa Grothus (435)



Elly Glass (434)

The 2002 Women's Indoor MVC Champions



Canada, Ghana, Croatia and Kazakhstan. That year, there were several NCAA qualifiers including Rachel Jansen (shot put), Morgen Edwards (discus) and the 4x400 relay team of Krystle Cordes, Angie German, Lynette Wilson and Raven Henry, but finished sixth in the conference both indoors and outdoors which, of course, did not satisfy Bucknam. "So we brought in winners of nine state titles in the freshman class to help us," he said. He added, "Since I've been the coach of the women, I can't remember a better fall of training or as much effort and cohesiveness as we've had with this team. It's a great group of kids who generally want to really get better."

For 2005-06 a new throws coach was added to the UNI staff. She was Renetta Seiler who came over from her position as throws coach at the University of Miami (FL) where she had been since 2002; prior to that she was an assistant coach at her alma mater, Kansas State. A native of Algona, Iowa, she was a three-time all-American in both the hammer and the 20-pound weight at KSU and a seven-time Big 12 conference champion. She qualified for the NCAA championships a total of 11 times in four different events. Seiler's contributions to the team were many, but perhaps they were most clearly demonstrated by the success achieved by



Renetta Seiler, Panther assistant coach/throws.

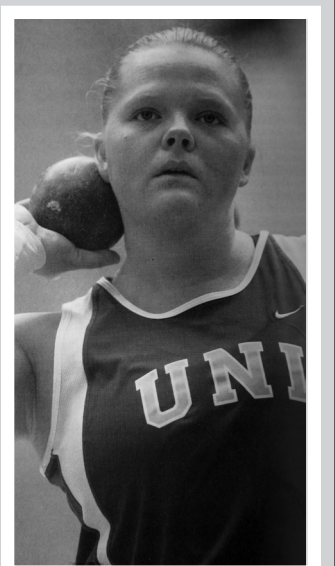
the woman destined to become the most decorated female track and field athlete in UNI history, shot putter Jansen.

Jansen's first all-American shot put performance came at the NCAA outdoor championships in 2006 and highlighted the season for UNI, but there was much more to come.

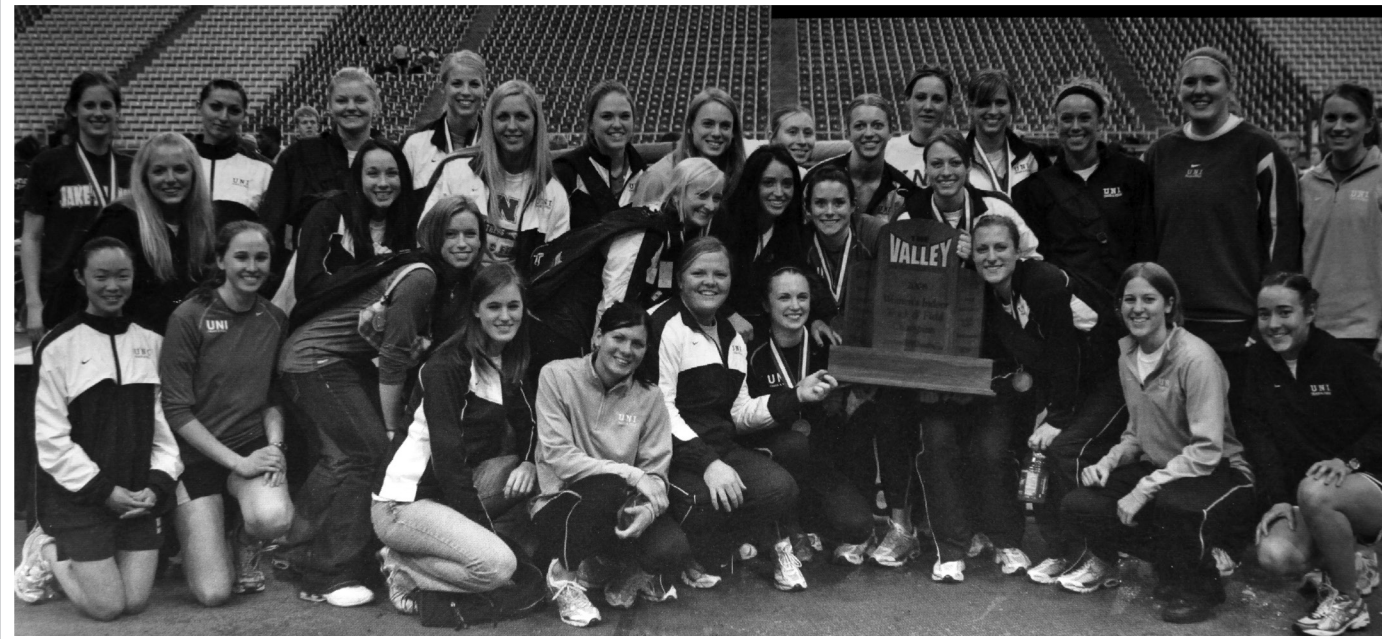
As teams, the Panthers improved from ninth to fourth in MVC cross-country competition and sixth to third in indoor track. "We are pleased with the progress we made this past year and we feel like we're moving in the right direction...but we're not satisfied yet," said Bucknam.

In 2007, the UNI women achieved runner-up finishes in both the MVC indoor and outdoor track seasons and Jansen continued her assault on the UNI and MVC records in the shot. By the time she graduated, she had garnered all-America honors a total of four times.

In 2008, the team finally achieved the goal that it and the coaches had been working toward for several years; UNI won both the MVC indoor and outdoor titles in the same year. The indoor conference meet saw four UNI women garner individual championships: Jansen in the shot, Crystal Hanson in the high jump, Traci Hawley in the 3000 meters and Olimpia Nowak in the pentathlon. The outdoor MVC conference meet included individual wins by Amy Bagge in the 800, Dani Stipe in the heptathlon, Hanson in the high jump, Hawley in the 10k and, once again, Jansen in the shot put.



Rachel Jansen: All-American, 2x NCAA Qualifier, 2x Regional Qualifier, 2x MVC Champion, 7x All-MVC.



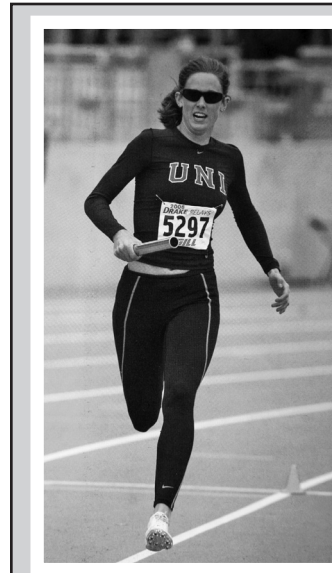
2008 women's indoor team with the MVC championship trophy.



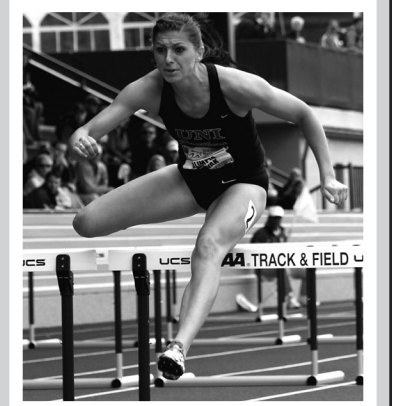
2008 women's outdoor team with the MVC championship trophy.

Recent Years (2009-Present)

As was described earlier in the section of this chapter on the men's program, 2008 was Bucknam's last as head coach at UNI. When he moved on to the University of Arkansas, his assistant, Goepfert, took over both the men's and women's programs at UNI. Earlier in this chapter, we described his background, as well as the backgrounds of his staff, so we will not repeat that information here. Under Goepfert's leadership, the women's program had just an average year in '09. It finished sixth in the MVC both indoors and outdoors. Perhaps the highlight of the year were the two multi-event team members who qualified for the NCAA national meet; Stipe and Nowack. As the reader will recall, Goepfert remained at UNI as head coach for



Heptathlete Dani Stipe reset the UNI school record she had set in 2007 with 5,550 points.



Pentathlete Olimpia Nowack set a 2012 school record in the indoor pentathlon with 4,038 points while becoming the second women's track athlete to achieve all-American status.

just one year and then moved on to join Bucknam at Arkansas.

Beginning with the 2010-11 academic year, the women's track program is now under the leadership path of Dan Steele. His work and where the team will go is the beginning of the next phase of track history. There will be those who will make their name well known and those who are a part of the team working toward its place in the conference and the nation as they race toward the finish line.



Coach Dan Steele

Women's Volleyball

Christopher R. Edginton, Kristi L. O'Brien, Keri L. Kulish

Introduction

The storied history of the women's volleyball program at the University of Northern Iowa reflects the will, determination and commitment to excellence of an exceptional group of coaches and student-athletes. Over a period of more than three decades from 1975 to 2010, the women's volleyball program has compiled a record of 907-299-22. Viewed as one of the NCAA's elite programs, efforts by student-athletes and coaches have resulted in numerous conference titles, league tournament crowns and NCAA tournament berths.

Women's volleyball, played as an intercollegiate sport, was introduced at UNI in 1975. Without question, the passage of Title IX in 1972 to address sexual discrimination in athletics had an impact on the formulation of the women's volleyball program at UNI. Although in the early years of the program there were no scholarships offered to student-athletes engaged in the women's volleyball program, there was great interest in individual student participation. During the first year, over 45 women answered the call to participate in the program and, as a result, two competitive teams were established.

The program's history can be neatly divided into three segments as defined by coaching appointments. The foundation of UNI women's volleyball was initially established by Sharon Huddleston and Carol Gruber. Huddleston served as the program's first coach, serving from 1975-77. She took a leave of absence from her position as a faculty member in physical education to pursue a doctoral degree. Huddleston was then followed by Gruber who served as head coach from 1978-80. During this initial development of the program, competition was at the NCAA Division II level and most of the matches were with colleges or universities in the state of Iowa.

The second, and perhaps most significant phase of the program, rests directly on the shoulders of Dr. Iradge Ahrabi-Fard. In fact, the story of the UNI volleyball program cannot be properly revealed without understanding the significant and long-lasting influence Ahrabi-Fard has had on the development of the

program. He served as head coach from 1981-2000. He is widely considered as one of the most innovative coaches at the collegiate national and international levels. He helped the transition of the program from NCAA Division II to Division I and posted a record of 503-142-4. He recorded at least 20 victories in 17 of his seasons, collecting 10 conference championships, eight league tournament berths and three National Invitation Tournament appearances.

Currently, the women's volleyball program is headed by Bobbi (Becker) Petersen. Petersen was appointed as head coach in 2001 and continues in this position today. One of UNI's most celebrated and acknowledged women's volleyball players, Petersen has continued the exceptional tradition of excellence established by her predecessors. Her record as a coach stands at 289-76. She has led her teams to three Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) regular titles, two NCAA Sweet Sixteen appearances and five MVC tournament crowns. In 2002, she was named the recipient of the American Coaches Volleyball Association National Coach of the Year Award.

The UNI program has been blessed with outstanding student-athletes, many who have been recruited within the state of Iowa. They were not all blue chip recruits; rather they were individuals with a strong work ethic, a desire to be a part of a winning tradition and who held a strong belief in their ability to compete at the highest levels on a consistent basis. Student-athletes such as Petersen, Alex Auken, Kim McCaffrey, Molly O'Brien, Ellie Blankenship, Kate Witt, Mary Bernhardt, Kara and Kate Galer, Kim Kester, Bre Payton, Jill Arganbright, Kris Schroeder and Shannon Perry all contributed in a significant fashion to the program over time. What is most impressive about the program has not only been its success on the court, but also the student-athletes' commitment to high academic achievement. Annually, the team has been a leader among all other student-athletes participating in intercollegiate sports at the University of Northern Iowa.

A part of the allure of UNI women's volleyball has been the setting where matches have been contested and legends established. From 1975-2005, the program

held its matches in the West Gymnasium. This facility proved to be a perfect venue for the program. A compact and intimate facility, the team racked up consecutive home winning streaks of 50 games that ended in 1996 and a second streak of 74 home victories that ended in 2004. The low ceiling and the close-in seating to the court created a context for great fan involvement in the events. The West Gym was referred to by opposing coaches as "the snake pit."



The infamous West Gym that basketball players and volleyball players alike have spoken about with high regard. They loved this environment. The fans were right on top of the action and, as a result, gave the visitors plenty to worry about. Built in 1925 for a mere \$180,000, the West Gym ranked among one of the toughest places to play for opposing teams.

All-American Molly O'Brien recounts her experience playing in the West Gymnasium. "I remember that game ...[Minnesota vs. UNI, 2001] ...the crowd, senior night, everyone was there to support us. It was so loud. There is no place like playing in the West Gym. With the fans sitting on top of you and they are intimidating your opponents and it is loud and they are watching everything. It was a hard place to play. I feel lucky that I got to play there."

In 2006, volleyball moved its matches to the McLeod Center. However, this did not prevent the team from staging a throw-back night in 2010 in the West Gymnasium. Loyal fans came out dressed in disco attire to celebrate this event with the team.

Over the past four decades, UNI volleyball has been viewed in the United States as one of the top 25 programs on a consistent basis. Each of the aforementioned coaches played a significant and important role

in its development. The respect that the program holds in the volleyball community is, in large part, due to the high expectations in which each of these coaches fashioned for their student-athletes. The story is a brilliant one, reflecting a commitment to a tradition of excellence. Today, the women's volleyball program is among the most highly respected programs in the nation; one of a few programs in the United States to have won over 900 matches.

The Beginnings

The women's volleyball program at the University of Northern Iowa was established in 1974 under the direction of Sharon Huddleston. Hired in the Women's Physical Education Department in 1973, Huddleston was responsible for establishing not only the women's volleyball program, but also women's gymnastics and women's track and field. At the time, individuals were hired to not only serve as coaches but also as instructors in the physical education program. Huddleston was responsible for teaching physical activity courses and first aid. Without question, she had a full load but referred to her assignment as "perfect at that time in her life." She reports that "...I was so busy and that was exactly what I wanted to do."

Coach Sharon Huddleston started the volleyball program at UNI. In addition, she started the women's gymnastics program and the women's indoor and outdoor track and field programs.



The Northern Iowan reported in an article published in September 1994 that there was "...over abundant interest shown in volleyball as a women's intercollegiate sport." According to Huddleston, the interest generated "...has made try-outs necessary but a difficult task." During the initial year, 52 women attended preseason practices. Again, as Huddleston noted, "...there are a variety of different levels of skill involved ...

we have girls who have just played intermural sports all the way to who've competed interscholastically." What Huddleston was looking for in those trying out for the team were individuals who possessed "the potential to develop and adjust to the skills of power volleyball."

Huddleston established an A team and a B team for a period of two years. Initially 14 of the individuals were selected to be members of a traveling squad that were drawn from a 20-member team. This group of athletes was mainly made up of freshmen and sophomores. Again, as Huddleston noted, "...only three of four women came out that had much experience in power volleyball, but even others have come along quite rapidly. Our offense is beginning to work and ...give us a chance to see what we can do."

In 1974, there were 14 colleges and/or universities that were engaged in women's volleyball in the state of Iowa. The schedule during the first year included participation in the Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) tournament in Mason City. This was followed by participation in a second invitational tournament in Grinnell and the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) state tournament held in Storm Lake and the Region 6 Tournament in Lincoln, Neb. No team records were kept.

The UNI competitive volleyball schedule was in place in earnest in 1975 with 15 matches scheduled. The schedule included teams from throughout the state including Coe College, Iowa State, Iowa, Drake, William Penn, Dordt, Upper Iowa, Dubuque, St. Ambrose College, Cornell College and Wartburg College. The schedule saw the team playing several teams twice and participating in the Graceland Invitational Tournament and the Upper Iowa Tournament. A foundation of excellence was established during this season with the team earning a record of 13-0-2.

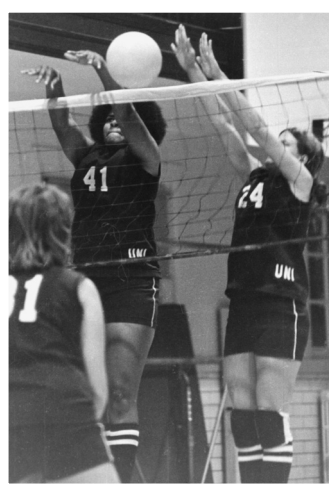
Huddleston notes that her coaching philosophy was the same as when she was an athlete. She offered "...I expected 100 percent on a daily basis in practice and my philosophy was that if you practiced that hard like you would in competition, then competition would be just fun and even practice was fun if you gave your best, your very best effort at all times; you would certainly improve." She further offered that the "...athletes who stayed with me were all intrinsically motivated ...I had excellent players that loved competition, loved the game and wanted to be the very best. I was never upset if I say

100 percent out of each player." Huddleston offers that "...I loved what I was doing. All I ever wanted to be at the time was a coach. I loved volleyball."

In 1977, UNI's schedule was tremendously expanded. The team's record in 1976 was 16-14-1 and for the first time, UNI hosted its own women's invitation tournament and participated in the AIAW Division II tournament, finishing second. The team then advanced to the regional tournament, bowing out after losing to Missouri, Nebraska, Mankato State, Kansas and Minnesota. Huddleston recalls that competing in tournaments against tough competition often found athletes really fired up for the first match. However, they would either relax or give up and she would often call a time out and ask the team to give one good reason why it should give up on the match. The athletes in turn rallied to her call and would win the match. In 1977, the team experienced one of two losing seasons in the history of the program with a record of 13-15-5.

Huddleston recalls that there was not a great deal of support for the program in the early years. "We had to eat at fast food places for lunch and dinner." When entering a restaurant, she had to quickly calculate how much money was available and report to the team members what they had to spend before they ordered from the menu. During Huddleston's tenure as a head coach, the program was an extension of the academic effort of the university and as a result many decisions regarding resource allocations were made at faculty

During the early years of volleyball, UNI was blessed with players like Helen Walker (no. 41) and Kathy White (no. 24). Said Huddleston of Walker, "She was an excellent blocker. She was easy to coach and always worked to make defense a great part of her game." As for White, Huddleston said, "Kathy was the best all-around player I ever coached. She had the first jump-serve of any team I had and it was affective."



meetings. In fact, many faculty members were asked to drive their own cars to events to transport athletes.

Huddleston identified several players that contributed significantly to the team, including Mary Smith, Jane Smith, Kathy Ryan, Doris "DJ" and Kathy Fitzgerald. Many of these athletes worked to stay in shape for the next volleyball team and Huddleston notes that they were very competitive and focused. She reports that nearly all of her players had high academic records. She offers "...they were all really good at academics. I don't know if I just got the right players or what I tried to instill in them flowed over into their academics." She offered "...they were all excellent people and the idea of never giving up even if there was a mistake was ingrained in their behavior."

At the end of the season, Huddleston made a decision to seek her doctoral degree, first attending the University of Wisconsin and then later enrolling at the University of Iowa in Sports Psychology. As Huddleston had been appointed to an instructor's roll which emphasized teaching and coaching, it was essential that if she was to succeed in the academic environment that she seek an advanced degree. Upon completing her doctorate, she returned to the physical education program, retiring as a full professor and was recognized as one of the leading sports psychologists.

Huddleston recalls her time as head coach with the women's volleyball team as one of the best times of her life. She recalls that she was "...doing exactly what she wanted to do, had excellent talent and great people to work with ...they were just wonderful good people."

The 1978-79 season found a new head coach at the helm. Carol Gruber, a native Californian, was named after meeting with administrators and interviewing at a national conference. A graduate of California State Long Beach with a teaching degree and a master's degree from University of Southern California, Gruber served as head coach from 1978-80. A former collegiate volleyball player and junior varsity coach at Wittier College, Gruber gained knowledge of the sport as a player and through her experience observing the program at USC. Gruber's position was a temporary one while Huddleston completed her doctorate but offered ... "the position seemed like a good opportunity."

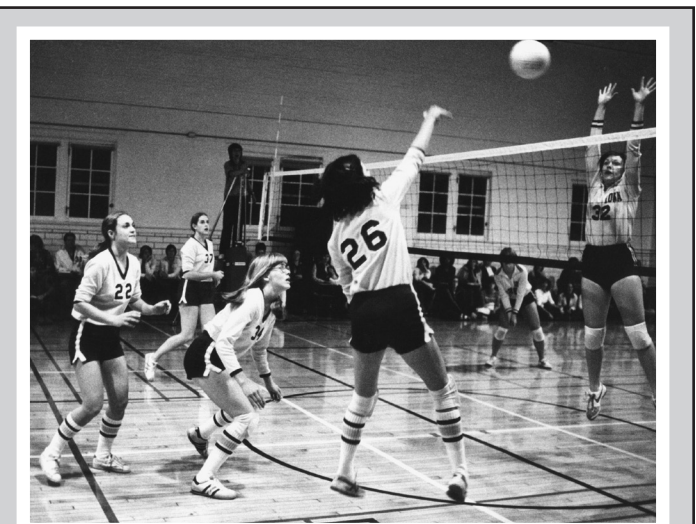
In her appointment as an instructor she was responsible for teaching three classes each semester as well as serving as the head volleyball coach and the

women's track and field coach. Gruber emphasized the importance of her players gaining and perfecting the fundamentals of the sport of volleyball. She viewed herself as a teacher of the game first. She credits her high school volleyball coach for giving her the fundamental skills to play the game. Gruber also states that her physical education teacher had her teach some of the classes while she was a senior in high school.

As the 1978 season began, Gruber remarked that she felt that it will be "...a challenging year ...a building and growing year." In fact it was with the Panthers recording their second consecutive losing season, 15-17-5. Of interest was the team's expansion of the schedule to include more games as well as participation in several tournaments, including the Wisconsin, Graceland, Iowa, and Winona State Invitation Tournaments, not to mention participation in the AIAW Divi-



Coach Carol Gruber took over the coaching responsibilities when Coach Huddleston decided to go back to school to acquire her doctoral degree.



This 1978 game was played against Iowa in the old East Gym where there was very little space for spectators. Here, Lisa Schlueter returns for a kill while no. 34 Kim Halligan, no. 22 Cheryl Steger and no. 37 Sue Amundsen ready for continued action.

sion II Tournament and the AIAW Division II Regional Tournament.

Gruber placed a great emphasis on building relationships with her student-athletes. She acknowledged the contributions of Teresa Langguth, Lynne Goedken and Sue Potts. She also noted that there were very few scholarships to build the program. She recognized the importance of recruiting players in order to be competitive with UNI's sister institutions - Iowa and Iowa State -- and spent the time necessary to reach out to those athletes that she felt would make a contribution to the UNI program. Gruber remarked that recruiting for women's athletics was a new and different concept in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

Winning fortunes returned in 1979 with a greatly expanded schedule of 50 games. The team recorded a record of 28-20-2. Of significant note was participation in several tournaments that involved schools from throughout the Midwest, including teams from Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, Tennessee, Kansas, North Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa. As a result, the program gained greater national exposure. In 1980, the team earned a record of 32-16-3. In the 1979 AIAW Regional Tournament, it produced a 3-3 record and in 1980 a record of 4-4.

One of the significant highlights of the program in 1980 was an unprecedented match between UNI and the US Olympic team. Led by 6-5 Flo Human, Rita Crockett and Debbie Green, the US team was said to be the best in U.S. history. As Gruber noted in a pre-match statement, "I don't know what the U.S. team expects of us but the chances of us scoring a few points against them is very realistic, especially if our offense is scoring well that day." The match was somewhat lopsided, with UNI only able to manage three points against the Olympians. Nonetheless, the match raised the profile of women's volleyball on the campus as well as raise money for a players' trust fund for the national team.

Gruber followed in the footsteps of Huddleston, completing her doctoral degree in Sports Psychology at The University of Iowa. Her experience at UNI was followed by serving as the head coach of volleyball at Eastern Illinois. At this writing, she was serving as the Associate Vice President for Student Engagement at Rowan University in Glassboro, N.J.

Architect of Greatness: The Years of Iradge Ahrabi-Fard

How do you build a NCAA Division I women's volleyball program into one of national prominence? This question was the challenge faced by Dr. Iradge Ahrabi-Fard in assuming the role as UNI head women's volleyball coach in 1981. Athletics Director Stan Sheriff contacted Ahrabi-Fard and asked him to serve as the coach for the 1980-81 season knowing that Ahrabi-Fard had had extensive experience growing up in Iran playing competitive volleyball. He had been a three-sport player (track and field, swimming and volleyball) who competed at the highest levels, including serving as a member of the Iranian Olympic swimming team. Sent to the University of Northern Iowa to complete a bachelor's degree, he returned to Iran, serving as National Men's & Women's Head Swimming Coach and, ultimately, Vice President of Iran's Ministry of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation. Returning to UNI, Ahrabi-Fard joined the faculty at Northern University High School, serving as a physical education teacher and coach for boys and girls swimming and boys' track and field. Successful in his work, Sheriff knew he was the right person to serve as UNI volleyball coach following the departure of Gruber.

This appointment was preceded by the Panthers' transition from Division II to Division I. With a small budget, inadequate facilities and a focus on recruiting mainly in the state of Iowa, Ahrabi-Fard was faced with many challenges in developing the volleyball program. However, he was up to the task as his record would eventually validate. The program gained a strong reputation for excellence not only in terms of wins and losses but also for the academic excellence of its student-athletes.

Building the volleyball program on multiple levels, Ahrabi-Fard made a point of recruiting and developing players from the state of Iowa. He worked to nurture a loyal fan base; in fact, there were only six spectators at an early match. Printing 100 tickets, he sold them around campus, to his friends and door-to-door for \$1.00 each. Fan support was critical in the long haul to the success of the team, and he did, in fact, craft a very loyal, enthusiastic and loud fan base. Panther fans often chanted for matches starting at 7 p.m., "three straight ~ home by 8:00."

Coach Iradge Ahrabi-Fard

A wizard, a magician, Dr. Iradge Ahrabi-Fard is regarded as one of the most successful volleyball coaches in NCAA history. An innovator whose contributions to the sport of volleyball are unmatched, his contributions are recognized at the collegiate, national and international levels. Establishing the foundation for UNI's current women's volleyball program, Ahrabi-Fard's legacy as the architect of the University of Northern Iowa's program has been firmly established.

Dr. Ahrabi-Fard is the only recipient in the history of women's volleyball to be acknowledged with all four of the American Coaches Volleyball's Association (AVCA) honors, including being named as Division I National Coach of the Year (1999); Excellence in Education Award (1999); Founder's Award for Lifetime Achievement (2002); and as an Inaugural Member of the AVCA Hall of Fame (2003). In addition, he was named as the Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) Volleyball Coach of the Century (2007) and was inducted into the conference's Hall of Fame (2011). This latter honor marked the first time an individual, coach or athlete in the sport of volleyball was inducted into this prestigious body.

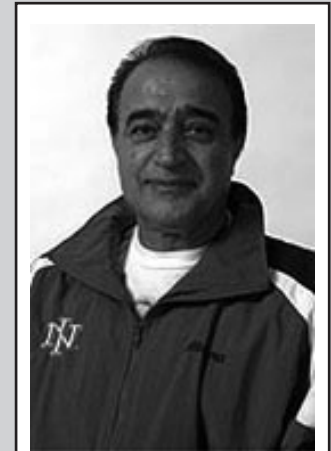
Ahrabi-Fard served as the women's volleyball coach from 1981-2000, compiling a record of 503-142-4. His teams never experienced a losing season and recorded at least 20 victories in 17 of his 19 years as serving as head coach. Guiding the program through a successful transition from NCAA Division II to Division I, Ahrabi-Fard's teams won 10 conference titles, eight league tournament crowns, eight NCAA tournament berths and three National Invitation Tournament appearances. In 1999, he guided his team to a 30-1 record and a no. 15 national ranking, including a trip to the Sweet Sixteen of the NCAA tournament. In 2001, he served as the head national coach of USA A2 in Colorado Springs, Colo., a team that included many of

the members of the USA's Silver Medal team from the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Serving as a professor in UNI's School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, Ahrabi-Fard's career reflected the best example of the teacher/scholar model of education. As a superb teacher on the court and in the classroom, he was also very attentive to exploring ways to advance the game of volleyball through the application of the scientific method. Author of numerous articles, books, videos and presentations, he set a high standard of scholarly inquiry. Among his many books were several titles dedicated to volleyball, including "Intricacies of Coaching Volleyball", "Teaching and Coaching Volleyball", and "Theory of Coaching Volleyball".

His research articles were numerous and well received by his colleagues worldwide, appearing in such professional publications and journals as "Coaching Volleyball" and "Performance Volleyball Conditioning". He was sought after as a speaker at state, regional, national, and international conferences and clinics; he offered presentations throughout the United States and in Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, The Netherlands, The People's Republic of China Taiwan and Turkey.

Dr. Ahrabi-Fard's positive and uplifting approach to coaching is evident in the caring and supportive relationships he built with his student-athletes. His commitment to excellence was reflected in his demanding leadership and coaching style, one which produced championship teams and student-athletes who gained life lessons. A highly respected coach and educator, Dr. Ahrabi-Fard brought great credit to the University of Northern Iowa and to the sport of volleyball.



Coach Iradge Ahrabi-Fard



Capable of doing the right thing at the right time, Coach Ahrabi-Fard used different ways to pose his team to the public as evidenced by this 1988 poster of the tux-dress team. Volleyball fans looked forward to seeing what the new poster would look like. Many other programs soon followed suit. Featured l-r: Bobbi Becker, Maryellen McCann, Angie Homan, Jill Sprague, Lauren Lawrence, Dana Tonn, Shawna Hutchins and Mary Bernhardt.

To promote and cultivate a greater awareness of the game of volleyball, he developed clinics to provide instruction to youthful would-be players. His first clinic drew eight individuals, including his daughter and two of her friends. Such clinics ultimately grew, bringing as many as 700 individuals annually to the University of Northern Iowa campus during the summer. Ahrabi-Fard also was a major speaker at clinics throughout the Midwest, especially in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa.

Panther volleyball posters were designed to promote the team and were among the most interesting and provocative advertisements offered by the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. Perhaps the most memorable of these poster designs featured Ahrabi-Fard dressed in a tuxedo and tails and his players dressed in formal gowns. This idea captured a lot of interest and actually was featured in the Los Angeles Times and highlighted in Germany. Ahrabi-Fard notes that the Germans were buying these posters for \$100 each. Every year there was a tremendous amount of anticipation among the Panther volleyball fan base to see what the poster would present.

Ahrabi-Fard was a superior innovator. Every four years, he took the Panther volleyball team to

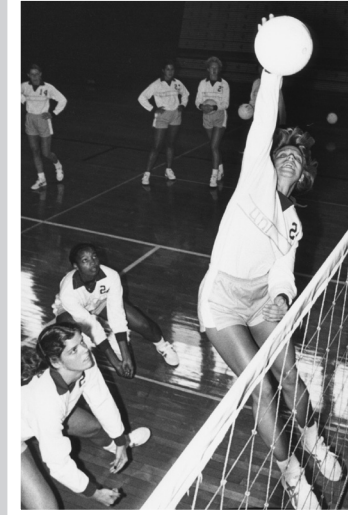


Coach Ahrabi-Fard's first team. Front row: Lisa Bickelhaupt, Terino Fair, Lynne Goedken; Middle row: Ann Davis, Pam Lehman, Tammy Pettit, Sue Potts; Back row: Student Asst. Sherri Wehr, Lisa Miller, Kate Witte, Sue Brewer, Lori Nauman, Julie Powers, Coach Ahrabi-Fard

Europe during the summer months. All of his players recall their times in Europe as one of the most important elements in their development, not only as volleyball players but personally. They reflect on the friendships they made and still maintain to this day with their European colleagues. Ahrabi-Fard arranged for home stays. He remembers, "I had connections in Holland where we were placed with families to eat and sleep. Many made lasting friendships that still continue today." To support these trips, Ahrabi-Fard arranged for tournaments and he and his family sold hamburgers and t-shirts to raise the necessary finances. In his 20 years of coaching, he took his teams to The Netherlands and Belgium.

Ahrabi-Fard's first season as head coach was very successful. He produced a record of 40-8-3. This was the Panthers' first and last 40-game winning season. As Ahrabi-Fard offered "...a record that won't be broken because they don't play 40 matches anymore." He cited the play of the team a "tremendous coaching experience... all of the dedication and hard work paid off." During the season the team won the UNI Invitational and Central Missouri Tournaments as well as the IAAW Iowa State Championships. It finished third in the AIAW Regional Championship. Kate Witte and Julie Powers served as co-captains of the 1981 team. The

Lori Nauman goes high for the slam as Terino Fair and Sue Potts get ready for a dig. The coach remembers six people were in attendance for the match. He soon found ways to increase those who would come to watch his Panthers play as he built UNI volleyball into a national power.

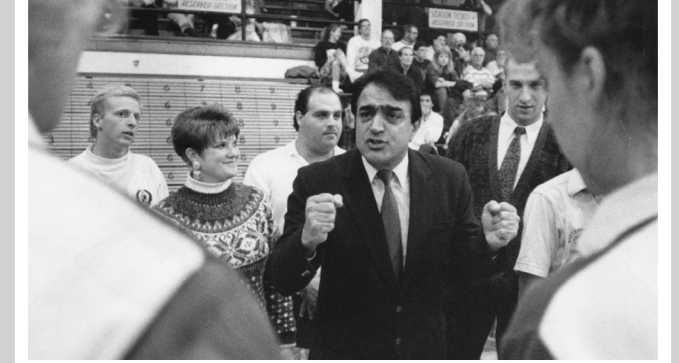


team recorded victories over Iowa, Iowa State, Drake and Kansas.

Of significant note for the 1982 volleyball season was the Panthers' transition from Division II to Division I. The challenge of duplicating the record-setting effort in 1981 was considered to be "...a key motivational factor. . ." as they moved up to a higher level of competition. Despite the team's inexperience and tougher schedule, it recorded a record of 38-19-1, finishing second in the Gateway Collegiate Athletic Conference and Tournament.

Jan Bittner served as the first assistant coach having formerly served as head volleyball coach at St. John's High School in Houston, Tex. She handled the team's administrative work, including scheduling, summer camp arrangements, travel and budgeting. In 1984, Sheng Gao was named an assistant coach. From The People's Republic of China, he held a bachelor's degree in volleyball and was working toward a graduate degree in physical education at the University of Northern Iowa. Gao served as the team's technical observer, working with the defense and centers, pre-game warm ups and scouting the opponents' defense. Jay Grassley started with the team as a student assistant in 1983, providing instruction, management of drills, substitution management and pre-game warm ups. Later, he would become the public service announcer at the Panther contests.

The 1983 and '84 seasons produced records of 21-20 and 16-16 respectively. These two seasons resulted in fifth- and sixth-place finishes in the Gateway Confer-

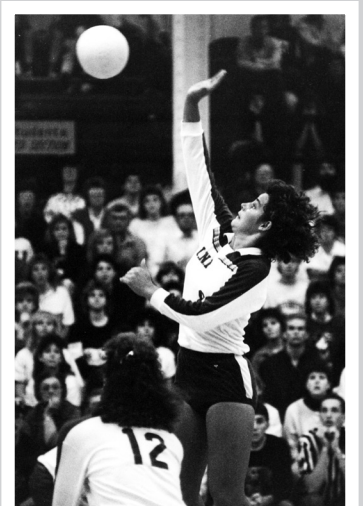


Coach Ahrabi-Fard is giving intense directions to his players. Jay Grassley is standing to his right and would eventually become the announcing voice of Panther volleyball.

ence. In 1983, the team lost five starters and returned only three performers; as Ahrabi-Fard noted, the best way to describe the team might be, "brand new ...inexperience will be a problem." In 1984, the team was a blend of veterans and newcomers and included matches against Iowa, Iowa State and Drake as well as a nine-match Gateway Conference schedule. Ahrabi-Fard felt the team should become more competitive and in fact predicted in the next three years the Panthers would be "a good, strong team." His prediction for the future was right on target.

The 1985 season was a breakout year in the evolution of the success of the Panther volleyball program - the best was yet to come. Exceptional progress was made in 1985 with an overall record of 23-6 resulting in a third-place finish in the Gateway Conference. Coach Ahrabi-Fard was given the conference's first Coach of

Bobbi Becker wrote the record book. Playing for the Panthers from 1986-89, her 40 kills in a 1989 match against Illinois State not only is tops in Northern Iowa history, but also stands as the all-time Gateway Conference and Missouri Valley Conference record.



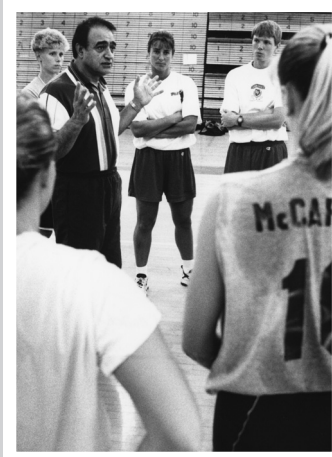
the Year Award. Four of his players received all-conference honors, including Sylvia Edler (first team), Lisa Meeker (second team), and Mary Bernhardt and Jill Sprague (honorable mention). The team rewrote the record book, setting 26 individual records and tying two. Significant wins included victories over Iowa State, Drake and Rice University.

Continuing their onward and upward progress, the Panthers reached new heights in the 1986 and '87 seasons, recording records of 30-3 and 34-5. As Ahrabi-Fard noted, "our players will be much better than last year ...they are more experienced and physically mature." He suggested that everything pointed to a successful season and he was correct. In both years the team won the Gateway Conference league and tournament. Instrumental of the future success of the program was the recruitment of Bobbi Becker from Dike, Iowa. Becker would become one of the most influential players in the history of the program and later be named its head coach. She holds the season record for matches (39) and sets played (38), established in 1987.

A most significant fact was the team's participation, for the first time, in the NCAA Tournament in 1986, followed by a repeat performance in 1987. Nearly 14,000 fans attended home matches that year, averaging a thousand. Iowa Public Television telecast the Panthers pummeling Iowa State. A record crowd of 2,237 attended this match on the UNI campus. The team captured four tournament titles. Several Panther players were named to the All-Midwest Collegiate Team, including Lisa Meeker (second team) and Bernhardt (third team). Becker, McCann and Sprague received honorable mention. In addition, Ahrabi-Fard was acknowledged as the Gateway Conference Coach of the Year and was named the Regional Coach of the Year. Bernhardt was named the Gateway Conference MVP and was selected to be on the National All-Star Team.

In 1988, '89, and '90 the Panthers' winning ways continued with records of 23-10, 25-6, and 28-5. In 1988, they were 8-1 in league play and third in the conference tournament. As Ahrabi-Fard noted, "I feel like we have accomplished most of our goals this season ...I think we did better than anyone thought we would." In 1989, they finished 8-1 in league play and second in the conference and in 1990 they finished with a 9-0 record and placed second in the conference. As a result,

Coach Ahrabi-Fard offers technical instructions to his team. DeeAnn Woodin (behind Coach), Kim McCaffrey (Davis), who will later become an assistant coach, and Assistant Coach Bobbi Becker (Petersen) look on.

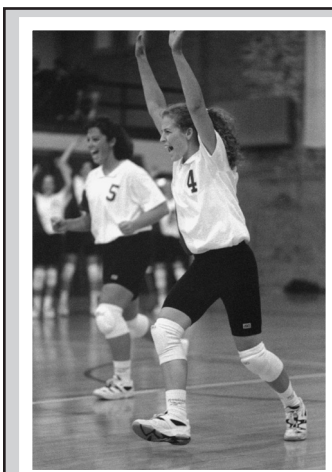


they received bids to the NIVC tournament in 1988 and '90 and in 1990 a bid to the NCAA Tournament.

These were the years that Becker dominated Panther play and gained All-Gateway Conference recognition in 1988 and '89. As Ahrabi-Fard offered, "it may take three or four players just to replace her ... you certainly don't replace someone like her with one player." In 1990, the Panthers defeated the University of Minnesota for the first time in 12 tries. The team also defeated Iowa State. Other significant players during this period included Sprague, Kris Schroeder, Denise Cuttell, Chris Less and Bobbie Kreple.

The next two decades would firmly establish the women's volleyball team as a national power. Although Ahrabi-Fard projected that the 1991 team would be "... the most unknown to him heading into the season as

any team I've ever had ...we'll have to see if this team is able to develop the important element of chemistry." Commenting on the 1992 team, Ahrabi-Fard offered, "I think this team made more progress and improvement from the beginning of the season to the end than any team I've had here in 11 years." The 1991 team did post a record of 23-8 and an 8-1 Gateway Conference record. It was tied for first in league play and went on to win



Michelle Becker (no. 5) and Mindy Workman give every expression that the match has been won.

the Gateway Conference Tournament, defeating Illinois State and Wichita State. This was followed by the berth in the NCAA Tournament where it exited after a first-round loss to Long Beach State University. Dawn Meester recorded 104 service aces in 1991. She holds the career record for service aces with 121 established from 1989-1992.

In 1992 and '93, the team recorded records of 17-9 and 24-6. Both years the teams finished third in the Missouri Valley Conference. According to Ahrabi-Fard following the 1992 season, the team "...made a commitment to defense in the off season." That commitment paid off as the team advanced to the National Invitation Volleyball Championship in Kansas City, Mo., finishing third after wins over Lehigh, Wright State, Arkansas State and Sacramento State. The team lost to Baylor in five sets and finished third overall in the tournament. Natalie Walters was the Panthers' most potent offensive weapon in 1993, leading the team in kills and digs. She was named first-team all-conference.

The following seasons, 1994 and '95, were outstanding years for the program. In both years, it finished in the Missouri Valley Conference standings and won the MVC Tournament. Advancing to the NCAA Tournament in 1994, it recorded its first victories, defeating Rider University in the first round and



The Galer sisters, Kara (left photo) and Kate, shown with Tina Parkin (10) and Danice Niemeyer. At the end of the 2000 season, Kate led in career kills with 1,720 and total attempts with 3,817. Kara ranked fifth on the leader board with 975 digs and second with 4,265 assists. Kara was named the 1994 and 1995 MVC Player of the Year. Opponents held the Galer's talents with high respect.



Kate Galer and Shannon Perry were offensive threats to opposing teams. Galer was named to the MVC All-Tournament Team in both 1994 and 1995. Perry was UNI's first volleyball all-American.

then losing to Colorado. It also was victorious at the Washington State Cooper Challenge, defeating Gonzaga, Nevada, Temple and Washington State. In 1994, the team's overall record was 28-2 and Ahrabi-Fard was named MVC Coach of the Year. Kara Galer was named conference MVP. The 1995 season saw a repeat with the team finishing 29-2. The team tied for first at the New Mexico Invitational, defeating Kansas and New Mexico before losing to Loyola-Mary Mount. In NCAA tournament play, the Panthers defeated Valparaiso and Colorado before succumbing to Stanford. Ahrabi-Fard recalls that during the first match at Stanford, the team played exceptionally well, losing the first set 12-15 before succumbing in the overall match. Ahrabi-Fard and Galer were again named MVC Coach and MVC Player of the Year. Kara's sister, Kate, was named to the MVC All-Tournament Team both years.

The Panthers' winning ways continued in 1996, although they did not earn the league championship or tournament title. Finishing third in the MVC, their overall win-loss record was 28-8 with a credible 14-4 in league play and a third-place finish in both the MVC standings and tournament. In 1997, Petersen was named the interim coach. Formally serving as a graduate assistant with the program in 1990, she returned to the Panthers as an assistant coach in 1995. Her appointment as interim coach was made only 10 days before the season started to enable Coach Ahrabi-Fard to assume the role as the National Head Coach of USA Volleyball

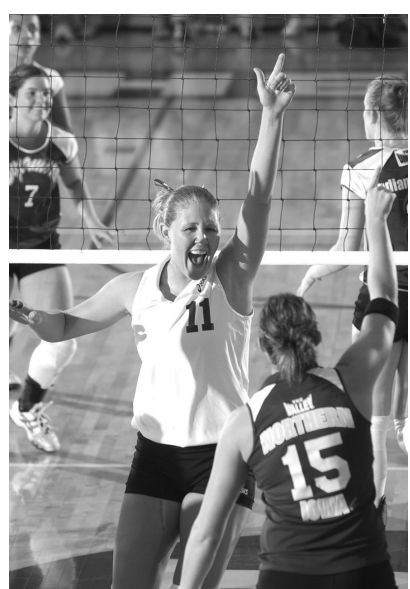
Molly O'Brien

Molly O'Brien, a native of Williamsburg, Iowa, stands out as one of the most celebrated players in the history of women's volleyball at the University of Northern Iowa. Earning all-American honors, she was named the Missouri Valley Conference's Player of the Year in 2001, 2002 and 2003. In her first year of intercollegiate competition, she was named the MVC Newcomer of the Year in 2000, was selected to the MVC's First-Team All-Conference and to the MVC's All-Newcomer Team. In addition, she was named to the MVC's All-Conference Team during all four years. During her career, she was selected to participate in the USA Volleyball National Program.

O'Brien was highly recruited. Her final decision rested between Kansas State and UNI. She has commented that her decision was made based on several factors, including the proximity of her home to UNI, great coaching, facilities, and the strong reputation of the program.

The transition to intercollegiate athletics at UNI involved a period of adjustment for O'Brien. Being away from home for the first time and adjusting to her new surroundings was stressful. However, she was able to work through the challenges of her new environment, including a higher level of competition and a more focused and intense practice schedule. Majoring in physical education, she was able to integrate many of the topics learned in her coursework into her daily routine as a student-athlete. Information on diet, health and stress management studied in her coursework was applied in her daily regimen. A stellar student-athlete, she was recognized as a first-team conference Scholar Athlete in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

O'Brien was fortunate to have played under both Iradge Ahrabi-

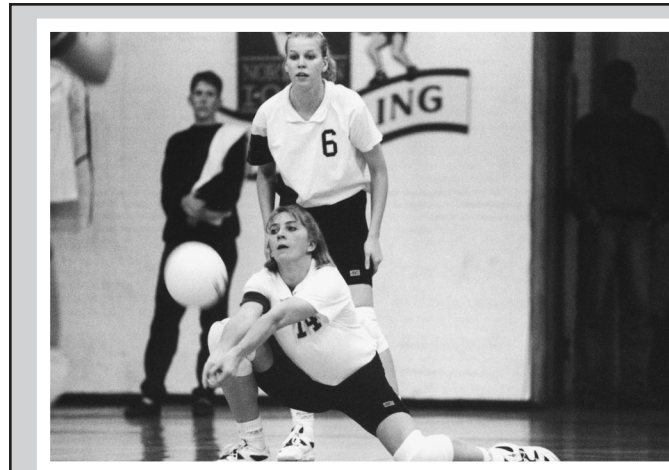


Molly O'Brien

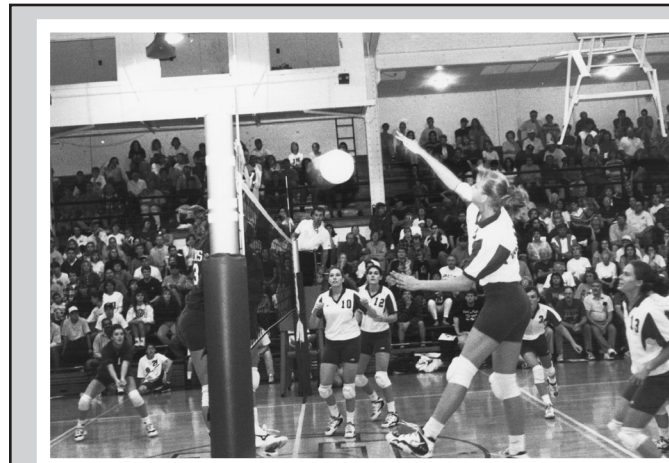
Fard and Bobbi Petersen. This dual perspective provided her with the opportunity to effectively hone her volleyball skills, including gaining greater understanding of the process of rally scoring. Introduced in 2001, rally scoring enabled either team to score on every volley as contrasted with scoring only by the serving team. This change quickened the pace of the game and made it much more intense. As O'Brien noted in an article appearing in the Northern Iowan, rally scoring created "... a whole different ballgame ... errors are a big thing and you have to play aggressive defense."

During O'Brien's career, the team won conference titles in 2000, 2001 and 2002, and finished second in 2003. In all four years, the team won the MVC Tournament and participated in the NCAA Tournament. In 2000, the team advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. The following year, it advanced to the third round, including a memorable and spirited win over Minnesota at home in the West Gym. In 2002, the team made it to the third round of the regional tournament and in 2003, lost in the second round. O'Brien is the all-time career and individual season leader for kills, recording 1,779 during her career and establishing a season record in 2002 of 595 kills. She also established the single-season record for total blocks with 195 in 2001. She holds the career and season record for points scored.

Her most memorable recollections involve the collective experiences, including opportunities to travel abroad with the team, making lasting friendships, as well as gaining skills to play at the professional level. She offers that "... volleyball has given me more than I thought was possible. It has helped me become the person that I am in the place that I am at today."



The two "Jills", Wolf (no. 14) and Schoberl on the defense.



Panthers Kate Marovich (no. 12), Allison Metz (no. 10), Shannon Perry (no. 13) and Jill Wolf on the offense.

A2 team. Ahrabi-Fard spent time with a group of players that ultimately gained the Silver Medal in the Olympic Games. He points to this as one of the crowning experiences of his coaching career. In Ahrabi-Fard's absence, Petersen guided the Panthers to a credible second-place overall finish in both the MVC and tournament. She finished with an overall 18-9 record and a 13-5 conference record.

In 1996, Grassley was offered the opportunity to serve as the announcer for Panther volleyball. He continues to this day in this role and has become identified as the voice of Panther volleyball over the years. He recalls with great fondness a parent of a recruit asking Coach Ahrabi-Fard if the announcer of the Panther volleyball program would be in this role over the next four years. He has been responsible for encouraging positive crowd

response to the team's play. Grassley has demonstrated an extra amount of exuberance in his presentation of the Panthers over the years. His closeness with the team is reflected in the fact that he has been asked by several team members to serve as the Master of Ceremonies at their weddings.

Ahrabi-Fard returned to head the Panthers in 1998, guiding them to a 23-5 record and an impressive undefeated record of 18-0 in league play. He again gained MVC Coach of the Year honors and Perry was named MVC Player of the Year. Advancing to the NCAA Tournament, the Panthers were defeated by Indiana. In 1999, their winning fortunes continued and earned them perhaps to date the best season in team history with an overall record of 31-1. Again, they were undefeated in MVC play at 18-0. In the NCAA Tournament, they defeated Ball State and Indiana. They lost to Pacific in the regionals. This was the first time UNI advanced beyond the first and second rounds into the regionals. Ahrabi-Fard was named Division I National Coach of the Year.

Ahrabi-Fard established a unique way of promoting the volleyball program by engaging the University of Minnesota and the University of Wisconsin in what he referred to as "boarder wars." For example, in 2000, the team played Wisconsin in Dubuque, Iowa and later played Minnesota in Rochester, Minn. The 2000 season was a remarkable one for the Panthers as they played three nationally-ranked teams (Pepperdine #8, Wisconsin #15 and Minnesota #9). They were ranked 22nd in the nation, finished the season with an overall record of 29-5 and with an undefeated MVC record. They advanced through the first round of the NCAA Tournament, defeating Western Michigan, and lost in the second round to Wisconsin. Named to the MVC All-Conference Team were Molly O'Brien, Jill Arganbright, Kim McCaffrey and Jeni Schneckloth. O'Brien was also named Freshman Player of the Year in the MVC. Again, Ahrabi-Fard would be named Coach of the Year.

Ahrabi-Fard's contributions continue today. He has a curious mind and is fond of seeking out new and dynamic innovations aimed at shaping the way the game of volleyball is played. His scholarly and scientific work has significantly advanced the game, promoting greater understanding of various coaching techniques and playing strategies. A sought-after speaker, his talks are

Coach Bobbi (Becker) Petersen

Adored by her fans as a player and widely respected nationally for her success, Bobbi (Becker) Petersen is recognized as one of the significant forces in the development of the Panther women's volleyball program. Hailing from nearby Dike, Iowa a mere 10 miles from the UNI campus, she led the Dike High School Bobcats to a 31-0-1 season and the state championship in 1985. In 1983-1984, the Bobcats finished second in the tournament. She was named to the Iowa All-State Volleyball Team as a junior and senior and was one of the highly sought after women's volleyball players in the state of Iowa. Nebraska, New Mexico, Florida, Iowa, Iowa State, and UNI were all schools that contacted her, but in the end she wanted to stay close to home and her decision came down to either Iowa State or UNI. She chose the Panthers.

Called one of the greatest volleyball players in UNI history, Petersen played under Coach Ahrabi-Fard from 1986-1989, graduating in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in Therapeutic Recreation and a master's degree in Physical Education in 1992. She was a three-time all-conference selection and was selected twice to the all-regional team. Holder of many UNI records her name is still found on the top-10 list of many Panther statistical categories. Against Illinois State in 1987, she recorded 40 kills, a UNI and MVC record. During the span of her career she recorded 1,611 kills and 1,457 digs. In 1992 she was named UNI's Gateway Conference Volleyball Athlete of the Decade and in 2006 was selected to the MVC All-Centennial Team.

Coach Ahrabi-Fard noted that Becker, as a freshman, made "a big impact on our team." Becker recalls in making her decision to attend UNI that the school had one of the best volleyball teams in the state. "When

I was deciding on where to go to college, I wanted an Iowa school that was close to home and UNI offered me a scholarship." Becker notes that although she was interested in playing in other sports, including basketball and softball, she ultimately chose volleyball as her primary sport.

Following her story-book career as a player she served as a graduate assistant to the UNI's volleyball program and later worked as a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist in the state of Arkansas. In 1995, Petersen returned to UNI as an assistant coach and in 1997 served as the interim head coach, compiling a record of 18-9. Following Ahrabi-Fard's resignation, she was named UNI's head coach in 2001. Her record stands at 289-79, making her one of the top 10 active winningest coaches in the United States. In 2006 and 2009 she was named the MVC Coach of the Year and in 2001 and 2002 AVCA Regional Coach of the Year. In 2002, she was named the AVCA Division I National Coach of the Year.

Petersen has said that she was passionate about going to UNI and loves the institution. Commenting on the success of her program she noted that she wants her players to understand that if you work hard, you can be successful in whatever career path you choose. Today, Petersen lives in Dike with her husband, Duane, and their two sets of twin daughters -- Baylee and Sydney and Jacy and Payton.



Bobbi Petersen

and honored volleyball coaches in America, he established the standard of excellence that will guide the UNI program well into the future. At his home in his basement, Ahrabi-Fard has a statement that sums up his coaching philosophy: "A successful athlete who has character and dignity should be a commonality, not a rarity. Success is important, but people who are instrumental in providing success are more important."

often featured at national and international conferences, drawing standing-room-only crowds. He is widely respected for his academic prowess and has published an incredible number of articles and books on the game of volleyball.

His record of 503-142-4 may be surpassed someday; however, his genius at building the UNI volleyball program into a prominent national power will be unmatched. As one of the most distinguished

Continuity of Excellence: The Years of Bobbi Petersen

Bobbi Petersen was appointed head coach in 2001. She has been called "...one of the most influential and popular people to ever be associated with the program." Her remarkable record as a player, assistant coach and coach has distinguished her as one of America's finest volleyball coaches. When assuming the head coach's position, Petersen offered that her appointment "...was definitely a dream come true ...when you become a Panther, you definitely have a strong tie that is unexplainable." Petersen went on to explain in her appointment news conference that she felt "...so fortunate to still be at a place that I have such a passion for ... feel privileged to be in it this way".

In making the transition from player to head coach, Petersen reflected that "...as a player, I had no idea what a coach at a Division I program does (head and assistants). We probably just thought they came to practice every day, did a little recruiting and maybe a few public speaking things," she said.

Petersen inherited an outstanding compliment of players. O'Brien, Kim Kester, Arganbright, McCaffrey and Shari Vermeer all contributed to making the 2001-2002 volleyball seasons among the most memorable. In 2001, the team finished the season with a 31-2 record, including a five-set victory over the third-ranked team in the nation, Wisconsin. In 2002, it recorded a record of 34-3. In both years it won the MVC with a record of 17-1, the MVC Tournament and advanced to the NCAA Sweet 16, finishing with a record of 2-1. In 2001 and 2002, O'Brien was named MVC Player of the Year and also gained all-American status in 2002. Petersen was named AVCA Central Region Coach of the Year in 2001 and 2002 and was named National AVCA Division I Coach of the Year.

Rally scoring was introduced to the game of volleyball in 2001 as a parallel to the international volleyball game. This provided a major transition in coaching volleyball for Petersen. This rule change was significant to the way the game would be played. It was much quicker, more intense and, as Petersen noted, "It is definitely a case that the team with the most errors won't come out on top." In addition, the rules regarding serving were changed so that if "a ...serve bounces off

the net onto the opponents' court, it is considered playable."

One of the most memorable matches that took place was in the second round of the NCAA Tournament against Minnesota. Playing in the West Gym in front of an enthusiastic, supportive and vocal group of Panther fans the team recovered from losing the first two sets of the match, 26-30 and 21-30; the Panthers won the next two matches 30-21 and 30-19. In the fifth set, the team rallied after being behind and won the match 17-15. Petersen recalls that she could tell by looking in the eyes of her players that they were going to come back.

The libero position was introduced to the intercollegiate game of volleyball in 2002. Again, this provided Coach Petersen with a new coaching challenge and was a major modification in the intercollegiate game. The concept had been introduced to the international game in 1998. Wearing a contrasting jersey color, the libero position does not block or attack but is mainly utilized as a defensive back row player and may be inserted in the game without affecting the substitution limit each team is allowed. Generally, the libero is viewed as the most skilled defensive player on the team.

In 2003, the team posted a record of 28-6, finished second in the MVC and won the MVC Tournament. Advancing to the NCAA Tournament in Minneapolis, the team defeated California-Santa Barbara and then lost to Minnesota.

In 2004-2005, the fortunes of Panther volleyball moved into unfamiliar territory. Although the teams recorded a record of 22-10 in 2004 and 20-12 in 2005, they finished third in the MVC Tournament both years. In fact, in 2004 they finished second in the regular season and in 2005, fourth. Neither of these teams advanced to the NCAA Tournament. As Petersen remarked, "...anything less than a first-place finish in the MVC and an appearance in the NCAA Tournament is viewed as a substandard season for the Panther volleyball team." None the less, in 2004 Rachel Tink and Vermeer were named to the all-conference team and Danielle Brazda was named to the MVC All-Freshman Team.

In 2006 and 2007 the Panthers returned to their championship ways, winning the MVC Tournament both years. In 2006, they recorded a record of 28-8, winning both the MVC regular season (16-2) and the MVC Tournament, earning a berth in the NCAA Tour-

Ellie Blankenship

In 2010, Ellie Blankenship was selected as the initial winner of the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award for Volleyball. This was the first year the award was given in the sport to recognize the most outstanding student-athlete in NCAA Division I women's volleyball. This award was made to an individual who obtained notable achievements in four areas of excellence: community, classroom, character and competition. The Lowe's Senior CLASS Award for Volleyball encourages student-athletes to use their platform as a volleyball player to make a positive impact as a leader in their communities.

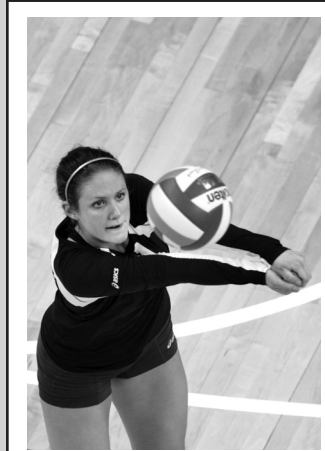
A native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Blankenship earned eight letters in three sports at Kennedy High School. She was a three-year starter in volleyball and a first-team all-conference and a second-team all-state selection in 2006. A walk-on to the UNI volleyball program, Blankenship was named to the MVC All-Freshman Team as the team's libero. As the team's libero, she recorded a record-624 digs as a true freshman. In 2008, she was a second-team All-MVC selection. Again, she set a new standard, recording 678 digs in one season. Blankenship holds the Panther career record for digs.

In 2009, she was named first-team all-conference and to the MVC All-Tournament Team. She set a new record for digs, recording 698, including double-digit digs in all 34 of her matches. During the same year, she received all-American honorable mention honors from the American Coaches Volleyball Association and was selected to participate in the US Women's A2 program. Concluding her career in 2010, she again earned MVC All-Conference honors, All-MVC Tournament honors,

and was named the MVC Libero of the Year. In addition, she earned all-American status.

During her four years as a member of the UNI volleyball program, the team appeared in the NCAA Tournament every year. She ended her career as the eighth player in Division I history to record more than 2,500 digs.

Blankenship's commitment to excellence did not stop on the volleyball court. She earned a degree in Management Information Systems, was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the UNI Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and the UNI Management Information Systems Association. Her community volunteer activities included work at the local humane society and food bank. In addition, she participated in the 'Just Read!' program, promoting the importance of reading to elementary school students. Upon learning that Blankenship had been named the recipient of the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award for Volleyball, Coach Bobbi Petersen commented that "... Ellie's competitive skills and abilities on the court speak for themselves with all her accomplishments, but the student she is, the community member she is and the person she is and the way she lives her life is what makes her one of a kind. I know she is completely humbled with receiving this award, which also speaks to her incredible character."



Ellie Blankenship

nament. In NCAA Tournament play, led by Danielle Brazda, Laura Rowen, Shannon Aschoff, Trista Humpal and Kristin Belzung, the team first defeated Winthrop University, then succumbed to the no. one team in the nation, Nebraska. Petersen gained recognition as MVC Coach of the Year in 2006 and was named to the MVC All-Centennial Team as a player in the same year. In 2007, the team finished second in the MVC regular season with a record of 14-4 and posted an overall record of 22-11, winning the MVC Tournament. Aschoff was named the 2007 State Farm MVC Tournament MVP,

helping lead the Panthers to their second straight tournament title. Advancing to the NCAA Tournament, Wisconsin defeated the Panthers in the first round in three sets. Stelken and Belzung earned first-team All-MVC honors and Brazda and Rowen were second-team selections. The team saw the emergence of a dynamic new player, Ellie Blankenship, a walk-on from Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She was named to the MVC All-Freshman Team.

Although the team did not fare as well in MVC regular-season standings (third place with a record of

13-5), the team finished second in the MVC Tournament in 2008, recording an overall record of 25-9. It was granted an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament, but it was defeated by in-state rival Iowa State. Amy Sampson and Stelken earned first-team All-MVC honors and Stelken was named honorable mention AVCA All-District. New team member Bre Payton, hailing from Columbus High School in Waterloo, Iowa was named to the MVC All-Freshman Team.

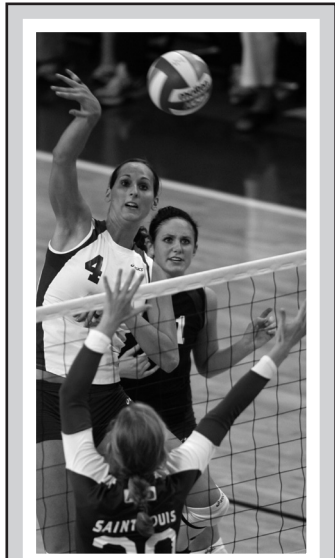
Led by standout players Blankenship, Payton, Michelle Burrow and Aschoff, the 2009-2010 volleyball seasons will be remembered as two of the most successful years in the program's history. With a combined 61-6 record, the Panthers finished both seasons in MVC league play undefeated, with a perfect record of 18-0. In addition, the team swept through the MVC Tournament, capturing a berth in the NCAA Tournament. Numerous conference, regional and national honors and awards were earned by team members. Blankenship was named honorable mention to the AVCA All-American team in 2009 and was named to the MVC All-Conference Team, along with teammate Burrow. Blankenship, Payton and Burrow were named to the AVCA All-American team in 2010. Payton was a second-team selection. Blankenship was named to the third team, while Burrow was named an honorable mention selection. Also, Payton was named Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year in 2009 and 2010. Blankenship earned the 2010 Lowe's Senior CLASS Award for Volleyball. Presented for the first time, this award recognized the most outstanding senior student-athlete in NCAA Division I women's volleyball.

In 2009, an attendance record for women's volleyball was established in the new McLeod Center. Competing against nationally-ranked interstate rival Iowa State, 6,126 screaming fans cheered on the Panthers. The outcome of the match did not favor the Panthers as they lost in three straight sets. However, the dramatic growth in interest in women's volleyball from the early days of the program was obvious at this sporting event.

Over the years, Petersen has been assisted by Kalani Mahi and Kim (McCaffrey) Davis. Mahi served as the head coach at Bradley University and at the University of Oklahoma. Davis was one of the most successful volleyball players in UNI history, not only earning All-MVC first-team honors but All-MVC First-Team

Scholar-Athlete selection. Former UNI player, Michelle (Becker) Coulter, has served as the team's administrative assistant. She was a four-year letter winner in the mid-1990's.

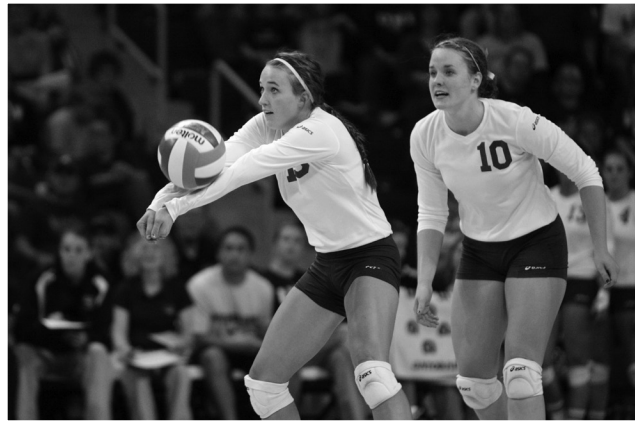
Following a legendary coach can often be a very difficult task. Clearly Coach Petersen and Coach Ahrabi-Fard have different personalities, yet their coaching styles complement one another. A close examination of each of the coaches' first decade as head coach yields an interesting perspective. Ahrabi-Fard's win percentage stands at .739 (278-98-4). Petersen's record for her first 10 years is (excluding serving one year as interim coach in 1997) .801 (271-67). Ahrabi-Fard's teams produced four conference championships and two tournament titles during the 10-year period; his teams also advanced to the NCAA Tournament, losing in the first rounds. He did make appearances in the NIVC Tournament. By comparison, Petersen's teams recorded five regular-season conference titles



Ashton Stelken does what she does so well; slam that ball back to the other court. Ellie Blankenship backs her up.



Bre Payton (no. 2), Michelle Burrow (no. 16) and Candice Burke on the offense. Payton was recognized and honored for her leadership and ability being named the MVC Player of the Year in 2009, 2010, and 2011.



Amy Braun (#17) and Candice Burke with a dig. No doubt it led to a point for UNI.

and seven tournament titles. Her teams advanced to the NCAA Tournament eight times, advancing to the Sweet Sixteen twice. In addition, three individuals were named AVCA-All Americans -- O'Brien, Blankenship and Payton.

Grassley, close witness to the coaching success of both Ahrabi-Fard and Petersen, has offered that the two employed different, yet successful, coaching strategies to advance the program. He has noted that Ahrabi-Fard was very competitive; a true tactician and scholar of the game. He operated with a great deal of precision and would encourage his players by challenging them to perform at their highest levels. Petersen has achieved her success by crafting a family environment, which Grassley suggests is one that is nurturing and supportive of her student-athletes. Perhaps each of these styles reflects the tenor of the times, both appropriate for creating a volleyball program of great excellence.

Without question, Ahrabi-Fard set the table for the continued success of the program by ensuring that there was a solid foundation in place. He had recruited Petersen as a player and assistant coach and it was evident that she was the heir apparent to him. In fact, when he selected her as an assistant there was no question that she would ultimately be his replacement. Ahrabi-Fard ensured that the program had great players in place when he departed. With some of the greatest Panther players, Petersen would build her future successes. Ahrabi-Fard laid the ground work for great excellence and success; Petersen has continued the program in that direction.

Concluding Comments

The measure of true success of any intercollegiate athletics program is not always in the team's win/loss record. Certainly the Panther women's volleyball team can claim great success based on its winning percentage over the years. However, there may be other, perhaps more important, dimensions to the success of the team than its win/loss record. Year-in and year-out, the volleyball program led all Panther teams in grade point averages and degrees earned.

The combination of athletic excellence coupled with academic achievement is reflected in the honors earned by the team. Five UNI players have been named academic all-Americans a total of nine times. Bernhardt was a three-time First-Team CoSIDA Academic All-American, from 1985-1987, while Kate Galer was a first-team pick in 1996 after earning third-team honors the previous season. Arganbright earned second-team accolades in 2002 and was a first-team choice in 2003, and teammate O'Brien was a second-team selection in 2003. Schroeder was honored on the second team in 1989.

As one can see viewing the table, the number of all-American academic honors earned is slightly greater than the number of all-American honors earned for volleyball sport performance. The richness of the program is, in fact, reflected in not only its sport competitive excellence, but also the academic achievements of its players. The Panthers have exceeded expectations, achieving excellence in its endeavors on and off the court.

All Panther coaches commented to the authors regarding their deep commitment to the development of the character of their players. Huddleston shared with us that she was not only able to recruit "good solid athletes" but also women who in general were good solid people who would work and make an impact off the court as well as in their future lives. Gruber recalls that she focused on instilling in her players a "sense of teamwork, helping each other, supporting each other," qualities that they would carry with them throughout their lives. Ahrabi-Fard emphasized the importance of hard work and exacting preparation in an environment that promoted great excellence. Petersen has built a strong bond with her players; a sense of family that transcends the typical player-coach relationship.

The genuine dedication to excellence has been instilled in the members of the Panther volleyball program. It is evident in the character of each of the individuals that these coaches mentored and that they have enjoyed the successes they have experienced in their lives.

UNI AVCA All-Americans

UNI AVCA All-Americans

2010	Bre Payton (2nd team)
2010	Ellie Blankenship (3rd team)
2010	Michelle Burow (honorable mention)
2009	Ellie Blankenship (honorable mention)
2009	Bre Payton (honorable mention)
2002	Molly O'Brien (3rd team)
1999	Shannon Perry (2nd team)

UNI Academic All-Americans

2003	Jill Arganbright (1st team)
2003	Molly O'Brien (2nd team)
2002	Jill Arganbright (2nd team)
1996	Kate Galer (1st team)
1995	Kate Galer (3rd team)
1989	Kris Schroeder (2nd team)
1987	Mary Bernhardt (1st team)
1986	Mary Bernhardt (1st team)
1985	Mary Bernhardt (1st team)

UNI MVC Players of the Year

2011	Bre Payton
2010	Bre Payton
2009	Bre Payton
2003	Molly O'Brien
2002	Molly O'Brien
2001	Molly O'Brien
1999	Shannon Perry
1998	Shannon Perry
1995	Kara Galer
1994	Kara Galer
1990	Denise Cuttall
1987	Mary Bernhardt

Wrestling History at the University of Northern Iowa

Timothy Cooney

One of the earliest sports dating back to the early Greek societies, wrestling began making its place amongst colleges and universities in the late 1800s/early 1900s. It was just a matter of time before it would find its way to the Iowa State Normal School and so it did in 1922 when the young men on campus began to put a team together.

The Paul Bender Era (1922-1930)

The return of male students to the Iowa State Teachers College (ISTC, now UNI) after World War I sparked the beginning of wrestling as an intercollegiate sport. In the fall of 1921, the Teachers College announced that a course in wrestling would be offered and conducted by Coach Paul F. Bender. By the end of January 1922, 35 men were involved in the sport.

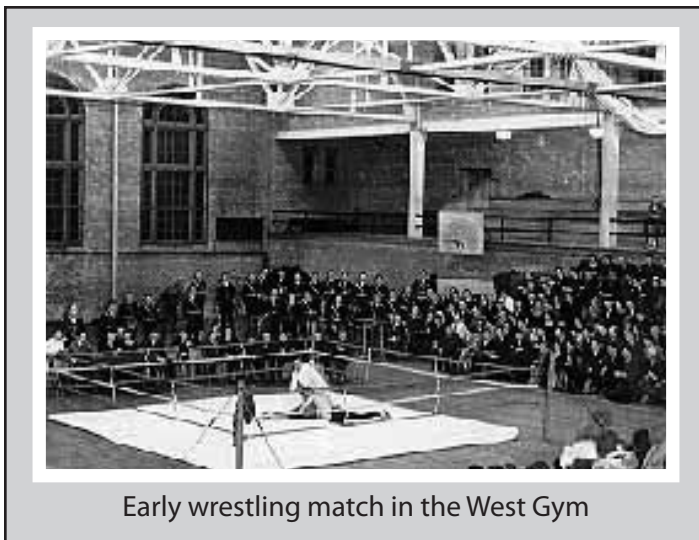
Bender was born in Primrose, Iowa. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa, a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University, and a Doctorate of Education from New York University. During the two years before he came to UNI, Bender was athletic director at Shenandoah (Iowa) High School. He was also an assistant instructor of gymnastics at the State University of Iowa from 1916 until 1918. He served in the military in both World Wars.

Bender came to ISTC in 1921. He served as track, wrestling and football coach, Dean of Men, and Dean of Students. He organized wrestling as a varsity sport on campus and coached the team from its inception until 1930 when he stepped aside to pursue academic responsibilities at the College. From 1948 until 1952 he served as Dean of Men, and was Dean of Students from



Coach Paul Bender

1952 until he retired in 1964. One of his greatest accomplishments was the development of the "head resident" system. Bender died in 1992.

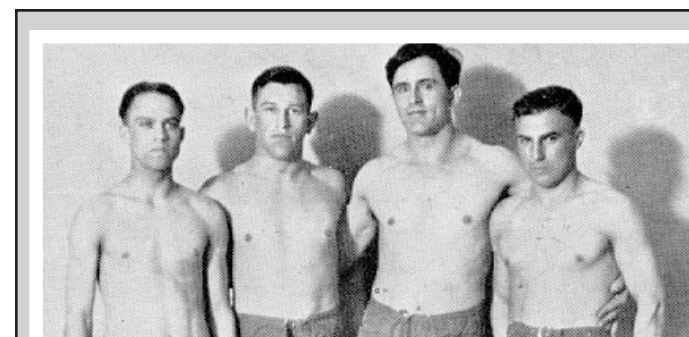


Early wrestling match in the West Gym

The first meet ever was an intra-squad meet scheduled for March 4, 1922. This competition was to take place before a men's basketball game against Still College of Des Moines. Final eliminations, where members of the class competed against each other, had been held in January and February to determine who would wrestle at this meet. At that time, college wrestling was organized into seven weight classes: 115, 125, 135, 145, 158, 175 pounds, and greater than 175 pounds. Only the best 14 wrestlers in each weight division would compete at the meet.

The wrestlers who managed to qualify for the March 4 meet, with the winners' names in bold, were:

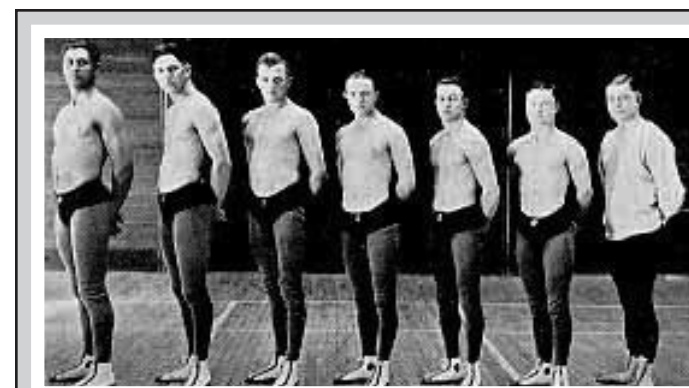
- Faris vs. **Cooper** at 115 pounds
- Jensen vs. **Winder** at 125 pounds
- Cahail vs. **Towne** at 135 pounds
- Corey vs. **Jones** at 145 pounds
- **Pendleton** vs. Barck at 158 pounds
- Fay vs. **Holder** at 175 pounds
- **Bruere** vs. Holder at over 175 pounds



Winning wrestlers: Winder, Holder, Bruere, and Jones

1922-23 Season

The meet in March, 1922 increased campus interest in wrestling. By December 1922, 51 men had signed up for wrestling, including two promising veteran wrestlers from the previous season -- Jones and Pendleton. Wrestling's popularity had grown so much that it was hoped an intercollegiate meet could be scheduled that winter. By the second week in January an intercollegiate wrestling meet was scheduled for March between the Teachers College and Cornell. Coach Bender increased the athletes' workouts in order to prepare them for the elimination matches, which would decide who would represent the school at the meet. On Feb. 7, 1923, the leading six wrestlers earned their positions on the first intercollegiate team.



Wrestlers representing the Teachers College against Cornell in descending order by weight were Fay (175), Vogel (158), Miller (145), Ransom (135), Shearer (125), Stevens (115) and Coach Bender.

Although Stevens lost by a fall at 115 pounds and Ransom by a decision at 135 pounds, the Teachers College team beat Cornell 16-8. The outcome of the

meet rested on the results of the final match. Before Fay in the 175-pound class wrestled, the score was 11-8 Teachers College. If the Cornell wrestler had won the match by a decision, which was three points, he would have tied the contest. Winning with a five-point fall would have given Cornell the meet! Obviously, Fay was victorious.

1923-24 Season

The wrestling program expanded the following season. Two one-hour wrestling classes were now held daily which served as workout times for the wrestlers. A new wrestling mat was also ordered.

The ISTC team won two of its four meets that season. The team's first opponent was a very strong team from Ames. It beat Teachers College 21-0. Cornell recovered from its defeat in 1923 to win 11-7 as well. The Teachers College wrestlers defeated Simpson 16-2 and Des Moines University 24-0.

For the first time, wrestling was recognized at the school as a major sport. Athletic letters were awarded to wrestlers who excelled in the sport. This year they were H.G. Croy, Bartelma, and Walter Miller.

1924-25 Season

Although only one letterman returned for the 1924-25 season, the team still went on to capture the Iowa Conference Championship. Croy was the captain and led his team to four victories against Ellsworth (12-0), Des Moines University (18-5), Parsons (35-0), and Simpson (11-9). The Teachers College only lost to Cornell 11-9. At the end of the season, athletic letters were awarded to White, Strayer, Andrews, Pete Grochowski, Croy, Gay Orr, and Anderson.

1925-26 Season

Forty men tried out for the wrestling team, including five returning lettermen. This season was notable because the first interstate meet was held and for the second time, Teachers College wrestlers won the



H.G. Croy

Iowa Conference title. ISTC, with its 2-1 record, beat Des Moines University 18-5 and Oklahoma 26.5-9.5. Its only loss was to Cornell 20-6.5.

1926-27 Season

Teachers College won two meets against Wisconsin (14-9) and Des Moines University (33-0) in the 1926-27 season, but lost to Michigan (12-11) and Cornell (17-8). Bartelma was also the first Teachers College wrestler to advance to the semifinals at the A.A.U. championship.



Bartelma and teammate Grochowski demonstrate wrestling holds.

1927-28 Season

Only two meets were held this season. Teachers College defeated Northwestern 30-15 and Monmouth 31-0.

At the AAU meet in Iowa City, 145-pound Grochowski and 158-pound Harvey Reuter each won second place in their weight divisions. At the end of the season Reuter, Grochowski, Noecker, Orr, and Barghahn all received letters.

1928-29 Season

Early in 1928, athletic officials ruled that freshmen could only wrestle on freshman teams. As a result, Teachers College separated the freshmen wrestlers from the upperclassmen and created two teams, a freshman team and a varsity team. This decision helped ISTC

because it could now schedule more intercollegiate meets. Teachers College went undefeated in 1929, beating three Big 10 teams in the process. ISTC defeated Northwestern 26-8, Purdue 19-13, Wisconsin 17-11, and Monmouth 32-0.

Five wrestlers made it to the A.A.U. championship in Ames that spring and three placed in their weight divisions. Levi Poynter earned second place at 135 pounds after being defeated by champion Finn Eriksen, also from Teachers College. Reuter placed second at 160 pounds.

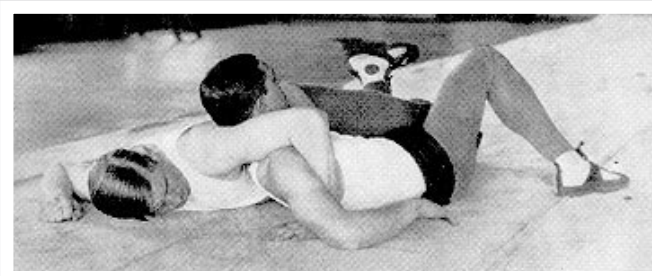


Finn Eriksen

1929-30 Season

Fifty-seven men competed for positions on the 1929-30 freshman and varsity teams. The varsity team, with four returning lettermen, had a 1-3 record that year, beating only Wisconsin by one point. It lost to Iowa State (25-8), Illinois (26.5-7.5), and Iowa (21.5-6.5).

Eriksen (135) and Orr (145) were named the first co-captains of the wrestling teams. Previously, only one wrestler each year held the honor of captain. Fifteen wrestlers competed at the 1930 A.A.U. championship, but only one placed. Freshman Virgil Duea placed second at 147 pounds. Brownlee, Sheffield, Orville, Orr, and Gerber all fought their way to the semifinals, however.



Wrestlers practicing their sport in 1930

Bender coached his last wrestling season in 1930. He was granted a leave of absence for the year 1930-31 to begin advanced study in health education at Columbia University in New York. He returned to

Teachers College the following year but did not return to coaching.

The Dave McCuskey Era (1930-1952)

David Homer McCuskey was born Sept. 4, 1907 in Dunlap, Iowa. He graduated from Woodbine High School in 1926, and began attending Iowa State Teachers College. In 1930, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education with a minor in Industrial Arts. While earning his degree, he was a successful football player and was on the wrestling team. Although he would become a wrestling coach, he never lettered in the sport. He later received a Master of Arts degree in Physical Education from Columbia University in December 1933.



Dave McCuskey

McCuskey, known as Mac to many, became the head coach of the Iowa State Teachers College wrestling team after Bender took a leave of absence in 1930. In addition to coaching wrestling, he also coached the freshman football and baseball teams, and was a swimming instructor. McCuskey held these positions until 1952. During this time, he also served more than three years in the Navy's V-5 program during World War II.

As head coach, McCuskey, nicknamed "The Whip," guided the Panthers to national recognition. In his first year coaching, the first ISTC wrestlers placed in the NCAA Championships. In 1934, Ray Cheney was the first ISTC wrestler to win a national title. From 1947-52, the Panthers dominated the national championships, placing no lower than fourth. In 1950, McCuskey led the Panthers to their first ever NCAA Championship in front of the home crowd in Cedar Falls. When he resigned in 1952 to take over the head coaching job at the University of Iowa, he had a 102-31-7 record. He coached 40 all-Americans, 17 NCAA champions, and five Olympians.

In 1972, McCuskey retired from coaching at the University of Iowa, where he had also been an associate professor of Physical Education. He became an honorary lifetime member of the University of Northern Iowa

Coach McCuskey's Impact on the Sport of Wrestling

- President of the Wrestling Coaches of America, 1950-51
- United States Olympic Team freestyle wrestling coach, 1956
- Chairman of the Olympic Wrestling Committee, 1956
- College Wrestling Coaches Association Coach of the Year, 1969
- West Team coach at the East/West NCAA All-Star Meet, 1970
- Charter member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1976
- Member of the Helms Hall of Fame, the Sports of Sorts Hall of Fame, and the Iowa Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame
- Received the Iowa Wrestling Hall of Fame Foundation Award
- 152nd member of the Des Moines Sunday Register's Iowa Sports Hall of Fame
- Inducted into the UNI Hall of Fame with its 1985 charter class

and the University of Iowa Letterman's Club later on in his life. He died in January 1985 at the age of 77.

1930-52 Seasons

During McCuskey's first season as head coach, nine of his wrestlers placed at the Midwest AAU meet. Jesse Arends (126), Eriksen (135), Maynard Harmon (147) and James Luker (175) wrestled their way to be declared champions.

Three wrestlers also placed at the



Jesse Arends (L) and Orville Orr (R) with teammate Glenn Shearman

National Collegiate Athletic Association meet in Rhode Island during McCuskey's first year. Arends was able to claim second place at 118 pounds, Orr placed third at 155 and Eriksen placed fourth at 135 pounds.

By 1934, Teachers College had gained much experience in intercollegiate wrestling. It placed for the first time at the NCAA Tournament, tying for seventh. Then in 1937, it again placed at the NCAA championships, tying with the University of Minnesota for third. This year was also a landmark because Cheney became the first Teachers College wrestling national champion. He placed first at 135 pounds.

The highlight of the 1940 season was a major defeat of one of Teachers College's biggest rivals, the Iowa State Cyclones. The TC Panthers beat the Cyclones 17-13, the first time since the two had begun competing in 1924. This win helped TC become the figurative state of Iowa champion having later bested Iowa 15-9 and Cornell 15-11.



Ray Cheney

World War II greatly influenced the 1942-45 seasons. During the 1941-42 season, low turnouts for wrestling teams prompted athletic officials to rule that freshmen could compete at the varsity intercollegiate level. For freshman Bill Koll, this ruling allowed him to compete at the AAU tournament and win first place in his division. Teachers College also won the state AAU tournament that year and took home two additional individual titles -- Gerald Leeman at 128 pounds and Leon Martin at 175 pounds. Koll earned first at 135 pounds.

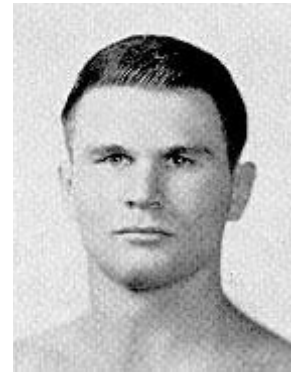
As the intensity of the war increased, more students and faculty members put their teaching and learning on hold to enter the war effort. Coach McCuskey joined the Navy as a lieutenant and instructor at the Navy Preflight School at Iowa City. Baseball coach Lawrence "Mon" Whitford was set to coach the wrestling team in McCuskey's absence, but he



Gerald Leeman

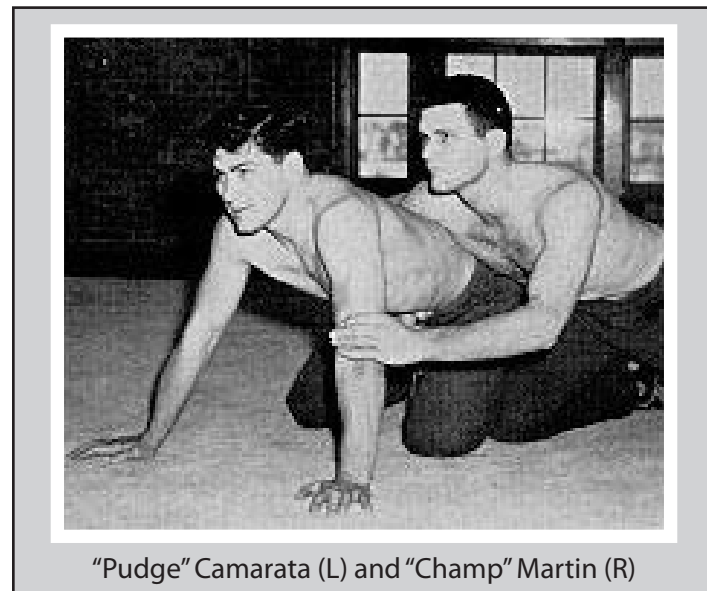


Bill Koll



Leon Martin

also entered the armed forces. Football coach Clyde "Buck" Starbeck coached the wrestling team to two wins against Michigan State and Iowa State, and a tie with the University of Minnesota.



"Pudge" Camarata (L) and "Champ" Martin (R)

No wrestling, nor any other intercollegiate sport, was organized the following two seasons because of the war. Once the war ended, Coach McCuskey returned and wrestling at Teachers College became more successful than ever.

The seasons from 1946-52 could be called the College's winningest. During those seven seasons the ISTC team placed each year in the top four at the NCAA Tournament and had 16 individual national champions.

Teachers College also won the 1949 and 1950 national AAU championships. Coach McCuskey produced three outstanding wrestlers during this time period. Each won three individual championships:

Bill Koll - Champion at 145 pounds in 1946 and 1947, and at 147.5 pounds in 1948; ended career with

Keith Young

Under the direction of Coach Dave "Mac" McCuskey, the Panthers compiled a three-year record (1949-51) of 29-1 while Algona native Keith Young was a member of the squad. In his first college wrestling match, he defeated the defending Big Ten champion Ken Marlin of Illinois by a 17-6 margin.

"I never scored that many points again," Young said with a chuckle.

In that first season, the team compiled a 9-0 dual record. Young remembered a match with Lowell Lang, a former Waterloo West High School athlete who was competing for Cornell College of Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Lang was a three-time NCAA and four-time AAU champion at 136 pounds, but wrestled up at 145 to challenge Young. "Coach Mac looked me in the eye and said 'You can beat this guy.' He was right, because I did win, but only after dancing around on one leg for a minute when Lang got in deep on a single leg," Young recalled.

Young remembers with amusement the trip the team made to Oklahoma in 1949. "We were scheduled to wrestle Oklahoma Tech. The crowd was all decked out in their cowboy outfits, complete with boots and hats, which didn't bother us, but when we were introduced as Iowa State College with no mention of 'Teachers' it made us a little hot-under-the-collar, so we took

our frustration out on their team, defeating them, 32-0." The next night, ISTC beat Oklahoma, 22-6.

When asked about his relationship with Coach Dave McCuskey, Young replied with a smile on his face. "He was very protective of his wrestlers—wanting to make sure we behaved ourselves and didn't get into trouble. As an example, several years during Christmas break, all of the wrestlers were housed in the old stadium hall dorm room. Coach stayed right with us; we weren't about to get out of line."

Young was one of only two wrestlers in Panther history to go undefeated during their entire college career, the other being Bill Koll (1946-48).

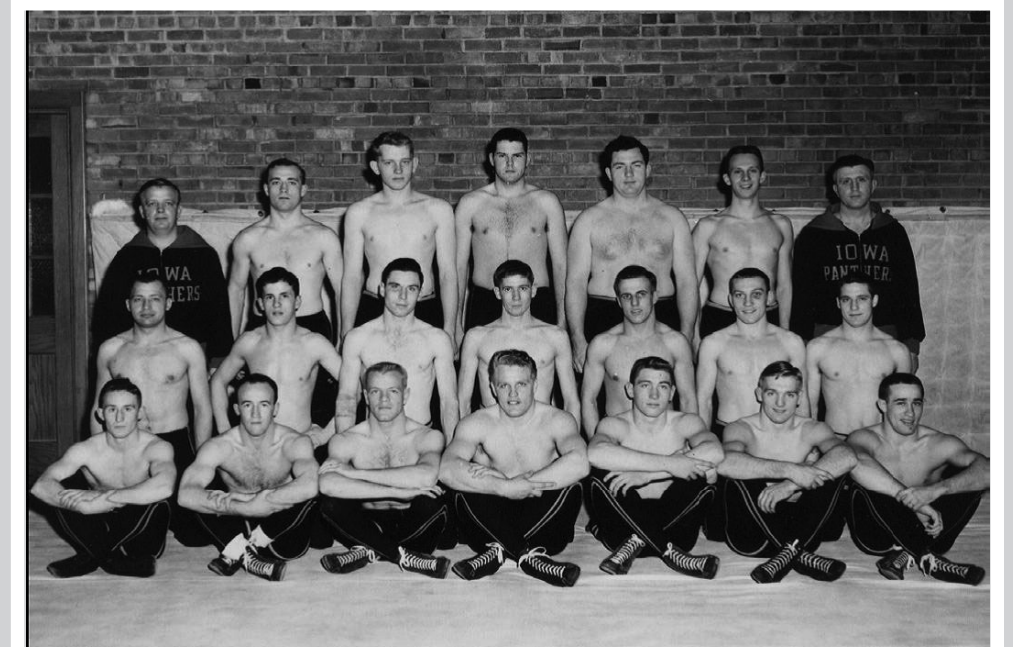
Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier



Keith Young handling an opponent

1950 NCAA National Champions

Front row (l-r): John Harrison, Martin Lundvall, Gene Lybber, Glen Salzbrenner, Richard Eisenlauer, Clyde Bean; Middle row (l-r): James Livingston, Jack Fisk, Maynard Stone, Bill Weick, Keith Young, James Clar, John Kunze; Back row (l-r): Asst. Coach Paul Cameron, Trainer Gordon Brookhart, Raymond Oles, Clyde Dilley, Lee Wachenheim, Lowell Cook, Coach Dave McCuskey



Bill Smith

Bill Smith was asked how it happened that he would elect to become an ISTC Tutor? He replied with a chuckle, "You might say I was a tag-a-long. Coach Dave McCuskey was looking for a high school 95- or 105-pounder to recruit and to get ready for the Olympic weight of 114.5 (they changed the NCAA weights in 1948 to coincide with the Olympic weights which were held that year). McCuskey had heard about the wrestling program at Council Bluffs and specifically about Dick Lewis who went second at State at 95 in 1946 and third at State at 105 in 1947. So he came to Council Bluffs to see him work out and it just so happened, he saw me working out at the same time. Coach Orville Orr (Thomas Jefferson) told me to go over and talk with him and before I knew it we were packing our bags for the return trip to Cedar Falls and I became a Tutor. It was quite a sudden change because I had already accepted a scholarship to wrestle for Nebraska, arranged by my father. This happened about the end of May."

Smith recalls that wrestling meets were very popular at the ISTC campus. It was located next door to Waterloo, long a hotbed of wrestling and schools that turned out many high school champions and future national winners. The Waterloo Courier devoted a great deal of space and attention to high school and college wrestling, which helped make ISTC wrestling a big-time sport.

"People were going to our wrestling meets because everyone on campus was talking about it," relates Smith. "The West Gym could seat about 2,000 people, and it was always packed. Athletes in other sports looked up to us too. Other sports were competing for honors in our small conference, but our wrestling program was going against schools in the Big Ten and Big Seven, earning national honors. We were a big deal back then."

When asked to name the toughest wrestler he ever faced, Smith was quick to respond. "Bill Koll was the toughest person I ever wrestled. He would just chew you up. Bill Nelson would also crunch you on the mat. It was either toughen up or get killed in that room. The room made me a collegiate champion, working every day with people like Nelson, Keith Young and Fred Stoeker, our heavyweight."

Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier

a 72-0 record. Was only one of five to ever compete in the Olympic Games.

Bill Nelson - Champion at 165 pounds in 1947, and at 155 pounds in 1949 and 1950; ended his career with a 49-12 record.

Keith Young - Champion at 145 pounds in 1949 and 1950, and at 147 pounds in 1951; ended his career with a 56-3 record.

Coach McCuskey resigned in 1952 and turned the wrestling team over to alumnus Koll, one of his outstanding wrestlers from the late 1940s.

ISTC Team Finishes at NCAA Championships, 1946-1952

- 1946 2nd place
- 1947 2nd place
- 1948 4th place
- 1949 2nd place
- 1950 1st place
- 1951 4th place
- 1952 2nd place

The Bill Koll Era (1952-1964)

Koll began coaching wrestling at Iowa State Teachers College in 1952 after McCuskey left to lead the University of Iowa team. He coached five individual national champions and 20 all-Americans (including one three-time and five two-time all-Americans). By the end of his 12th year, he had a 71-42-6 record, had coached eight winning seasons, and his teams had placed eight times in national tournaments.

William Koll was born Aug. 12, 1923, in Fort Dodge, Iowa. He began his wrestling career in high school, winning the state title in 1941. He graduated from ISTC in 1948 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science, with minors in Physical Education and the Biological Sciences. He continued his studies at Iowa, Wyoming and Oregon State. He received a Master's degree from Northwestern in 1950.

Koll was an instructor and wrestling coach at the University of Chicago from 1948-51, and at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, from 1951-52.



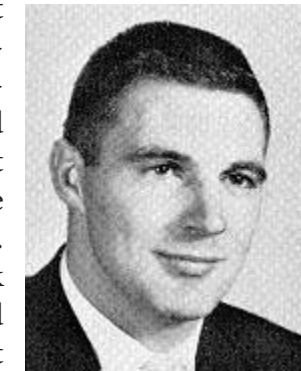
Bill Koll

When Coach McCuskey resigned from Teachers College in 1952, Koll returned to his alma mater and began coaching both the wrestling and tennis teams. He was also an instructor of physical education and an assistant football coach.

In his first year as wrestling coach, Koll led his team to a fourth-place finish at the NCAA Championships. In 1957, he took a leave of absence for one year to finish his doctorate. The following year he returned and took over as head coach once again. He resigned in 1964 to take a position at Pennsylvania State. After 11 seasons at ISTC, Koll had a 71-42-6 record. He died Sept. 27, 2003, at the age of 80 in Centre Hall, Pa.

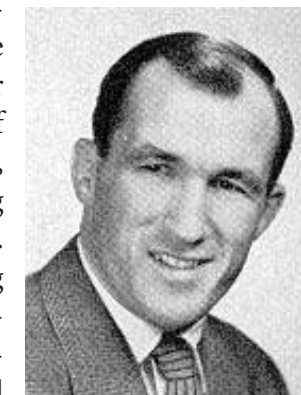
Koll's first season, the team posted a 4-2-1 record with one individual national champion and a fourth-place NCAA Division I team finish.

Jim Harmon won first place in the 157-pound division at the 1953 NCAA championships. Others who placed in their divisions included Pat McCarron (123) in third place and Gus Gatto (191) in fourth. Two years later, Bill Weick placed first at 157 pounds and Gatto again placed fourth at 191 pounds.



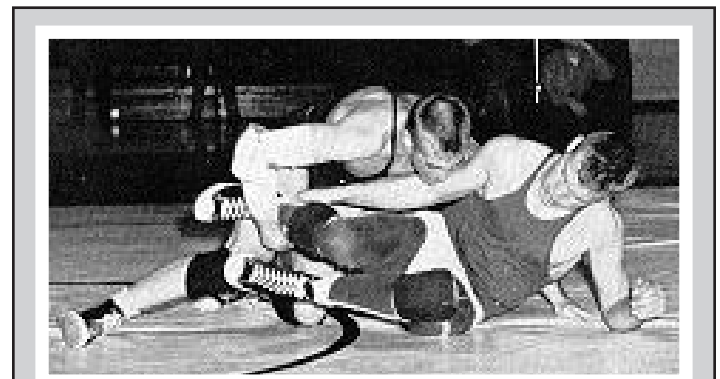
Jim Harmon

The 1955-56 wrestling season was one of the most outstanding seasons for Koll. His team, consisting of sophomores and one junior, went undefeated, out-scoring all 10 teams on the schedule. Four of those teams were Big 10 teams (Wisconsin, Michigan State, Minnesota, and Illinois). Four wrestlers traveled to the NCAA Tournament in Oklahoma. Dick Formanek (177), Ken Salyer (167), and John Vovos (130) were all defeated in the first round. Dick Heaton (147) was defeated in the second round and took home third place.



Bill Weick

Koll had been working on his terminal degree throughout his teaching and coaching tenure at ISTC. He decided to take a leave of absence from the 1957-58 academic year to finish his doctorate. The year before



Tom Murphy stays on top of a Cornell opponent in 1957.

Koll stepped aside to finish his degree, Ed Lyons had been hired as an Assistant Professor of Physical Education for Men and as an assistant football coach. When Koll did finally leave campus to finish his degree, Lyons filled in to coach the wrestling team and teach Koll's classes, in addition to coaching football.

Lyons coached the 1957-1958 wrestling team to an impressive 8-2-1 record with only three returning lettermen. Six wrestlers competed in the NCAA championships. Heaton at 157 pounds was the only wrestler to make it as far as the semifinals; he placed fourth in his division. Gerry Geinger (167), Larry Guldberg (115), Jerry Lane (137) and Chuck Patten (147) were all defeated in the first or second rounds.

With Koll's return, Lyons continued coaching football for one more year before taking a teaching and coaching position at Cedar Falls High School.

Koll's return meant that the team would once again find individuals wrestling in the national tournament. It was almost synonymous with his coaching as it was with those who preceded him. In 1959, five ISTC wrestlers competed in the NCAA championship. However, none placed and the team did not place. The five wrestlers were Guldberg (115), Patten (147), Jerry Ray (157), Jerry Lane (130) and Arland Waters (167).

The Panthers' 1961 season was much more successful, ending with a 10-2 record and tying for eighth place at the NCAA Tournament. One of their



Ed Lyons

losses was to Iowa State 16-11. Now known as the State College of Iowa (SCI), it had not wrestled the Cyclones since 1952. Also, 1961 was the year for the first annual North Central Conference (NCC) Tournament. SCI tied for first place and won five of the eight championships. The winners at that meet were Bill Dotson, Franc Freeman, Don Wilson, Ray and Patten. At the NCAA Tournament, David Jensen (130) placed second and Freeman (123) fourth.

Although the last three seasons under Coach Koll were losing seasons, the team competed well at the championship tournaments. In 1962, the SCI Panthers placed fifth in the NCAA Tournament, their highest placing since 1953. Freeman (123) and Dotson (137) each earned second place in their divisions while Jensen placed fourth at 130 pounds. At the second annual NCC Tournament, the Panthers cleaned up. Members won six individual titles and placed second in two other divisions. The winners were Jensen, Freeman, Dotson, Wilson, Jim Sanford and Bob Stevens. Second-place winners were Wayne Cormaney and Wendell Williams. In addition, Jensen was named Outstanding Wrestler.

In 1963 the team made the transition to NCAA Division II wrestling by competing in both Division I and Division II championship tournaments. The team



Bill Dotson in 1963

placed third at the Division II tournament, the highest placing under Coach Koll. Dotson also made school history that year by being the first SCI wrestler to win championship titles in both divisions.

In Koll's final season as coach, the team took first place at the NCC meet with four wrestlers winning titles. At the NCAA Division II Tournament, Bob Trautman (137) placed fourth, while Jim Monroe (167) took second.

The Chuck Patten Era (1964-1982)

Charles (Chuck) Alva Patten was born Dec. 3, 1938, in Waterloo, Iowa. He wrestled at East High School from where he graduated in 1956. In 1961, he received a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education from State College of Iowa (UNI). While working on this degree, he participated on the wrestling and golf teams. He lettered in wrestling in 1959, 1960, and 1961.



Chuck Patten

After graduating, Patten worked on his Master's degree at Oregon. He was the freshman wrestling coach there until he graduated in 1962 with a degree in Physical Education. From 1962 through 1963, he coached at Exeter High School in California. In 1963 he began coaching wrestling at Reedsport High School in Oregon.

In 1964, Patten was named head coach of the SCI wrestling and golf teams, his alma mater. Highlights of Patten's career at UNI include being named the NCAA Division II Coach of the Year in 1969 and 1978; serving as president of the NCAA College Division Coaches Association from 1971 through 1972; and leading the Panthers to first-place finishes at the Division II championships in 1975 and 1978. With a record of 217-87-8, he also holds the distinction of compiling the most victories.

Patten retired from coaching in 1982 to assume the position of Assistant to the Athletics Director at UNI. His assistant coach, Don Briggs, became the new head coach.

Outstanding wrestlers during this period included three-time national champions Gary Bentrim

Panther Team Placement at NCAA Championships, 1953-1964

- 1953 4th place
- 1955 11th place
- 1956 10th place
- 1958 14th place (tie)
- 1961 8th place (tie)
- 1962 5th place
- 1963 3rd place*
- 1964 8th place*

* Division II

Franc Freeman

Franc Freeman did not start his high school wrestling "career" until he was a junior in the Davenport High School system in 1956, when he placed second as a 120-pounder in the Iowa High School state tournament as a member of the state championship team.

After graduating from high school, Franc entered the military service for two years, serving in the Navy and was sent to the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in North Chicago, Ill. It was there that Freeman gained more valuable experience, which better prepared him for his future wrestling years. He wrestled at the 137-pound weight and garnered fourth place at the National AAU Tournament held in Pennsylvania in 1957. Upon completing his Navy duty, Freeman looked forward to continuing his education. His former Davenport coach, Jim Fox, had attended Iowa State Teachers College (1942) and spoke well about the school – its academic excellence and great wrestling program. So Freeman decided to give the school a "look". He recalls his first meeting with Coach Koll with amusement.

"I hitch-hiked from Davenport to Cedar Falls, found the West Gym on campus, inquired as to where Coach Koll's office was located, and finding it, knocked on the door. A voice behind the door said 'come in' and upon entering there was Coach Koll, sitting on top of his desk – legs crossed with that ever-present cigar in his mouth. What a sight!"

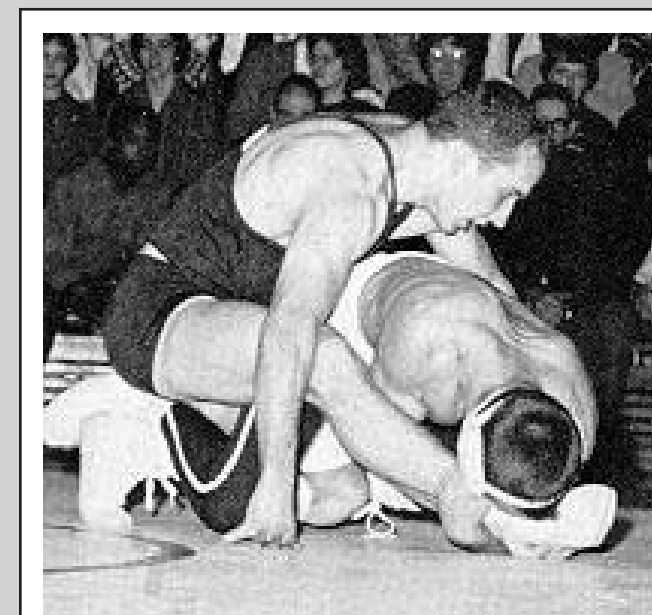
Asked about his other memories of Coach Koll, Freeman replied, "Coach didn't like to lose – he hadn't lost as a collegiate wrestler, and certainly didn't like to lose as a coach. It was on a 'western swing' when we were scheduled to wrestle at Colorado Mines and Wyoming in 1960. We lost our first match to Colorado Mines (which didn't set too well with Coach Koll) but were expected to win the next match against Wyoming, spend the night in town, get plenty of rest and then drive back to Cedar Falls the next day. Well, we lost the match to Wyoming and Coach was so mad he loaded us in the two cars and proceeded to drive non-stop back to the Cedar Falls campus. And it was my misfortune to be in Coach Koll's car – cigar and all. Not a word was said the entire trip back. That was the longest, most terrible ride of my life.

"One last story about Coach Koll," relates Franc. "We were practicing one day and Coach had called

us into the 'circle' to show us a 'move.' As he started to describe and perform the technique on another wrestler, Coach became aware of the cigar in his mouth. So in one quick move (and he had plenty) the cigar (not lighted) was removed from his mouth and stuck it into the open mouth of a very much surprised wrestler in the 'circle'."

During Franc's three years as a varsity wrestler, he had the distinction few others share of participating for "two schools" in Cedar Falls. During his first year as a sophomore (1959-60) the campus was called Iowa State Teachers College (ISTC) and then the name was changed to State College of Iowa (SCI) in 1961. During most of his collegiate wrestling career, Freeman would compete at 130, but when tournament time rolled around, Coach Koll wanted Freeman to "get down" to 123, which he was able to do. There were times though when he wrestled as high as 137 pounds.

Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier



Franc Freeman (top) holds a Michigan wrestler in 1962



Patten with assistant coach Don Briggs in 1982

Team Finishes at National Championships

- 1st Place (2) - 1975 [2], 1978 [3]
- 2nd Place (4) - 1970, 1972, 1974, 1980
- 3rd Place (5) - 1967, 1969, 1976, 1977, 1979
- 4th Place (1) - 1973
- 7th Place (1) - 1971
- 8th Place (1) - 1968
- 10th Place (2) - 1966, 1982*
- 12th Place (1) - 1981*
- Did not place - 1965

* NCAA Division I

Patten's NCC Record

From 1964-78, UNI participated in the North Central Conference (NCC) championships. While Patten coached the Panthers, the team won 10 NCC championships and placed second the remaining years.

NCC Team Placing

1st Place (10) - 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978
2nd Place (4) - 1965, 1966, 1970, 1973

and Kirk Myers. Bentrim placed first in Division II national tournaments in 1976, 1977, and 1978; while Myers placed first in 1978, 1979, and 1980. By Myers' senior year, he was also the only wrestler to have won 30 or more matches in four years of competition.

Two-time national champions during Coach Patten's reign included Parker, who won in 1966 and 1967; and Kent Osboe in 1968 and 1969. In 1974 and 1975, both Jim Miller and Ken Snyder placed first.

One-time national Division II champions under Patten included Clint Young (1971), Tom Garcia (1974), Randy Omvig (1975), Keith Poolman (1978), and Ken Gallagher (1980). Mike McCready, the 1972 national champion, also won the Gold Medal at the 1975 Pan American Games.

1964-65 Season

Patten's first season at UNI was a losing season. The team finished with a 2-8-1 record, beating Luther and Cornell, and tying South Dakota State. It failed to place as a team at the NCAA national tournament and did not have any individual wrestlers place. Although this season may have been a disappointment, it began a climb toward national recognition. This first year was also Patten's only losing season in his 18 years as a UNI coach.

1965-66 Season

The following season, the team had a 6-5 record and placed 10th at the NCAA Division II Tournament. But, Parker won the title at 177 pounds and Dave Steinkamp placed sixth at 160.

1966-67 Season

By this season, with a record of 10-7-1, the team was coming together for Patten. That year the team won the North Central Conference title, placed third at the Division II Tournament, and had three wrestlers place in their divisions. Parker again won the title at 177 pounds, while Jerry Bond at 137 and Kent Osboe at heavyweight both placed second. Parker went on to the Division I tournament, placing sixth.

1967-68 Season

In 1968, UNI again won the NCC Tournament, with six champions, including Bond (145), Tom Horton (160), Osboe (hwt), Jim Kinyon (123), Marv Reiland

Don Parker

Don Parker attended North Fayette County Community School, graduating in 1963 after participating in four sports: baseball, track, football, and wrestling. He was state runner-up at 165 as a junior and state champion at that same weight his senior year. Parker talked about his high school days commenting, "There were no weight classes between 165 and heavyweight in those days, so I had to really cut weight after football to get down to the 165-pound weight. I didn't want to wrestle those "big guys."

Parker came to SCI on a split scholarship (football-wrestling) offered to him by Stan Sheriff. He competed in both sports for two years, but decided to concentrate on wrestling in 1965. Asked about Chuck Patten as a coach, Parker described him in one word "GREAT! He took a raw-boned, 'farmer-type,' small-town kid like me and turned me into a competitive college wrestler."

Parker recalls with amusement, when he, Coach Patten and Larry Straw (Hwt.) were on their way to Golden, Colo. for the finals of the NCAA Division II Tournament held at the Colorado School of Mines in 1965. Coach Patten started the trip as the driver, but five miles out of Cedar Falls, he asked Parker if he wanted to take over and drive "for a few miles." Being the accommodating kind, he said, "sure." Little did he know he would end up driving the entire distance, while Coach Patten and Straw played cards the whole trip. Relates Parker about that trip, "Coach really got me that time."

In every wrestler's "Career" there are "certain" opponents who give you the toughest battles. In Parker's case, one was Tom Peckham, who had defeated him in high school for the state championship at 165 when he was a junior. He also met Peckham in college when Peckham was the NCAA national champion, wrestling for Iowa State. Another tough opponent was Bill Harlow from Oklahoma State. Then there was Dave Mucka from Moravia who Don defeated twice-- in the finals of the National Division II at 171 pounds in the 1965-66 season

(130), and Jim Guyer (167). Osboe also won the trophy for the most falls in the least amount of time. A second-place winner at the meet was Dan Mashek at 191.

This meet qualified more than 11 wrestlers for the NCAA Division II national tournament. Only Osboe at 145 pounds won the title for his division. Bond placed fourth at 145 pounds. Although both Osboe and

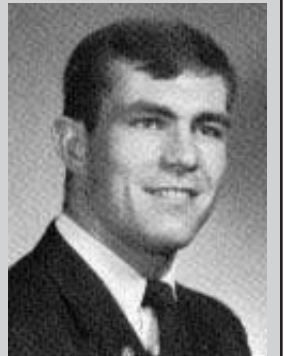
and the 1967 East-West All-Star Classic.

Parker was known as a "pinner," with 29 of his 65 wins (45 percent) coming by way of a fall. When asked why he was so successful at pinning his opponents, he replied, "When you step on that mat, that's your ultimate goal -- to pin your opponent.

Coach Patten instilled that 'concept' in our minds -- and we worked hard on it (pinning)." Every wrestler has a "move," or a series of moves that he uses to set up a pinning situation.

In 1998, Parker sustained a serious neck injury while hunting that has left him paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. Falling from a tree-stand, he laid on the ground in the cold fall air until he was finally found 17 hours later. By that time, his body temperature had fallen to 84 degrees. Parker believes he was able to survive for two reasons -- first, because he was in good physical shape as a result of his involvement in sports, and secondly, because he and other sport athletes had been taught "how to survive."

Despite the injury, Parker returned to coaching wrestling, and in the 1999-2000 season, he was named the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Coach of the Year. That season, the Blugolds matched their highest finish (4th) and highest point total (87) in conference competition. Because of his accident, Parker has had to change his coaching style. "I used to be a very 'hands-on' type of coach, getting on the mat and showing my wrestlers what I wanted them to do. Now it's necessary to verbalize my thoughts and suggestions. It helps very much to have good assistant coaches -- and I'm fortunate to have always had just that -- very good assistants." *Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier*



Don Parker

Bond qualified for the Division I national tournament, neither was able to place.

1968-69 Season

The 1968-69 season was just as successful. Early in the season, Osboe (hwt) and Skip Bellock (167) won

titles at the AAU wrestling meet. The team then took home the NCC title for the third straight year and had four individual champions -- Reiland (130), Guyer (160), Bellock (167), and Osboe (hwt). Second-place winners included Brad Stolz (145) and Clint Young (152). Osboe won the Pinner's Trophy and was chosen the Most Valuable Wrestler.

At the Division II tournament in March the team placed an impressive third and had four wrestlers place in the top three -- Osboe (hwt) first place, Reiland (130) second place, and Guyer (160) third place. Bellock also placed sixth at 167 pounds. Reiland and Osboe participated in the Division I tournament as well. They both placed sixth in their divisions.

In just his fifth season as head coach, Patten was named NCAA College Division Coach of the Year in 1969.

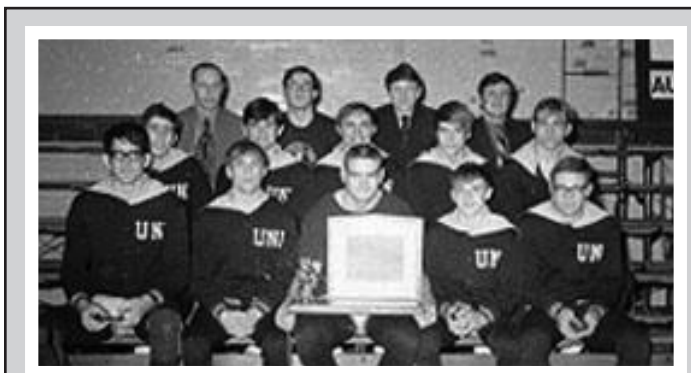
1969-70 Season

This was the season of second-place finishes. In March the team lost the NCC Tournament to Mankato by one point, but Clint Young, Mike Allen and McCready all won titles in their weight divisions. Later that same month, UNI placed second in the NCAA Division II Tournament behind California-Poly. Although UNI did not have any champions that year, five wrestlers did place -- Bellock (167) took second place, Bob Boeck (177) and McCready (hwt) finished third, and Reiland (134) and Young (158) fourth. After the tournament was over, Patten was elected president of the NCAA College Division of the Wrestling Coaches Association.

1970-71 Season

UNI was again successful at winning the NCC Tournament in 1971. As host of the event, it had five champions, two second-place finishers, and three third-place winners.

To end the year, Patten was again elected president of the NCAA College Division of the Wrestling Coaches Association.

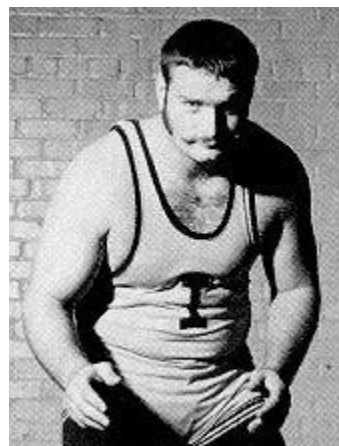


1971 NCC Championship Team. The five champions are pictured in the front row, along with their teammates. Left to right, Randy Omgig (190), Dave Pike (134), Mike McCready (hwt), Dave Nicol (118), and Mike Meador (150). Second-place winners at the meet were Mike Ott (167) and Bob Boeck (177). The three third-place winners were Jon Moeller (126), Mark Fox (142), and Clint Young (158). At the NCAA Division II Tournament, Young won the title and Omgig placed fifth. As a team, UNI placed seventh.

1971-72 Season

Six champions helped UNI win the NCC crown: McCready, Meador, Vern Allison, Moeller, Mark Fox, and Joe Hatchett. Other place winners were Boeck at second place and Jim Miller at third.

Eight wrestlers went to the Division II national tournament and competed well. They boosted UNI to a second-place finish behind California-Poly. McCready won the title at heavyweight, while Hatchett placed second, Fox fourth, and Moeller fifth. McCready and Hatchett also qualified to compete at the Division I tournament later in the month. There, McCready placed third.



Mike McCready



Joe Hatchett

1972-73 Season

The following year brought another rare second-place finish at the NCC meet. Four wrestlers placed at the tournament, including two champions. Miller and Omgig took home titles, while Allison and Nicol both placed second. At the NCAA Division II tournament, Ken Snyder placed second at 142 pounds and qualified for the Division I tournament.



Ken Snyder

1973-74 Season

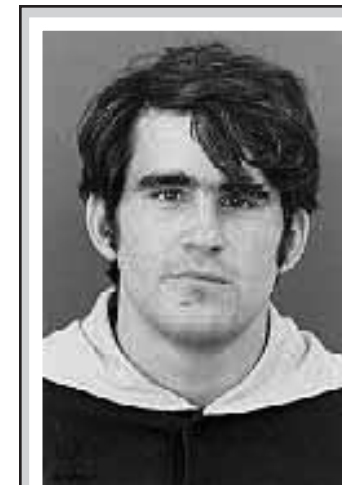
This was a very successful season for the Panthers. UNI won the NCC title with five champions, two second-place finishers and one third. Champions included Garcia (126), Miller (134), Jim Blasingame (150), Dan Keller (167) and Omgig (hwt).

Second-place finishers were Snyder (142) and Tim Balvanz (158). Third-place winner was Moeller (190). UNI placed second at the NCAA Division II Tournament behind California-Poly. Individual champions included Garcia at 126 pounds, Miller at 134 and Snyder at 142 pounds. Others who placed were Keller (167) and Omgig (hwt) in fourth place, and Dave Cunningham (118) and Dick Erickson (177) in sixth place. Miller and Snyder went on to place second and third, respectively, at the Division I tournament.

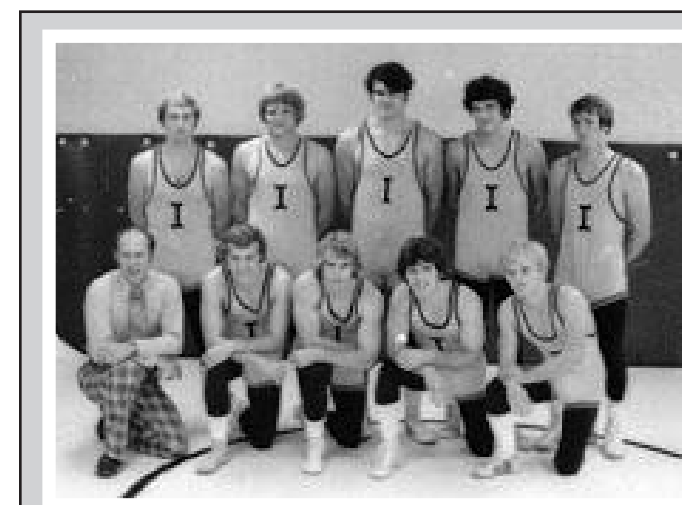
1974-75 Season

The 1974-75 wrestling team had an outstanding season. It first won the NCC Tournament with a record 154 points. Champions at the meet were Omgig, Snyder, Cunningham, Miller, Blasingame, and Keller. Others who added points were second-place winner Erickson, third-place winners Jon Boganstas and Cas Ingram, and Dick Briggs placed fourth. Snyder was also named Outstanding Wrestler of the tournament.

For the second time in school history, UNI won the NCAA Division II Tournament. Its top rival for



Randy Omgig became the only man to win four successive NCC crowns.



Coach Patten with nine returning lettermen. First row (l-r): Patten, Tom Garcia, Ken Snyder, Jim Miller, and Dave Cunningham. Second row: Gary Meyers, Dick Erickson, Randy Omgig, Dan Keller and Jim Blasingame.

the championship in past years, California-Poly, had moved up to Division I, leaving UNI to be ranked no. one coming in.

At the Division I tournament, Miller placed fourth at 134 and Snyder fifth at 142 pounds.

1975-76 Season

Although the Panthers again won the NCC championship, they were not able to hold on to the NCAA Division II title in 1976. At the NCC, Bentrin (142), Blasingame (150), Keith Poolman (167), and Keller (177) all placed first. Second-place finishers were Cunningham (118) and Bagenstos (126). Others who



Opening night at the Dome, Feb. 7, 1976

placed included Briggs and Bob Leonard at third and Bruce McClure at fourth.

The Panthers dropped to third place at the NCAA Division II Tournament. The only two wrestlers to place were Bentrin in first and Keller in second.

This year also marked the opening of the UNI-Dome on campus as a new location for wrestling meets. Previously, meets were held in the smaller West Gymnasium.

1976-77 Season

UNI placed in all but one weight division at the 1977 NCC championship tournament. Eight Panther wrestlers placed in the top three.

UNI hosted the NCAA Division II Tournament in 1977, placing third with seven wrestlers placing in the top six. Bentrin was the only champion at 142 pounds. Other place-winners included Briggs and Poolman in fourth, Jeff Melvin in fifth, and Dave Prehm, Scott Kollings, and Ed Herman in sixth.

1977-78 Season

With a record of 12-4, this was another championship season for the Panthers. In February, the team won the NCC for the fifth straight year. Nine wrestlers placed at this competition, including three champions.

Bentrin also won his third consecutive NCC title.

Results of 1977 NCC Championship Meet

Division	Wrestler	Place
118	Dave Prehm	3rd
126	Jeff Melvin	2nd
134	Scott Kollings	2nd
142	Gary Bentrin	1st
150	Dick Briggs	1st
158	Hal Turner	1st
167	Keith Poolman	1st
177	-----	---
190	Ed Herman	1st
Hwt	Bob Leonard	4th

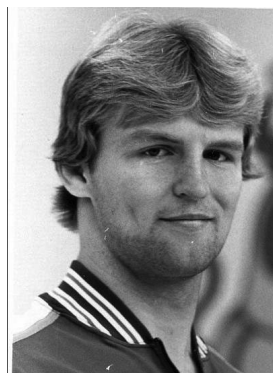
1978 NCC Tournament Placing

- 1st Place: Dave Prehm (118), Gary Bentrin (158), Kirk Myers (190)
- 2nd Place: Kevin Finn (134), Keith Poolman (167), Joe Gormally (177)
- 3rd Place: Mike Wood (142), Bob Kniff (hwt)
- 4th Place: Dick Briggs (150)

The NCAA Division II championship was again hosted by UNI. For the third time in the school's history, UNI won the Division II title. Myers, who placed first at 190 in the Division tournament, also placed sixth at the Division I meet.

1978-79 Season

1979 marked the first time for the Mid-Continent Conference meet. A new conference meant a new era for Panther wrestling. Although UNI placed second, four Panther wrestlers earned titles and nine qualified for the national tournament. Champions included Poolman (167), Ken Gallagher (150), Gormally (177), and Myers (190). Second-place finishers were Tony Wesley (118), Kirk Sallis (126), and Kevin Finn (134). Larry Luttrell (142) and Kevin Kurth (hwt) both placed third.



Kirk Myers

UNI placed third at the NCAA Division II Tournament. Myers won the only title at 190 pounds. However, seven others earned all-American status by placing in their divisions.

Myers and Gormally qualified for the Division I tournament, where they placed third and fourth, respectively.

1979-80 Season

The team posted a winning record of 12-4, and this was another season of second-place finishes. UNI placed second at both the Mid-Continent Conference meet and the NCAA Division II Tournament. Brent Hagen (126), Gallagher (150), and Efonda Sproles (177) all took home titles from the Mid-Continent competition. Place winners at the NCAA tournament were Gallagher and Myers, first place; Hagen and Sproles, second place; and Dion Cobb and Kurth, sixth place.

Gary Bentrin

A native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Gary Bentrin began his wrestling career at a very young age as most great wrestlers do. He would tag along with his older brother to practices and soon he was hooked. He won the city title as a freshman at 90 pounds (but had to put rocks in his pockets because he only weighed 80 pounds and you were only allowed no more than eight pounds under the level at which you competed). Bentrin entered the Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School varsity program at the sophomore level (1970-71) and competed for the Jayhawks for three years, wrestling at 103 pounds his first year, 119 pounds as a junior and then 126 his final year. Bentrin achieved considerable attention at the high school level with numerous awards. "My older brother Bob also wrestled for Jefferson four years ahead of me...and wanted to become a draftsman. But a car accident left him paralyzed and he was cared for at home the four years I wrestled at Jefferson. He was certainly an inspiration to me. Whenever I would get tired I would think, one more lap for Bob, one more push-up for Bob. It really gave me a physical and spiritual boost."

Not resting on his high school laurels, during the summer of 1973 Bentrin placed third in freestyle and

1979 All-Americans

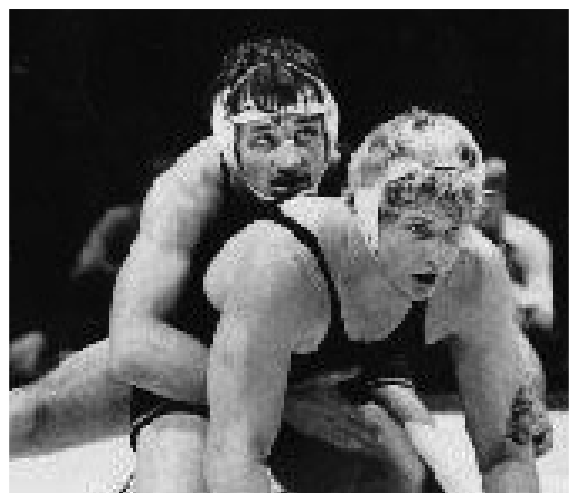
- Kirk Myers (190) 1st Place
- Joe Gormally (177) 2nd Place
- Ken Gallagher (150) 3rd Place
- Kevin Finn (134) 4th Place
- Keith Poolman (167) 4th Place
- Kevin Kurth (hwt) 5th Place
- Larry Luttrell (142) - 6th Place

1980-81 Season

Three wrestlers were top placers at the Division I Regional Qualifying Tournament in March 1981. Gallagher, Doug Tredway and Jay Llewellyn were all champions. Cobb, Sproles, Gormally, and John Kriebs all placed third. Although all seven wrestlers qualified for

fourth in Greco-Roman at the Junior Olympic Nationals. He also finished second in the 1972 regional Olympic try-outs in Iowa City. Then came the moment to decide where he would continue his education and wrestling career. Gary was recruited by all three of the state colleges, Iowa, Iowa State and UNI as well as Missouri. "I signed a Big Eight letter of intent with Harold Nichols and Iowa State; what that meant was I couldn't sign with another Big Eight school. I had already visited Missouri and wasn't interested in their program. But it was incorrectly reported that I had signed a National Letter of Intent. After very careful consideration I decided I really liked the UNI program, with their good teacher education program, beautiful campus and rich wrestling tradition, along with a great coach in Chuck Patten. Word was out that I had signed with Iowa State, so when I showed up in Cedar Falls and walked into Patten's office, Chuck said, 'What the heck (or something stronger) are you doing here?!' To which Gary replied, 'I'm here to wrestle for you...and so my career as a UNI Panther started that fall of 1973.'

Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier



Ken Gallagher (top) controls his opponent.

the Division I tournament, only two placed at the event. Gallagher placed fifth at 142 and Cobb placed fourth at 158.

1981-82 Season

This was Coach Patten's final season coaching at UNI. The team won the Midwest Regional crown with three champions, four second-place winners and one third-place finish. At the NCAA Division I Tournament, Myers placed fifth at 190, and both Gormally (177) and Gallagher (142) placed seventh. Myers received the Most Valuable Performer award as well.

Before the season closed, Patten was named NCAA Midwest Coach of the Year for the second time in his career.



Joe Gormally (top) moves into position in a 1981 match.

Patten retired after the 1981-82 season and turned the team over to his assistant, Don Briggs.

The Don Briggs Era (1982-1997)

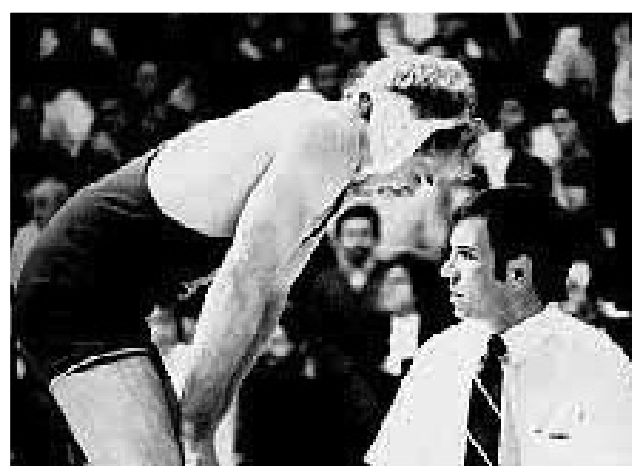
When Don Briggs became the head wrestling coach in 1982, he had already been working at UNI for seven years. He was an assistant coach at Prairie High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1973. From 1974-75, he was a graduate assistant, and then in 1975 he became UNI's first full-time varsity assistant wrestling coach after he received his Master's degree in Physical Education.



Don Briggs

At the high school level, Briggs wrestled at Jefferson High School in his hometown of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. At the college level, he was an outstanding wrestler three years at the University of Iowa. Under head coach Dave McCuskey, he compiled an individual record of 30-5-1, which included a fourth-place finish in the Big Ten Conference his sophomore year, and third-place finishes his junior and senior years. He graduated in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education.

During his first year as head coach, Briggs guided the Panthers to a 17-3 record which included a 10th-place finish at the NCAA Championships. He was named National Rookie Coach of the Year. Briggs coached the Panthers to a 164-98 record, giving him the most Division I victories in UNI wrestling history. He



Coach Briggs in his rookie season

also was named the NCAA West Regional Coach of the Year 10 times.

At the end of his 15 years, Briggs had coached 29 all-Americans, among them four two-time and three three-time all-Americans. His teams placed in the top 20 at the NCAA meet 12 years. The Panthers also performed well at the West Regional Championships, placing first from 1986-97, and second in 1983, 1984, and 1985.

Outstanding wrestlers during this period included three-time all-Americans Steffensmeier at 150 pounds, Rich Powers at 177 and Justin Greenlee at heavyweight. Steffensmeier placed second in 1990 and fourth in 1991 and 1992 at the NCAA Championships. Powers placed fifth in 1990 and 1992, and fourth in 1991. Greenlee placed eighth in 1993 and second in 1994 and 1995.

Although UNI had no national champions during Briggs' time, several wrestlers did place second. In addition to Steffensmeier, Greenlee (hwt) and Bob Hallman (118) took home second-place medals in 1989 and 1984, respectively.



Justin Greenlee

1982-83 Season

In Briggs' first season as head coach, UNI tied Oklahoma for second at the Midwest Wrestling Championships, placed second behind Louisiana State in the West Regional Tournament, and placed 10th at the NCAA national tournament.

The first Midwest Wrestling Championships were held Dec. 29-30, 1982, at Iowa State University. The only UNI wrestler to win a title was Sproles at 177. Randy Majors (126) and Scott Morningstar (142) each placed second.

UNI Sports Information stated in a Jan. 24 release that six Panther wrestlers were ranked in Amateur Wrestling News' Mid-Season Top 20 ranking: Hallman 13th at 118, Majors ninth at 126, Larry Luttrell 12th at 150, Mike Llewellyn sixth at 167, Sproles seventh at 177, and Kriebs 12th at heavyweight.

UNI hosted the NCAA Western Regional Feb. 26-27, 1983 in the West Gym. Seven wrestlers earned

their eligibility to compete at the 1983 national championships -- Hallman (118), Majors (126), Luttrell (150), Llewellyn (167), Sproles (177), Mark Johnson (190), and Kriebs (hwt). Kriebs placed first in his division at the tournament to secure his spot, while Majors, Johnson and Sproles all placed second. Hallman and Llewellyn both placed third. As a team, UNI placed second behind Louisiana State.

Oklahoma City hosted the NCAA Championships March 10-12. Two UNI wrestlers earned all-American status. Majors placed third at 126, ending his career with a record 50 wins against only 15 losses. Kriebs placed fifth at heavyweight. Sproles was defeated in the consolation round, ending his chances at becoming an all-American.

Although this was Briggs' first season as coach, the Panthers placed 10th at the tournament. The season ended with a 17-3 team record. The Panthers' only losses were to Iowa, Iowa State and Nebraska.

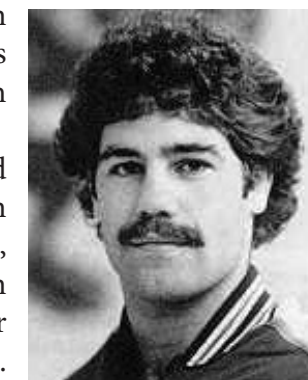
1983-84 Season

Five seniors returned to do battle for UNI -- Hallman (118), Dave Morkel (134), Cobb (167), Llewellyn (167) and Kriebs (hwt).

The Midwest Championships were held at Ames Dec. 29-30, 1983. The competition was first rate as three of the top four schools participated. UNI placed second behind Oklahoma State, and Iowa State placed third. Randy Thompson defeated Illinois wrestler Jeff Fiornini for the 177 championship. Other place winners were Lew Sondgeroth (142) and Kriebs (hwt) at second, and Hallman (118) and Llewellyn at third.

A win over rival Iowa State topped the 1984 season. UNI beat ISU 21-17 on Jan. 28. This was the first victory over ISU coach Harold Nichols, and also the first dual victory over the school in 32 years. A record 5,753 fans piled into the Dome to watch this momentous meet.

UNI placed second at the West Regional held in Cedar Falls that year. Hallman, Kriebs and Jeff Weatherman all placed first, qualifying for the NCAA Championships. Paul Kreimeyer and Dave



Bob Hallman

Rich Powers

With a career record of 134-25-1, Rich Powers is recognized in UNI wrestling history as one of the most successful wrestlers to wear the Purple and Gold. A Harvard, Ill. native, Power's wrestling "career" began in sixth grade when he participated in a school-sponsored wrestling class. Then in the seventh grade, he was encouraged to really get involved in the sport by his teacher Tim Haak, and quite a start it was. A four-year varsity wrestler for Marian Catholic High School in Woodstock, Ill., Powers compiled an overall record of 137-12. He was named the Illinois Outstanding Wrestler his junior and senior high school years. Powers not only excelled as a wrestler, but received all-conference and all-area honors in football as a linebacker, captaining his team to the state title his senior year. In addition, he was a two-year letterman in track. With his high school "days" over, he was faced with the important decision – where to continue his education?

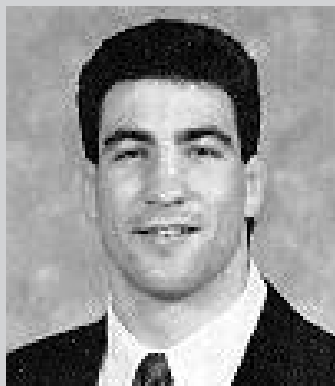
One of the most highly recruited athletes, Powers received scholarship offers from many schools, including such notables as Iowa State, Notre Dame, Villanova, Wisconsin and Illinois. Fortunately for the UNI wrestling program, his selection was the Panthers. When asked why he chose UNI to further his academic and wrestling career, he pointed out there were "several" reasons. One was he really "connected" with the coaching staff – head coach Don Briggs and assistant Jim Miller. Also the team members were friendly and made him feel "welcome". But of equal importance was the emphasis that UNI placed on academics and graduation. "I researched the graduation rates of the various

schools I was considering and found that UNI had the highest percent of graduation – that was very important to me and had a big influence on my decision."

Powers will always remember his wrestling coaches and teammates as an "extended family" and friends for life (even though they did give him a ribbing about being the only starter on the team from Illinois). "Wrestling has been a big part of my life," he relates. "It meant more to me than just wins and losses – it helped immensely in developing me as a person."

Powers earned his Master's Degree in Education at UNI in 1994. In 2006 he completed his Doctorate in Education in Leadership at Loyola University-Chicago. In July of 2006 Dr. Rich Powers became principle at Cedar Falls High School. "It's an honor to be part of this community and system," Powers said. "Cedar Falls has very high expectations for their schools and that is an exciting thing to be part of. This is a great opportunity for me and my family. I have been very impressed with the staff and parents, and their commitment to the school."

Adapted From the UNI Wrestling Notebook by Don Frazier



Rich Powers

geroth both placed first at 118 and 142, respectively. Perry Summitt placed fourth at 118.

UNI had another second-place finish in the West Regional in 1985. First-place finishers were Kreimeyer at 118 and Sondgeroth at 142. Weatherman (190) and Pat Pickford (126) both placed second, while Morningstar (150) and Grant (167) placed third.

All six wrestlers competed at the NCAA meet in Oklahoma City that spring, but only two earned all-American status. Kreimeyer placed sixth in his class and Sondgeroth placed fifth. As a team, UNI placed 18th.

In post-season wrestling, Kurt Shedenhelm (149.5) and Tony Koontz (hwt) won their divisions at the National Espoir Freestyle Tournament in Lock

Haven, Pa. This meet featured wrestlers under 20 years of age. Freshman Jeff Clutter was named to the Amateur Wrestling News National Freshman All-Star Team in April.

1985-86 Season

At the Midwest Championships, UNI placed third out of 27 teams and had three wrestlers place in the top three. Pickford (126), Weatherman (177) and Llewellyn (190) all placed second in their divisions.

UNI won the West Regional Tournament, sending 10 wrestlers to the national meet. The tournament was held Feb. 28-March 1 at Springfield, Mo. First-place wins from Tony Koontz, Mark Schwab, Pickford and Weatherman helped boost UNI to victory over second-place Drake. Second-place winners were Marty Anderson (134), Shedenhelm (142), Dan Majewski (150), Clutter (158) and Joel Greenlee (190). Kevin Kahl placed third at 167. UNI was one of only three schools to have qualified wrestlers at all 10 weight classes for the national tournament. The other schools were Iowa State and Oklahoma State.

The NCAA Tournament was held at Iowa City March 13-15. UNI finished 17th overall and had two all-Americans -- freshman Schwab placed fifth at 118 pounds and sophomore Clutter was eighth at 158. Anderson (134), Shedenhelm (142), Kahl (167) and Koontz (hwt) all lost their matches in the first round. Greenlee (190), Pickford (126), Weatherman (177) and Majewski (150) all made it to the consolation bracket but did not place.

This was a successful season for Schwab. He earned the record for the most victories in a single season for a freshman with his final 49-9 mark.

Four UNI wrestlers were named to the Amateur Wrestling News Freshman National All-Star Team -- Schwab, Joel Greenlee, Koontz and Kahl. Schwab and Koontz were named to the second team, Greenlee the third team, and Kahl the sixth team.



Mark Schwab

1986-87 Season

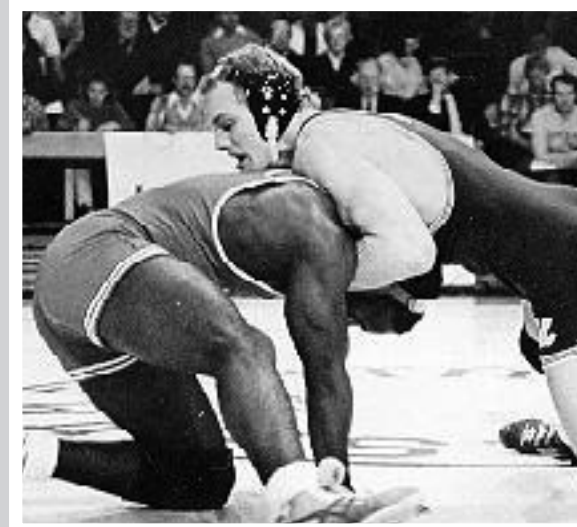
The 1986-87 team consisted of 20 freshmen, 10 sophomores, seven juniors and four seniors. Fourteen members were returning letter winners.

The Midwest Championships were held at Drake University. UNI placed second overall out of 39 teams and had three wrestlers place in the top three. Mike Schwab (126) and Weatherman (hwt) placed first in their divisions, while Joe Gribben placed second at 134.

For the second consecutive year, UNI won the West Regional Tournament. Seven wrestlers qualified for the NCAA, including six champions -- Mike Schwab (126), Gribben (134), Shedenhelm (142), Pat Hogan (150), Weatherman (190) and Joel Greenlee (hwt). Keith Massey also became eligible for the national competition.

As a team, UNI finished 13th at the NCAA Championships March 19-21. Mike Schwab finished eighth at 126 and Weatherman placed fifth at 190 to take home all-American honors. Briggs received another honor by being chosen President of the National Wrestling Coaches Association.

The strong wrestling talents of Mark Schwab and Koontz were visibly missing from the 1987 season. Schwab had chosen to redshirt so he could wrestle overseas. He was one of 15 U.S. wrestlers who competed at the Tbilisi Tournament in the Soviet Republic of Georgia in January. To qualify for the meet, he won first place



Joe Gribben (right) holding his opponent.

Grant placed second and Llewellyn third to secure their spots.

The 1984 NCAA Championships were held at East Rutherford, N.J. March 8-10. Although Kriebs was ranked second in the nation at heavyweight coming into the tournament, he left the meet sixth in his class. Other wrestlers who placed at the meet were Hallman, second at 118; and Grant, eighth at 158.

1984-85 Season

The Midwest Wrestling Championships were held Dec. 29-30 at Ames. UNI placed sixth out of 29 teams and had two champions. Kreimeyer and Sond-

at the Hall of Fame Classic meet in Oklahoma City the previous November. He was the first person to qualify for the meet since McCready in 1973. Although his record was a close 5-4 at the tournament, this experience helped him prepare for Olympic wrestling.

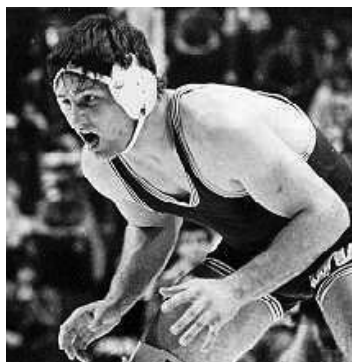
When Koontz was beaten out of his starting spot at heavyweight by Joel Greenlee, he began concentrating on freestyle wrestling. He competed on the American All-Star team at the Cuba-Cerro La Cuada Tournament in February 1987. There he placed second in his class. Koontz had qualified for this tournament by placing third at the same Hall of Fame Classic meet.

1987-88 Season

Mid-season, Mark Schwab (118) and Joel Greenlee (hwt) wrestled in the National Wrestling Coaches Association All-Star Wrestling Classic. This event matched wrestlers from across the nation who were ranked first and second by Amateur Wrestling News. Schwab was defeated by Jack Cuvo of Pennsylvania and Greenlee earned a 4-4 draw.

UNI again won the West Regional title, although this time with six champions. Mike Schwab (126), Shedenhelm(142), Pat Hogan (150), Chris Lembeck (158), Keith Massey (167) and Joel Greenlee (hwt) all placed first. All six of those wrestlers, and third-place winner Doug Downs (177), were able to wrestle at the national meet. The other UNI wrestler to place was Paul Huffman (118). He did not qualify for the national meet.

The NCAA meet was held March 17-19, 1988 at Ames. Joel Greenlee placed fourth and Lembeck fifth. They were UNI's only two all-Americans that year. As a team, UNI placed 13th.



Chris Lembeck

1988-89 Season

Heavyweight Joel Greenlee began his senior year by competing at the International Canadian Tour-

namment, where he placed third. Coming into the 1989 season, he held an 83-14-4 record.

In late December, the team brought home a third-place finish at the Midwest Championships held in Des Moines. At the West Regional, UNI again won first place, sending seven to the national tournament -- Mark Schwab - 118; Duane Martin - 126; Steffensmeier - 142; Hogan - 150; Lembeck - 158; Powers - 177; and Joel Greenlee - hwt (named Outstanding Wrestler).

At the NCAA Championships, UNI finished 14th, with only one wrestler placing in the top eight. Joel Greenlee became a two-time all-American by placing second. This was the highest any UNI wrestler had placed since 1984 when Hallman placed second at 118.

In June, UNI Assistant Coach Jim Miller was named National Wrestling Coaches Association Assistant Coach of the Year.

1989-90 Season

As the school year opened, athletic officials announced that former UNI wrestler Joel Greenlee would step in as Assistant Coach.

He replaced another former wrestler, John Kriebs, who left to coach at Southwest Missouri State after working at UNI five years.

Ten lettermen returned for the 1989-90 season, including five seniors, two juniors and three sophomores. Of these wrestlers, Mark Schwab, Duaine Martin, Steffensmeier and Powers were all West Regional champions from the previous season.

The Midwest Championships were held Dec. 29 in Des Moines. Top winners were Powers, Mark Schwab, Martin and Steffensmeier. Powers placed first at 177, Schwab (118) and Martin (126) both placed second, and Steffensmeier (150) third.

The West Regional Championship was held in Charleston, Ill. on March 10. Seven wrestlers qualified for the national tournament, helping UNI claim its fifth consecutive West Regional title:

Mark Schwab - 1st at 118 (named Outstanding Wrestler of the tournament)



Joel Greenlee

Duaine Martin - 1st at 126
Steve Hartle - 3rd at 142
Gary Steffensmeier - 1st at 150
Jamie Byrne - 1st at 158
Greg White - 2nd at 167
Rich Powers - 1st at 177

At the national tournament in Maryland, UNI placed 11th and had four all-Americans: Steffensmeier-2nd, Powers-5th, Mark Schwab-6th, and Martin-8th. This was the most all-Americans UNI crowned since 1981.

Two wrestlers competed outside the regular season that year. In February, Assistant Coach Greenlee wrestled in Russia as part of the USA Wrestling Team. His record there was 3-3. Mark Pustelnik won first at 125 pounds at the National Open Greco-Roman Tournament in Las Vegas, Nev. in April. Then in June, he won the Silver Medal at the Pan-American Games at 125.5 pounds. The event was held in Colorado Springs. By July, he was ranked second in the country in Greco-Roman wrestling after placing second in the World Team trials. In 1985 and 1986, Pustelnik was the Junior National Champion.



Mark Pustelnik

1990-91 Season

In pre-season rankings, UNI was ranked 11th in the nation and had four wrestlers in the top 20. Steffensmeier was ranked first at 150 pounds, Powers was fourth at 177, while teammates Hartle and Jamie Byrne were 17th and 12th, respectively.

The Midwest Championships were held Dec. 29 in Des Moines. Five UNI wrestlers placed in the top three in their divisions -- Hartle (142) and Dave Malecek (190) placed first, Byrne (158) and Cory Manning (167) placed second, and Curt Bennethum placed third at 158. Other wrestlers who placed at the meet were Scott Hassel, fourth at 134; Greg Berg seventh at heavyweight, and Brian Benning eighth at 190.

UNI again won the West Regional in Normal, Ill. with six first-place and two second-place finishers. The top winners were Burke Tyree, Pustelnik, Hartle,

Steffensmeier, Powers and Malecek. Second-place wrestlers were Scott Hassel and Bennethum. All first-place winners were eligible to compete at the national tournament. Hassel and Bennethum were also selected as Wild Card choices. To top off the meet, Briggs was chosen West Regional Coach of the Year and Powers was named Outstanding Wrestler. UNI won the meet with a final score of 113.5. Notre Dame finished a distant second place with 65.5 points.

At the NCAA Tournament in March, three wrestlers were named all-Americans -- Hartle placed seventh at 142, Steffensmeier was fourth at 150, and Powers was fourth at 177. Although UNI was picked to finish sixth and was ranked eighth coming in, it placed 11th overall. In the final Amateur Wrestling News ranking, UNI was fifth behind Iowa, Oklahoma State, Iowa State and Arizona State.

Three UNI wrestlers were recognized for their scholastic abilities in April. Steffensmeier was named to the National Wrestling Coaches Association All-Academic First Team. Byrne and Manning both received honorable mention.

Although Pustelnik graduated from UNI in May 1991, he still kept on winning. He competed at the National Sports Festival-Greco Roman Competition in Los Angeles in July, winning a Gold Medal in the 136.5 weight division.

UNI lost an assistant coach of eight years after the 1991 season. Miller resigned from UNI to coach wrestling at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

1991-92 Season

In pre-season rankings, the Amateur Wrestling News had UNI sixth, with Iowa leading the nation and Iowa State fifth. Three returning all-Americans and eight NCAA qualifiers led the team, including Powers, Steffensmeier and Hartle.

UNI hosted the NCAA West Regional March 7, 1992. UNI defeated the other seven teams to take home its seventh consecutive title. Nine wrestlers qualified for nationals, six of them champions -- Brad Bruhl (118), Scott Hassel (134), Steffensmeier (150), Byrne (158), Powers (177) and Dave Malecek (190).

This meet was a milestone for three champions. With their wins, Steffensmeier and Powers both earned their fourth regional championship, and Malecek

claimed his second. All went on to the national tournament, including Wild Card choices Andy Showalter, Hartle and Justin Greenlee.

This meet also marked the seventh consecutive year that Briggs was named West Regional Coach of the Year. Powers was named Outstanding Wrestler for the second year.

At the national tournament in Oklahoma City, Steffensmeier placed fourth at 150 and Powers fifth at 177. As a team, UNI placed 10th.

Several UNI wrestlers received special honors or competed in special events during the 1991-92 season. Powers was selected to compete at the National Wrestling Coaches Association All-Star Classic in January. In April, Pustelnik tried out for a spot on the U.S. Olympic team. After the national championships, Steffensmeier was named to the GTE Academic All-America Third Team for his accomplishments off the mat.

On the coaching side, Tim Krieger was named assistant coach for the Panthers for the following year. He was an outstanding wrestler at Iowa State, winning two NCAA championships at 150.

1992-93 Season

The 1992-93 team was one of the most experienced teams to hit the mat for some years. Although the team lost top wrestlers Steffensmeier and Powers, 13 lettermen returned. The team had eight seniors, nine juniors and four sophomores. In pre-season rankings, UNI was ranked 11th in the nation and had seven wrestlers in the top 20.

On March 6, 1993 UNI won its eighth West Regional Championship title with seven individual champions and one second-place winner. All eight traveled to the NCAA Tournament later that month.

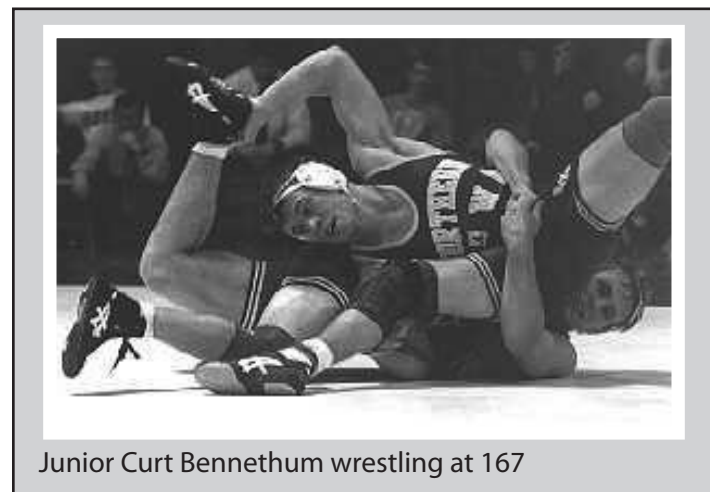
First-place winners included Bruhl (118), Showalter (126), Hassel (134), Hartle (150), Byrne (158), Malecek (190) and Justin Greenlee (hwt). The second-place winner was Nate Hartle (142). Briggs again received West Regional Coach of the Year honors.

At the national tournament, UNI placed a disappointing 22nd. Two wrestlers did earn



Steve Hartle

all-American status, however. Hartle (150) and Greenlee (hwt) both placed eighth. The wrestlers at 118, 126, 134, and 142 were all knocked out of the running in the first round. Byrne won three matches at 158 but lost two, including one in the consolation round. Malecek won two and lost two matches at 190.



Junior Curt Bennethum wrestling at 167

1993-94 Season

The season began with another change in the coaching staff. Chris Bollin was hired as assistant coach to replace one-year assistant Krieger. Bollin was a University of Oklahoma all-American and was still second in freestyle at that time.

Six lettermen returned. In addition to the four captains, Doug Kjeldgaard and Jason Wedgbury also added their experience. Three of the lettermen were NCAA qualifiers and Greenlee was an all-American. The team roster listed 18 freshmen, seven sophomores, eight juniors and five seniors.

In October, the wrestling team and University received a great honor when athletic officials announced that the NCAA Championship would be held in the UNI-Dome in 1997. Championship meets have been held at UNI five times over the years. In 1950, the Division I meet, which ISTC won, was held in the West Gymnasium. Division II Championships were in 1963, 1964, 1977 and 1978, which UNI won.

One of the highlights of this season was the 18-16 win over Iowa State. At that time, UNI had won only 13 meets against ISU since the schools started competing

against each other in the 1924 season. Eleven of those wins fell between the 1940 and 1952 seasons. The last meet UNI won was in 1988.

Six wrestlers qualified for the national championships at the West Regional Tournament. Scott Murray (118), Showalter (134), Malecek (177) and Greenlee (hwt) all placed first. Wild Card choices Tim Novak (142), who placed third; and second-place winner Kjeldgaard (150) also competed. This meet marked UNI's ninth consecutive West Regional title.



Justin Greenlee wrestling an Iowa State opponent

UNI's best hopes for all-Americans at the championships were with team captains Greenlee and Malecek. By March, Greenlee was ranked second at heavyweight by Amateur Wrestling News and had a 34-5 record. His accomplishments included winning at the Pan American Games and the Olympic Festival the previous summer, a second-place finish at the Trophée Milone Tournament in Italy, and competing in the National Wrestling Coaches Association All-Star Classic at the University of Pittsburgh. There he was defeated by top ranked Kerry McCoy. His brother and former UNI wrestler, Joel, was an assistant coach for UNI at that time.

Malecek had a 23-6 record and was known by his teammates and coaches as a team motivator and leader. He opened the season wrestling at 190. Then in early February he began wrestling at 177, where he remained the rest of the season. Before the championships, Malecek was ranked seventh in the nation at 177 pounds.

The NCAA Championships were held March 17-19 at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. UNI placed 11th, with two wrestlers earning all-American status. Justin Greenlee placed second at heavyweight,

losing out again to McCoy, and Malecek was fourth. Showalter and Kjeldgaard both lost in the first round, while Murray failed to make weight.

This season marked the first time UNI had a losing dual record in 29 years. Ending at 5-7, the March 6, 1994 Northern Iowan stated that the percentage of dual wins had decreased since the WCAA had placed restrictions on the program in 1991.

1994-95 Season

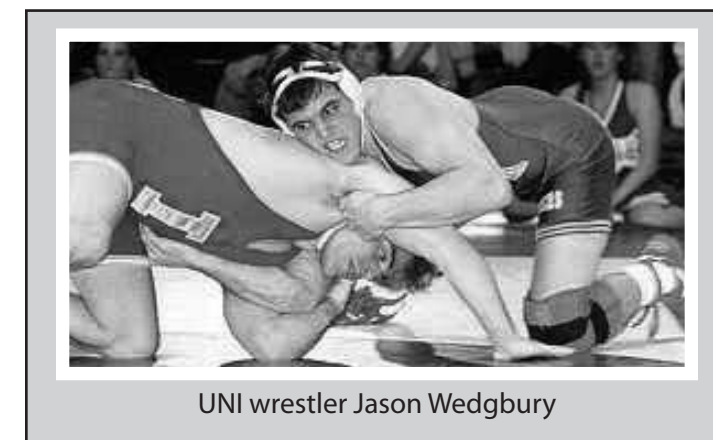
Out of the 12 letter winners from the previous season, only seven returned. Two of these wrestlers, Murray and Novak, were NCAA qualifiers in 1994. Returning heavyweight Greenlee was also a two-time all-American. Although UNI placed 11th at the NCAA Championships last season, Amateur Wrestling News ranked the Panthers 22nd in the nation in pre-season rankings.

One outstanding wrestler made headlines shortly into the campaign. After pinning all five of his opponents at the Northern Iowa Open, Greenlee recorded his 101st victory of his career. Only 13 other Panther wrestlers had over 100 victories while at UNI.

The West Regional Championships were held in Milwaukee, Wis. March 5. UNI won the meet for the 10th consecutive time with four first-place winners -- Dan Beerman (134), Ryan Cummings (150), Wedgbury (167) and Greenlee (hwt). In addition, three



Dave Malecek



UNI wrestler Jason Wedgbury

other wrestlers were chosen as Wild Cards to compete in the NCAA Championships. First up were second-place winners Kjeldgaard at 158 and Ben Barton at 177. Murray was the third-place winner at 126. On a final Regional note, for the first time in eight years, Briggs did not receive the Coach of the Year Award.

The 1995 NCAA Championships were held in Iowa City March 16-18. Greenlee was the only UNI all-American, placing second at heavyweight. Murray, Beerman, Cummings and Barton all lost in the first round. Kjeldgaard won in the wrestle-backs and Wedgbury also won his second match. UNI ended the season 16th in the NCAA.

By the end of the year, Greenlee, the heavy-weight senior, had left his mark in the record books. He had recorded the second highest number of career victories in school history. His 129 victories fell five short of Powers' 134 victories. Greenlee also recorded 57 career pins, topping Powers' record of 54. He posted a .787 career winning percentage with only 35 losses.

Four UNI wrestlers received awards and honors that May. Cummings, who placed first at the West Regional meet, received the Most Improved Wrestler award for his success in his first varsity season. The Most Courageous Wrestler was Robert Armye, who moved up two weights from his normal 167 pounds to wrestle at 190.



Ryan Cummings

Two new coaches' awards were given out that season honoring Lyle E. Schwarzenbach and former wrestling coach Chuck Patten. The former was to be given to the wrestler who exhibited the highest degree of sportsmanship and dedication to the sport and academics. The first recipient was 150-pound freshman Chris Bahr. This was Bahr's first official year on the team after red-shirting. Greenlee received the second new award, given for excellence in leadership and value to the team.

The academic success of the entire wrestling team was also brought to the forefront. The team's combined grade point average was 2.69, earning it an 18th ranking in the nation, according to the National Wrestling Coaches Association. Greenlee received a

further honor when he was named to the 1995 N.W.C.A. All-Academic First Team.

1995-96 Season

The 1995-96 team, with eight returning lettermen, was ranked 12th in the nation pre-season by Amateur Wrestling News. It was a relatively young and inexperienced team, with only four seniors and three juniors on the roster. Gone from last season were three-time all-American Greenlee and letter winners Paulson, Bennett and Beerman.

Despite this, UNI won its 11th consecutive West Regional title at home in the West Gymnasium. Six champions and two Wild Card choices represented the Panthers at the national tournament.

1995-96 West Regional Champions

- Scott Murray (118)
- Ryan Kutz (126)
- Joe Stephens (142)
- Chris Bahr (150)
- Jason Wedgbury (167)
- Burt Beamer (hwt)

Wild Card choices Kjeldgaard (158) and Tony Wieland (190) both placed second in their divisions. Second-place winner Ken Bigley was chosen to attend the championships as an alternate at 177. At the conclusion of the meet, Bahr and Eastern Illinois' Matt Hughes were named joint recipients of the Most Outstanding Wrestler Award.

UNI was not successful at the NCAA Championships in Minneapolis that March. The Panthers left the competition tied for 27th, the first time it placed out of the top 25. However, freshman Wieland did place eighth at 190 pounds and brought home UNI's only all-American title that year.



Chris Bahr



Scott Murray (right) fights for control.

Several team records were challenged that season. Two outstanding freshmen won their way onto the "Most Victories for Freshmen" list. Wieland earned 34 victories in his first season, coming close to the top record of 49 wins set by Mark Schwab in 1986. Beamer won an impressive 23 matches to put him in 10th place. Junior Murray moved into eighth place on the "Career Pins" list with a total of 24.

In February, Murray received recognition from Successful Farming Magazine. He was named to the magazine's All-America Farm Team, which honored wrestlers who had come from farm or ranch backgrounds.

1996-97 Season

Although UNI was ranked 30th in the pre-season rankings, Coach Briggs' goal was to finish in the top 10. Out of the nine returning letter winners from 1996, only two were seniors. One hundred twenty six-pound Murray was a three-time NCAA qualifier and was ranked eighth individually in the nation in pre-season. Kjeldgaard, wrestling at 167, was a two-time NCAA qualifier and sophomore Wieland was UNI's only all-American from last year. Four other letter winners -- Beamer, Barton, Cummings and Bahr -- had also qualified for the NCAA Championships during their careers.

For the 12th consecutive time, UNI won the West Regional title. Wieland (190), Murray (126), Kjeldgaard (167) and Barton (177) all placed first in their divisions, sending them on to the NCAA Championships. Bahr was also chosen as a wild card to compete in the tournament at 150.

The surprise of the West Regional was UNI wrestler Ken Bigley. Bigley wrestled well at 177 the previous



Tony Wieland

Ken Bigley

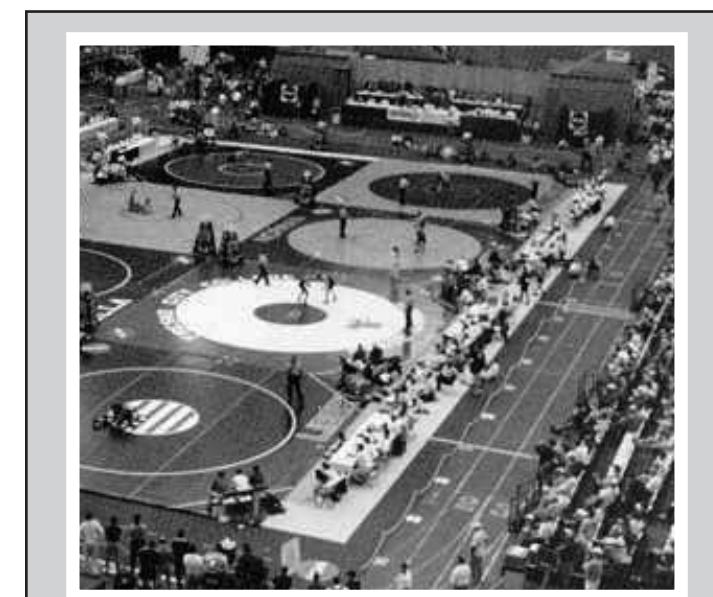
Ben Barton

season. This year he wrestled at both 177 and 190, and then moved to heavyweight for the Regional. Although he placed second, he was not chosen as a Wild Card.

Bahr received a cut on his forehead during his first match of the tournament. In his final match with Dubuque's Mack Rohaly, he re-injured his head. Although he lost the match to Rohaly, he still represented UNI at the NCAA as a Wild Card. John Zelinski was beaten in the finals to take home second place at 118.

The NCAA Tournament was held at UNI March 20-22, 1997. It was the single most attended amateur wrestling event ever held. According to the March 28 issue of the Northern Iowan, a record total of 90,064 fans attended the sessions, compared to the previous record of 81,516 set in Iowa City in 1995. The University of Iowa won the tournament for the 15th time in history. UNI placed a distant and disappointing 41st.

All five of UNI's tournament wrestlers lost in the first round. Wieland and Bahr were defeated in their



NCAA Championships in UNI-Dome

first round of wrestle-backs and were out of the tournament, while Kjeldgaard, Barton and Murray were eliminated after losing in the second round of wrestle-backs.

In May, Coach Briggs announced his resignation as head coach, stepping down to take a position teaching full time in UNI's Department of Health, Physical Education, and Leisure Services.

The Mark Manning Era (1997-2000)

On June 12, 1997, Mark Manning was introduced as UNI's new coach. As a collegiate wrestler, Manning won two NCAA Division II championship titles and a Silver Medal at the 1988 Pan American Games.

Before his UNI appointment, Manning had extensive experience as an assistant coach, including ties to the Big 12 Conference. He spent four seasons on Jack Spates' staff at Oklahoma from 1993-97 before accepting Northern Iowa's position. He helped guide the Sooners to three top-10 team finishes at the NCAA Championships during his tenure,



Mark Manning

including a seventh-place showing in 1997. He assisted in coaching 14 OU wrestlers to all-America accolades, and five to the NCAA finals. John Kading also claimed the 1996 190-pound title under him.

Manning began his coaching career as an assistant at North Carolina in 1985. While pursuing his Master's Degree in Sports Administration, he assisted Coach Bill Lam in guiding 15 Tar Heel wrestlers to all-America honors.

1997-98 Season

In his first year as head coach, Manning had 10 returning regulars from the previous season, including two who qualified for the NCAA Tournament. Barton and Bahr were returning seniors who were NCAA qualifiers in March of 1997. Barton finished the previous season at 28-12 while Bahr had a 21-18 record at 150 pounds. Junior Bigley entered the season ranked 18th

nationally at 177 pounds, Eric Keller was ranked 15th at 118 pounds.

The team opened the 1997-98 season in great style as the Panthers grabbed three championships and placed seven wrestlers in the Ryan Kaufman-Glen Brand Open. Redshirt freshman Eric Keller won his first collegiate championship. Glen Pero claimed a title at 150 pounds, while Wieland won the title at 190.

The Panthers' 5-9 dual record included wins over Indiana, Cal State-Fullerton, Marquette, Northern Illinois and Wyoming. They had wanted to get that percentage higher, but were pleased with the direction the team was going under their new coach.

For the 13th straight year, the Panthers won a NCAA Regional Championship. They competed in the East Regional in Atlanta, Ga. While claiming the title, UNI qualified five wrestlers for the 1998 NCAA Wrestling Championships. Redshirt freshman Nick Flach and seniors Bahr and Barton each won regional championships to advance. Juniors Keller and Bigley each lost in the finals, but earned Wild Card berths.

Keller lost his first match, but won the next two before being eliminated. Flach won two matches but fell short of placing at the NCAA Tournament. Barton won two early matches but fell one match short of placing. Bahr and Bigley both lost two matches, which eliminated them from the competition.

1998-99 Season

This was the second season for Manning. He and his staff had six letter winners back from a team that posted a 5-9 dual record and was tied for 30th at the NCAA Championships. The Panthers had two sets of brothers on the roster -- the Kellers and the Koenigs. Senior Eric Keller was joined by Chris, a freshman 157-pounder. Bob and Tom Koenig were both freshmen, Bob directly from high school and Tom after a four-year stint in the United States Air Force.

UNI entered the season ranked 19th in the Intermat Preseason Top 25, the highest ranking for a Panther team since the end of the 1994 season. The Panthers were ranked 19th in the final regular-season ranking that year and 15th in the pre-NCAA Tournament poll.

Northern Iowa won the team title and qualified its six wrestlers for the NCAA East Regional. It

was the 14th consecutive regional title for the Panthers. Seniors Eric Keller (133) and Bigley (184) and juniors Tony Davis (149), Randy Pugh (174) and Wieland (197) all won regional championships, while freshman Nate Lawrenz (165) received a Wild Card bid to the tournament.

1999-2000 Season

The Panthers opened their season in fine fashion on Nov. 20 at the Nebraska-Omaha Open, crowning three champions. In all, UNI had six finalists and four additional place winners. Freshman Eric Dunmire decided 15th-ranked Matt Azevedo of Iowa State, 6-3, in the semifinals on his way to the 125-pound title. Top-rated Davis recorded a pin and a pair of match terminations in winning the 149-pound championship. Pugh handled seventh-ranked Gabe McMahan of Iowa in the 174-pound final, 9-3.

Junior college transfer Chad Boudreaux (133), sophomore Lawrenz (165) and senior Wieland (197) all finished second. Other UNI place winners included Troy McIlravy (4th, 133), Kyle Hansen (4th, 184), Mark Rial (5th, 141) and Brandon Livingood (6th, 141).

Post-season action began March 4 with UNI hosting the NCAA West Regional at the Price Laboratory Fieldhouse in Cedar Falls. UNI was chasing its 15th consecutive regional team title, but more importantly, 22 individual berths in the NCAA Tournament were on the line. The 10 individual champions would earn automatic spots in the NCAA Tournament, while the other 12 Wild Card berths would be decided by the regional coaches. The national tournament was to be held March 16-18 at the Kiel Center in St. Louis.

Davis found himself on top of the podium as national champion in St. Louis. A senior from Chicago, he capped off a fantastic UNI career by securing the

school's first individual title since Bill Dotson captured the 137-pound title in 1963. UNI finished in 11th place with 42 team points, just a half point from the top 10. UNI's team standing was due in part to strong finishes from Davis and 174-pounder Pugh. Seeded fifth, Pugh finished in fourth place and gained all-American status.

The ninth-rated Panthers (10-5-2) posted their first winning dual season and returned to the national top 10 for the first time in seven years under their third-year coach.

Manning left UNI at the end of the 2000 season to become the head coach at the University of Nebraska. He had compiled a 23-24-2 record in his three years as UNI head coach.

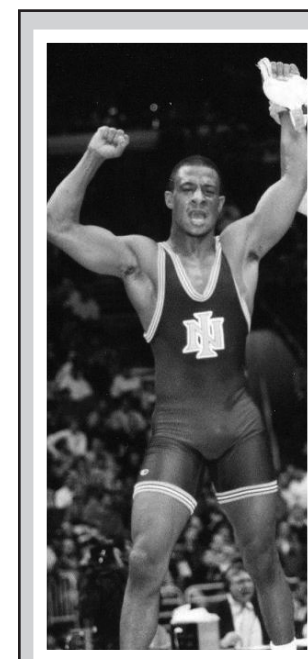
The Brad Penrith Era (2000-2010)

Brad Penrith was named head coach on June 21, 2000. He had been a UNI assistant coach.

Penrith served one year as an assistant at Boise State in 1991-92, spent two seasons at Arizona State from 1989-91, and was a graduate assistant at Iowa. He won the 126-pound national championship while at Iowa in 1986 as a sophomore, and then placed second at 126 in 1987 and 1988. He was a three-time Big Ten champ for the Hawkeyes and was named Outstanding Wrestler at the conference meet in 1986. A 1988 Iowa graduate, he also made his mark on the international level before retiring in 1996. He captured a Silver Medal at the 1991 World Championships and was the Gold medalist at the Pan American Games in 1989 and '91.

Penrith was third at the 1994 Goodwill Games, was a two-time Sunkist Open champion, took the Roger Coulon title in France in 1992 and 1996, was a member of the 1989 U.S. World Team, and took third at the World Cup in 1990 and 1991. He placed third at the 1996 Olympic Team Trials, won the U.S. Nationals three times--1989, 1991, and 1993--and was second at the 1992 Final Olympic Wrestle-Off.

Penrith was involved with USA Wrestling at several levels of coaching. In the summer of 1999 he



NCAA champion Tony Davis



Brad Penrith

was the head coach of the United States team that took the Bronze Medal in the team competition at the Junior World Freestyle Championships in Sydney, Australia.

A native of Windsor, N.Y., Penrith was a four-time state place winner in high school, including winning the state title as a sophomore in 1981. He was named the Outstanding Greco-Roman Wrestler at the 1983 Junior Nationals.

2000-01 Season

UNI finished the dual season at 11-8 against tough competition that included 10 teams in the Top 25. The Panthers finished the dual meet season ranked 15th in the nation. They opened the dual season with their first four matches coming against ranked Big 10 opponents -- Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Purdue. Their 23-13 victory over Purdue gave them their first win of the season after losing to Minnesota 36-3, Wisconsin 20-19 and Iowa 32-16. The win sparked them to win eight out of the next 10 matches. Included in that run were victories over then no. 23 Fresno State, Neosho Community College, Northwestern, Binghamton, Ashland, Cleveland State, Wyoming, and Marquette.

UNI hosted Oklahoma State and Nebraska two consecutive weekends. The Panthers fought hard in the 31-9 loss to OSU and lost a close match, 26-20, against Nebraska in the final dual of the day. They came back strong and defeated both Eastern Illinois and Northern Illinois. In the final match of the season, the Panthers faced interstate rival and fourth-ranked Iowa State, losing the match 29-15.

In the post-season, the Panthers won their 16th consecutive regional team title on March 3 in Laramie, Wyo., winning four individual championships in the process. UNI tallied 97 points to Fresno State's second-place 87. UNI qualified eight wrestlers for nationals, which was the most since 1996 when it also took eight. All-Americans Kyle Hansen (184 pounds) and heavyweight Paul Hynek led the team to an 18th-place finish at the NCAA Championships in Iowa City. Other Panthers competing at nationals included senior Mark Rial (141), juniors Nate Lawrenz (165), Eric Brown (174) and Jason Payne (197); sophomore Eric Dunmire (125), and redshirt freshman Dylan Long (133).

2001-02 Season

UNI entered the season ranked 13th nationally by InterMat Wrestling. Penrith and his staff returned nine letter winners and five national qualifiers from the previous season's team that placed 18th at the NCAA Championships and finished the dual season at 11-8. The Panthers went into the 2001-02 season excited to have two all-Americans returning for the first time since 1992. Not only were all-Americans Hansen and Hynek back for another season, but the Panthers also returned three other national qualifiers.

Some of the team's goals were to finish in the top 10, win the regional title, and to take all 10 athletes to the national tournament. In order to achieve those goals, the Panthers first had to get through a tough schedule. UNI faced Iowa, Iowa State, Oklahoma State, Oklahoma, Boise State and Wisconsin, all of which finished in the top 10 the previous season. The Panthers also had to travel to the N.W.C.A. National Duals where 16 of the nation's top schools competed. This was a young team in many respects, but the wealth of experience that the returning members brought helped develop those young athletes. Penrith finished his second season at the helm with a dual record of 7-8 with wins over ranked Boise State, Wisconsin and Oregon.

Northern Iowa was the team to watch and the team to beat at the 2002 NCAA West Regional Championships at Fresno State. The Panthers placed first with 107.5 points and grabbed close to half of the regional's pre-determined number of NCAA bids. They ended with eight wrestlers in the finals and all eight qualified for the NCAA Championships in Albany, N.Y.

The team proved that hard work and dedication pays off in the long run as it finished the season in 16th place at the NCAA Championships. For the first time since 1991, the Panthers honored three all-Americans in seniors Hansen (184, 8th) and Payne (197, 8th) and junior Hynek (hwt., 6th).

2002-03 Season

The Panthers finished 11th at the 2003 NCAA Championships in Kansas City and for the first time since the 1987 season, sent nine wrestlers to the meet -- Pat Garcia (133), Dylan Long (141), Jon Garvin (149), Chris Bitetto (157), Drew Kelly (165), Eric Hauan (174),

Jordan Holm (184), Sean Stender (197) and Hynek (Hwt). The three days in Kansas City were a success as UNI came away with two all-Americans, including one finalist, while scoring 49.5 points.

Long led the charge with an outstanding year and a record of 31-4, along with being the national runner-up at 141 pounds. The native of Creston, Iowa achieved so much in just a season. In 2002, he was seeded fourth at nationals, but just missed earning all-American honors. He took that disappointment and trained even harder.

In the regular season, there were only two wrestlers to defeat Long, one being second seed Zack Esposito of Oklahoma State and the other Arizona State's seventh seeded Dana Holland. Coming in as the three seed, Long could have faced both to get to the finals, but West Virginia's Shane Cunanan sent them down to the consolation bracket. Long went on to defeat Cunanan 4-3 in the semi-finals and was only the sixth Panther to have ever reached the finals.

He faced no. 1 Teyon Ware, a true freshman from Oklahoma. With the score tied and time running out in regulation, Ware scored a takedown, which was later overturned because time had expired on the clock. Going into the one minute sudden victory, Long was very offensive, but Ware came back scoring two points with a takedown at the 42-second mark to win the match 6-4.

Sophomore Stender was the only other Panther to earn all-American status with a sixth-place finish and a record of 5-2 at the tournament, with both of his losses coming to no. 2 Muhammed Lawal of Oklahoma State. Stender and Long might have led the Panthers in victories, but it was a whole team effort for the eventual 11th-place finish.

All nine national qualifiers were able to win a match at the tournament which gave the squad, at least, half a team point. The Panthers finished with a 19-17 record at nationals.

This was the final year for Hynek. With a young team, he provided leadership and experience. Unfortunately, the native of Swisher, Iowa was injured before the season started and was unable to get back on the mat and see competition until January when UNI traveled to the Texas Duals. His determination and dedication to the program shined through, as he made his third trip to nationals. Hynek finished his career with a

mark of 74-33 and was one win shy from becoming a three-time all-American.

The Panthers entered the West Regional ranked 11th in the nation and were predicted to win, but no one could predict all 10 wrestlers in the championship match. UNI scored 126 points with seven regional titles. Freshman Bitetto had the biggest upset of the tournament. Coming in unseeded, he went 3-0 defeating no. 1 Frank DeFilippis of Eastern Illinois 4-3 and later beating Fresno State's Jim Medeiros in the finals, 5-3 in overtime.

Garcia (133), Long (141), Garvin (149), Hauan (174), Holm (184) and Stender (197) all went undefeated in their quest for the title. Chris Helegeson (125) took second place after falling in the championship match 5-3 to Heath McKim of Fresno State. Hynek fell to Air Force's Kevin Hoy in the title match 6-4 in overtime and had to wrestle for true second. He forfeited that match and took third.

The Panthers' dual season was one of the best in recent years. Penrith and his staff knew that the way to succeed at nationals was to compete against the best during the regular season. They did just that as they faced Arizona State, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan, Northern Illinois, Iowa State, Fresno State, and let's not forget national champion Oklahoma State, twice. With a record of 12-6, the Panthers continued to improve as the season went on, winning six of their last seven duals.

UNI had a big win over Iowa State in Ames after the Cyclones had beaten the Panthers nine times in the previous eight years. The 26-12 win not only broke the nine-match losing streak, but it gave the Panthers their first win since 1951 over ISU on its home turf.

2003-04 Season

Wearing a UNI singlet has always been an honor. The 2003-04 squad found the season to be no exception. With six NCAA qualifiers returning from the previous season, it had the potential to be one of the finest for Penrith and his assistants. In Penrith's three seasons, his teams had finished 18th, 16th and 11th, respectively, at nationals. His teams had crowned seven all-Americans, two who would return this season in Long and Stender.

The Panthers also returned a talented core in Garcia, Garvin and Hauan. All three were national

qualifiers. Garcia stepped in right away and took over the 133-pound slot. He finished with an 18-9 record and captured a first-place finish at the West Regionals. Garvin was a two-time national qualifier who also swept through regionals without a loss. Hauan took the reins at 174 for the third consecutive season, bringing with him a 30-win season from his sophomore campaign.

The Panthers' schedule was a typical, grueling lineup with top opponents from around the country. The UNI coaching staff knew the best way to improve is to face the best competition. Trips to Oklahoma State, Iowa and Arizona State made the schedule a difficult task.

The Panthers finished the dual meet season with a 10-6 record and was ranked 16th in the nation by InterMat Wrestling. In the first dual, UNI buried South Dakota State 32-9. UNI then got a dose of its own medicine at the hands of 20th-ranked Wisconsin, 24-13. Feeling the absence of returning all-American Stender, the Panthers continued to struggle at 197.

After a loss in Iowa City the Panthers rebounded, sweeping up five consecutive wins heading into the National Duals. With dog fights against Minnesota and Penn State, UNI took down Iowa State 22-21, snapping the two-loss skid. The Cyclones came to town a week later looking for revenge. Stender was back in the line-up, but an injured Johnson sat out for the Panthers. The seventh-ranked Cyclones needed the last match to scrape by with a 19-16 victory.

UNI then hit the road for three matches in the last leg of the season. Against the two defending national champions in Oklahoma State and Division II Central Oklahoma, UNI lost to the Cowboys but easily pinned a win over the Broncos, 35-3. In Tempe, Ariz. against Arizona State, Hauan racked up a decision in the last match, enough to take down the No. 18 Sun Devils 17-16. In the last home dual, UNI closed out another 10-win season over the Buckeyes, 22-18, to finish the season 10-6 and ranked 18th by the Wrestling Mall.

At the West Regionals in Colorado Springs, the Panthers grasped their 19th consecutive title, defeating

individuals from Air Force, Fresno State, Wyoming and Eastern Illinois. Seven grapplers advanced to the NCAA Championships in St. Louis.

The squad finished another strong year in 21st place at the 2004 NCAA Championships in St. Louis. Although the Panthers were picked to finish 11th, they still concluded a highly successful season. At nationals, seven Panthers represented the Purple and Gold, including Helgeson (125), Long (141), Jeff Harrison (149), Nick Baima (157), Hesston Johnson (165), Hauan (174) and Stender (197). At the end of the three-day event, two Panthers were crowned all-Americans.

2004-05 Season

The Purple and Old Gold kicked off its 2004-05 season at the Harold Nichols Open with five champions. Newcomer Nick Baima (165) and seniors Hauan (174) and Stender (197) all earned top honors. The next meet was the Kaufman Brand Open in Omaha. C.J. Ettelson and Hauan took runner-up honors in the 141- and 174-pound weight classes, respectively. Harrison (149) took sixth.

The first dual was against Wisconsin. The Panthers opened up a 6-0 lead with help from Helgeson at 125. The Badgers went on to take the next four matches before Baima and Hauan put together back-to-back wins. After a loss at 184, the Panthers were down three heading into the final match. Wisconsin's Ryan Flaherty slipped by Stender at 197 pounds to win 20-14.

The Panthers hosted their annual UNI Open in early December. Hauan claimed his second championship of the season and his third consecutive UNI Open title. UNI had eight other place winners, with Stender (197) and Harrison (149) wrestling for second place. Baima lost in the first round at 165 pounds and then fought through the consolation bracket, winning six straight to claim third place. Ettelson also placed third in the 141-pound weight class, while Alex Dolly claimed sixth at 184 pounds.

The ninth-ranked Iowa Hawkeyes came to the UNI-Dome for the Panthers' second dual of the season. Iowa took an early 12-0 lead, winning three straight matches. Baima ended the Hawkeyes' streak by defeating Oleg Polyatskiy 3-0. Hauan kept the momentum going, beating Luke Lofthouse 6-5. With a Hawkeye win at 184, the Panthers were down 16-6. Stender then rolled

up Dane Pape at 197 by major decision, 13-5. Helgeson tallied a win at 125 pounds, but it was not enough to get by the Hawks as the Panthers suffered their second dual loss 23-13.

Penrith's wrestlers had little time to recover after the Iowa dual, traveling to Rochester, Minn. only three days later to face the Minnesota Golden Gophers. The Panthers gave Minnesota a run, taking half of the matches, but fell to the Gophers 25-20.

After a two-week break, the team traveled to the annual Midlands Championships. The Panthers finished sixth out of 10 teams with 76.5 points. Three wrestlers placed in Stender, Harrison and Baima.

The Panthers got their first dual meet win at home against Tennessee-Chattanooga, 22-16. Stender and Bitetto scored half the team points, both pinning their opponents. Redshirt freshman Jeremy Meyer made his varsity debut at 133 pounds with a 10-3 victory.

UNI improved to 3-3 after hosting Eastern Illinois and Virginia Tech in a double dual. The Panthers dominated EIU 38-7. Osgood, Baima and Stender all pinned their opponents, while Bitetto and Justin Swafford won their matches by major decision. In the Panthers' first ever meeting with the Hokies, they won three matches by forfeit. Harrison and Baima won their matches by major decision.

The Panthers next traveled to Ames to face off against intrastate rival Iowa State. Hauan claimed his 100th career victory, defeating no. 9 Nick Passolano 7-2 in overtime. Harrison and Stender also chalked up wins, while Baima won by injury default. ISU prevailed 25-16.

UNI joined the nation's finest at the National Duals in Cleveland, Ohio. The no. 14 Panthers came away with one dual victory, upsetting no. 6 Hofstra 22-14. Helgeson (125), Harrison (149), Bitetto (157), Baima (165), Hauan (174) and Shedek (HWT) tallied wins. Harrison was the only Panther to muster a win against no. 5 Lehigh, as UNI fell 33-3. It was down to the wire against Central Michigan, but the Panthers fell short, 21-18.

Defending national champion Oklahoma State was the next opponent for the Panthers. UNI hosted the dual and Baima and redshirt freshman Danny Dunning were the only two grapplers to tally wins in front of the

home crowd. The Panthers chalked up their seventh dual loss of the season, 30-6.

Starting with the Northern Illinois Huskies, the Panthers won the remainder of their dual schedule, winning four straight. UNI handled NIU especially in the heavier weights, taking wins at 174, 184, 197 and 285. Hauan won by tech fall, while Stender chalked up his sixth pin of the season.

The Panthers kept their win streak alive against North Dakota State and South Dakota State on the road. The squad then moved on to demolish the South Dakota State Jackrabbits 34-3. SDS mustered only one win while the Panthers took one fall (Stender), two technical falls (Manchio, Hauan) and one major decision (Harrison). Osgood, Baumgartner, Bitetto, Knoll and Dolly all won by decision.

UNI finished in a respectable 15th place in the nation. The Panthers had a successful season, although they were picked to finish 12th in the tournament. At the NCAA Championships, eight wrestlers represented the Purple and Old Gold -- Helgeson (125), Ettelson (141), Harrison (149), Bitetto (157), Baima (165), Hauan (174), Dolly (184) and Stender (197). By the conclusion of the three-day tournament, Stender and Hauan were crowned all-Americans.

2005-06 Season

The 2005-06 wrestling team returned five national qualifiers who helped the Panthers to a 15th-place finish at the NCAA Championships the previous season. This year had an air of excitement because many wrestlers were changing weights and some were taking to the mat for the first time. Senior leadership came from Helgeson (133), Bitetto (157) and Michael Shedek (HWT), on and off the mat.

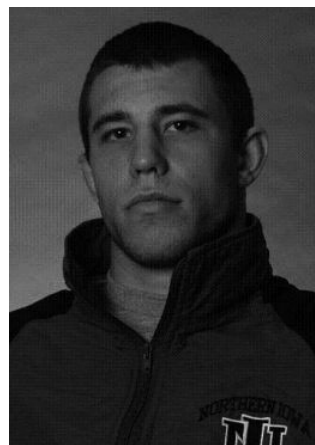
The Panthers finished the 2005-06 dual season with an 8-8-2 mark and qualified eight wrestlers for the NCAA Championships. UNI scored 20.5 points at the Championships in Oklahoma City, placing 28th in the team standings.

Junior Baima was named the Outstanding Wrestler at both the Midlands and the NCAA West Regional. The 165-pounder capped his year with a mark of 34-5 and had his streak of 14 consecutive wins snapped in the second round of the NCAA Championships. At one stretch in the season, Baima won 26-of-27 matches. His



Sean Stender

winning percentage (.872) ranked as the 10th-best in school history. His 17 dual wins tied him for the sixth-best single-season mark in school history with Rich Powers (1990-91). Baima is a three-time national qualifier after taking the West Regional title at 165 pounds. His career mark stands at 88-34, including a 30-14 career dual mark.



Nick Baima

Redshirt freshman Moza Fay was one of three wrestlers to reach the 30-win mark in the 2005-06 season. Fay bounced around the Panther lineup, wrestling at 157, 165 and 174 pounds. He captured individual 157-pound titles at the Mike McCready Open and the Brand Open. He placed second at the UNI Open and took third at the Harold Nichols Open. Fay was a perfect 9-0 in dual action and tallied 40 team dual points. He was the only Panther to record a win in the Oklahoma State dual, toppling OSU's Kevin Ward with a fall at the 6:44 mark.

Sophomore Ettelson (141 lbs.) was the third member of the Panthers' 30-win club as he finished the season at 30-12. Ettelson led the team with 13 falls, including three at the 2006 NCAA Championships. He went 3-2 at the national tournament and recorded falls over Vincent Ramirez (North Carolina), David Panaar (Slippery Rock) and Sean Markey (The Citadel). He is now a two-time national qualifier and has captured two NCAA West Regional crowns. The 141-pounder placed second at the UNI Open and third place at the prestigious Midlands. He also placed fourth at the Harold Nichols Open and finished the 2005-06 dual season 10-5.

Senior Helgeson capped his Panther career with his third trip to the NCAA Championships. He went 2-2 at the national tournament, notching a first-round win over no. 12-seeded Mark Moos (Michigan) 13-12. Helgeson then dropped his next match to eventual national runner-up Chris Fleeger (Purdue). He scored a consolation win over Joseph Baker (Navy), 12-9, before falling to no. 10-seeded Darrell Vasquez (Cal Poly). The 133-pounder finished his NCAA Championships career with four wins at the national level and posted a career

mark of 80-65, including 31-30 in dual action. Helgeson ranked third on the team with five falls this season.

Bitetto (157 lbs.) wrapped up his Panther wrestling career with a third trip to the NCAA Championships, picking up a pair of wins in the consolation bracket over Seth Martin (Lock Haven) and William Rowe (Oklahoma). Bitetto was consistently ranked in the top 20 all season at 157 pounds and finished with a record of 24-14. His career record stands at 59-49, including a 23-24 mark in dual action.

2006-07 Season

The 2006-07 campaign had plenty of firsts but there were changes in store for the program. The first was a change in venue for the dual matches. The new home for the team became the \$26 million dollar McLeod Center. UNI's wrestling history is deep and storied in the venerable West Gym, which includes a 1950 NCAA national championship. Along with moving to the McLeod Center, the Panthers joined the newly-founded Western Wrestling Conference. The WWC was created in the offseason and included seven teams -- UNI, Air Force, Northern Colorado, North Dakota State, South Dakota State, Utah Valley State and Wyoming. It is refreshing to know that some things stayed the same, namely, six returning wrestlers with national tournament experience.

For the second straight season the spotlight was UNI and the UNI-Dome as the Panthers hosted the NWCA/Cliff Keen National Duals. The Panthers also had the added excitement of hosting the 2007 NCAA West Regional on March 3 in the McLeod Center.

UNI finished the season with a 7-9-1 dual mark and qualified six wrestlers for the NCAA Championships. The Panthers also captured the first Western Wrestling Conference dual and tournament championships. UNI was a perfect 4-0 in league dual action. It then finished its first WWC season by winning the NCAA West Regional/WWC title. The regional win marked the 22nd straight regional crown for the Panthers.

The team wrapped up its 2006-07 season by sending six qualifiers to the NCAA Wrestling Championships at the Palace in Auburn Hills, Mich. The Panthers finished with an 8-12 record in which eight of those losses came to either national champions or all-American wrestlers.

2007-08 Season

Penrith's squad returned 11 letter winners and six starters from the previous season. The Panthers' dual mark may take a hit early on but only because Penrith will not shy away from contending with the nation's best in head-to-head matchups. UNI scheduled Wisconsin, Iowa, Iowa State and Oklahoma State in dual matches. It also looked to extend its dominance at the West Regional. The Panthers had won an unprecedented 22 straight team titles at the regional level and looked to make it 23 in a row in Fargo, N.D.

The team returned four national qualifiers from a year earlier and depended upon their guidance with the influx of freshmen ready to contribute. Serving that leadership role were the four returning national qualifiers -- Ettelson (141 lbs.), Fay (165 lbs.), Dolly (174 lbs.) and Andrew Anderson (197 lbs.) -- along with seniors Justin Swafford (149 lbs.) and Danny Dunning (184 lbs.).

UNI finished with a dual mark of 7-5-1 and qualified nine wrestlers for the NCAA Championships. The Panthers also captured the Western Wrestling Conference dual and tournament championships. UNI was a perfect 4-0 in league dual action for the second consecutive season. It finished its second WWC season by winning the NCAA West Regional/WWC title. The regional win marked the 23rd straight regional crown. Josh Baldrige (Haysville, Kan.) at 133 pounds, 149-pounder Tyson Reiner (Mitchell, S.D.), 165-pounder Fay (Anamosa, Iowa), and 184-pounder Anderson (Sioux City, Iowa) were crowned champions to move on to the national tournament. Three more national qualifiers, after the coaches' Wild Card meeting, included 125-pounder Ettelson (Hudson, Iowa) and 174-pounder Dolly (Mishawaka, Ind.).

The Panthers placed 20th at the 2008 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships held at the Scottrade Center in St. Louis. Fay led the way with a fifth-place finish in the 165-pound weight class. He posted an overall record of 25-8 and led the squad with 11 falls. He was also named the WWC's Wrestler of the Year. Dolly reached the Round of 12 and came within one victory of all-America status. He was a three-time national qualifier and posted 60 career wins.

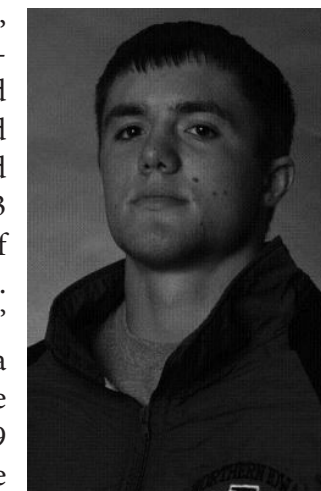
2008-09 Season

The Panthers returned 13 letter winners under ninth-year coach Penrith. UNI was also returning all-American Fay, the first returning all-American since the 2004-05 season. In addition, seven of its nine national qualifiers from the 2008 NCAA Championships were back for a run in 2008-09.

UNI finished the season with a dual mark of 10-6 and qualified six wrestlers for the NCAA Championships. UNI was a perfect 4-0 in league dual action for the third straight season and captured the Western Wrestling Conference dual and tournament championships. The Panthers then finished off the WWC season by winning the NCAA West Regional/WWC title. The regional win marked the Panthers' 24th straight regional crown.

They placed 22nd at the 2009 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships held in the Scottrade Center. It marked Penrith's seventh top 25 finish at the NCAA Championships. They had finished 11th (2003), 15th (2005), 16th (2002), 18th (2001), 20th (2008), 21st (2004) and 22nd (2009) during his tenure.

Fay led the effort, earning back-to-back all-America honors. He placed sixth in the 165-pound bracket after having placed fifth a year ago. He went 4-3 and was credited with 14 of the Panthers' 25 team points. Fay became the Panthers' 39th wrestler to become a two-time all-American. He capped his career with 119 wins to rank seventh on the school's all-time list.



Moza Fay

2009-10 Season

On Oct. 17, 2009 the program unveiled its Hall of Champions in the West Gym. The Hall showcases the Panthers' national champions as well as the program's all-Americans throughout the years. It was finished in time for the 2009 UNI Athletics Hall of Fame Banquet, which saw the 1950 NCAA Championship squad inducted the following day.



Wrestling Hall of Champions

The 2009-10 Panthers came off a 22nd-place finish at the 2009 NCAA Championships after capturing their 24th straight West Regional title. They returned seven national qualifiers, including Trent Washington and Christian Brantley. Both Washington and Brantley were ranked in preseason polls by Amateur Wrestling News -- Washington 17th at the 141-pound slot and Brantley 11th in the heavyweight class. Intermat Wrestling ranked Washington 15th and Brantley 12th.

The Panthers qualified four wrestlers for the NCAA Championships, with 174-pounder Jarion Beets earning all-America honors. They finished the dual season with a 10-12 overall record while going 4-2 in Western Wrestling Conference action.

All-American Beets finished eighth at the NCAA Championships while also capturing the WWC crown at 174 pounds. He recorded a 22-12 mark, including 14-7 duals.

Redshirt freshman Ryan Loder finished with a record of 32-5. Of Loder's 32 wins, eight were major decisions, three were technical falls and 10 were wins by fall. In open tournaments, he claimed four tournament titles, three third-place finishes and one fifth-place finish.

David Bonin earned runner-up honors at the West Regional. He earned the no. 3 seed heading into the West Regional, but won a major decision over Air Force's Clayton Gable to advance to the finals before losing to Wyoming's Shane Onufer.

Reiner finished second at the Regional while earning an at-large bid to the NCAA Championships.

He finished the season with a record of 18-14, including a 13-9 mark in dual competition.

Senior Brett Robbins battled injuries a majority of his career, forcing him to see limited action on the mat. In 2009-2010, he recorded a 19-5 mark and was a perfect 3-0 in dual meets before suffering a season-ending injury. Robbins finished his career with a record of 30-16.

Penrith stepped down at the end of the season after nine years at the helm.

The Doug Schwab Era (2010–Present)

Director of Athletics Troy Dannen tabbed Doug Schwab as the Panthers' ninth head coach in the program's illustrious history. Schwab, a native of Osage, Iowa had recently completed his fourth season as an assistant coach at Iowa after serving as the team's volunteer assistant coach in 2006-07.

As an assistant for the Hawkeyes, Schwab provided team and individual instruction on a daily basis. He worked with the coaching staff to recruit future student-athletes, including leading the recruitment in 2009. He coordinated and scheduled the Iowa City Duals as well as various other dual meets. He assisted with coaching responsibilities before, during and after competition, including weight management and video tape analysis.

While serving on the Hawkeye staff, Schwab remained active in international competition. He represented the United States at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China, wrestling freestyle at 145.5 pounds (66 kg). He won titles at the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials and U.S. Nationals. In 2007, he won the U.S. Senior Freestyle title, earned a Bronze Medal at the 2007 Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and placed fifth at the 2007 World Championships in Baku, Azerbaijan. Schwab's other post-college accomplishments include winning the 145.5-pound title at the 2003 Sun-kist Kids International Open and earning Outstanding Wrestler honors in the freestyle event. In 2005, he won



Coach Doug Schwab

the 145-pound division of Real Pro Wrestling, earning Outstanding Wrestler honors as part of the champion Iowa Stalkers team.

Prior to joining the Iowa staff, Schwab served two seasons (2005-06) as an assistant coach at Virginia Tech under Tom Brands, another Iowa standout. Schwab was a three-time all-American and Big Ten champion from 1998-2001. He won the 1999 NCAA title at 141 pounds and finished his collegiate career with 130 wins, 10th-best in school history.

Schwab was born Aug. 3, 1977. He earned a B.S. in Communication Studies from Iowa in 2001, and is working toward a master's degree in Kinesiology/Sport Management at Minnesota. He and his wife, Allyson, have two sons, Hayden and Hendrix.

2010-11 Season

In Schwab's first season as the Panthers' head coach, he led the team to its first 12-win season since 2003 with a record of 12-9. The team won the WWC Conference Championship with a perfect 5-0 record. The team took second place in the WWC Conference tournament with two champions and four second-place winners. There was one 30-match winner and five 20-plus match winners-- Loder (30), Levi Wolfensperger (20), Joey Lazor (20), David Bonin (23), Blayne Beale (22) and Christian Brantley (22).

Two weeks prior to the NCAA Championships, the Panthers took home second place at the NCAA West Regional hosted by Air Force. UNI crowned two champions and finished with four runners-up. All 10 Panther grapplers finished in the top four. In the team race, UNI came up just short of reigning champion Wyoming as the Cowboys edged out the Panthers 93-87.

At 184 pounds, second-seeded Loder earned his first West Regional title and first trip to the NCAA Championships with a 4-3 win over no. 1-seed Joe LeBlanc (Wyoming). With that win, Loder had won 20 of his last 23 matches.

Brantley scored a 3-1 decision over Wyoming's Matthew McLaughlin to earn his third West Regional title. After picking up three wins during the tournament, Brantley held a perfect 8-0 career mark in West Regional matches.

Bonin fell to North Dakota State's Vince Salminen in the championship match at 157 pounds. In the

true second-place match, he bounced back and scored an 11-4 decision over South Dakota State's Nick Flynn to solidify his second-place finish and guarantee his spot at the NCAA Championships. This marked Bonin's first trip to the NCAA Championships.

Caleb Flores took Michael Martinez (Wyoming) into overtime before falling 3-1 in the championship match. In the true second-place match to determine the West Regional's second NCAA qualifier, Flores fell to Ben Kjar (Utah Valley) by a slim 3-2 margin.

At 149 pounds, Cole Dallaserra escaped Brett Robbins' grasp in overtime to score an escape and earn a 3-2 decision in the championship match. In the true second-place match, Robbins suffered a 5-4 loss to Northern Colorado's returning all-American Justin Gaethje. Senior Andy O'Loughlin fell to Wyoming's L.J. Helbig, taking second place at 197 pounds.

UNI took three wrestlers to the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships in Philadelphia in 2011. Bonin, Loder and Brantley represented the Panthers.

At 184 pounds, Loder bowed out just shy of the all-America rounds, falling to Wisconsin's no. 4 seed Travis Rutt by a 4-2 decision. He did pick up wins over Hofstra's Ben Clymer, Oregon State's Brice Arand and Virginia's Jonathan Fausey to finish with a 3-2 record.

At 157 pounds, Bonin fell to Harvard's Walter Peppelman in the third round of the consolation matches. He finished with a 2-2 record, topping Binghamton's Matt Kaylor and Northern Illinois' Bryan Deutsch while falling to eventual runner-up David Taylor from Penn State.

Brantley bowed out early at the heavyweight slot, falling to Minnesota's Anthony Nelson and Oregon State's Clayton Jack. In the end, the team standings left the Panthers in 46th place.



Christian Brantley

2011-12 Season

Two NCAA championship qualifiers returned to the Panther lineup -- sophomore Loder (184), who was one win away from achieving all-American status last year -- and junior Bonin (157), who bowed out in the third round of consolation matches.

This year's Panther squad featured many new faces. Of the 28 wrestlers on the preseason roster, 15 were true freshmen or first-year transfers. Notable recruits included junior college national champion Joe Colon (133), who transferred from Iowa Central; as well as Iowa's 2011 "Mr. Wrestler" and Waverly native, Cody Caldwell (174).

The season began with a number of wrestlers competing in three open tournaments. UNI boasted five individual championships and one runner-up finish at the Loras Open Nov. 5. Champions included freshmen Adam Perrin (141), Jarrett Jensen (157), Blaize Cabell (197) and Cody Krumwiede (285). Kyle Lux and Taylor Berger shared the 165-pound title. Freshman Tanner Hiatt (149) took home runner-up honors.

Bonin (157) and Loder (184) claimed championships at the Harold Nichols Cyclone Open. Bonin ended the day with a 7-2 decision over Quinten Haynes (unattached). Loder went 4-0, ending with a 4-1 decision over St. Cloud State's Derek Skala.

Fourteen of UNI's 17 competitors placed in the upper division at the Finn Grinaker Cobber Open. Three of those places were championships as Ryan Jauch (133), Tanner Hiatt (149) and Loder (184) took home first-place finishes.

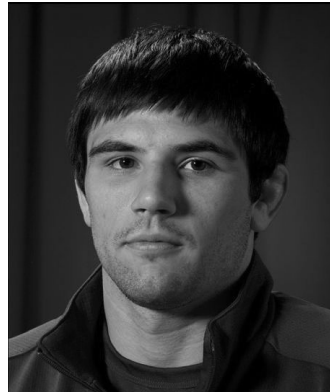
The Panthers began the dual season by competing in the 2011 Northeast Duals. They fell to no. 21 Central Michigan and no. 12 Maryland, but defeated Bucknell. Loder (184) was the lone Panther to go undefeated. One of his three wins came against ninth-ranked Ben Bennett. By day's end, Loder had improved his overall season record to 11-0.

The dual season ended with a loss to no. 8 Nebraska, 26-16. UNI won the final three matches with bonus-point victories, but a 23-point swing in the Huskers' favor was too much for the Panthers to overcome.

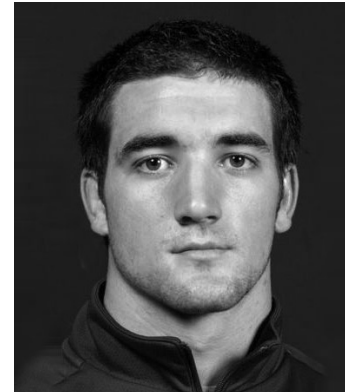
In spite of losing the last dual meet of the season, the squad posted an 8-7 record featuring wins over Air Force and Wisconsin. With the dual schedule completed, the Panthers set their sights on the NCAA West Regional, held at the McLeod Center on March. 4.

UNI qualified five wrestlers for the NCAA Championships after its performances at the West Regional. As a team, the Panthers placed second behind Wyoming. Colon took the 133-pound title on a day that included two bonus-point victories. Wolfensperger was the tournament's big surprise, as he took his weight

class' only automatic qualifier spot as a no. 4 seed. Beale was the third Panther to take first place. Bonin (157) suffered his first loss in his last 13 matches, but fortunately that loss occurred after he had secured a spot at the NCAA Championships. Loder (184) also lost in his championship match, but he took the second automatic qualifier spot at 184 pounds with his runner-up finish.



David Bonin



Ryan Loder

The NCAA Championships were held in St. Louis. Of the five UNI qualifiers, redshirt sophomores Colon(133) and Loder(184) both ended their seasons one win away from a top eight finish. Loder won two wrestle-back matches before bowing out to Nebraska's Josh Ihnen in the fourth round. Colon lost his quarter-final and fourth-round wrestle-back matches to Illinois' B.J. Futrell and Virginia Tech's Devin Carter. Bonin (157) fell to Columbia's Jake O'Hara in his second-round wrestle-back match.

Underscoring Support for the Teams: The Teams Behind the Teams

James Kelly, Connie Hansen

In the Beginning

The athletic program began in the late 1870s beginning with football and moving on to other sports as they became popular. In those early days of athletics, the team had the moniker “Tutors.” Because ISNS and ISTC and SCI were always thought to be a teacher preparation institution, the name seemed to fit. One of, and maybe the first cheer adopted by the students of ISNS was found in the May 21, 1892 Normal Eyte, the campus paper at the time. It went like this: *Normalite! Normalite! Normalite! I! – We are all teachers, mighty fine creatures – Zip! Boom! Rye! – Normalite I!* How about that?

These chants weren’t called cheers in the early years; they were called “yells.” And, instead of cheerleaders, they had leaders of yells. Such was the case of Bob Lichty. The Normal Eyte noted that Mr. Lichty was elected to be the yell leader. “He is a new man, but he is brimful of enthusiasm and has had considerable experience as leader of yells. He will make our T.C. [Teacher’s College] cheers ring with new spirit and fresh vigor.”

Of course, not everyone was excited about sports and the yelling that went with it. E.J. Leonard in an 1898 Normal Eyte response regarding cheering or yelling at the sporting events wrote a rather condescending article. It went like this: “A college yell and other species of ridiculous heathenish howls seem to be a vent to explosive animal spirit which blows the cork from the bottle of enthusiasm with such an accumulation of heterogeneous conglomerated combinations of hideous, sepulchral, ear-piercing, razor-edged sounds as would awaken several generations of natives if there is any virtue in noise and clamor. This malady which, either by chance or the will of the immortal gods, has invaded our school is one of the relics of barbarism seeking to be retained in civilized society.” Maybe E.J. was just not a true fan of sporting activities.

But did the fans forgo such verbal attacks and attend the games anyway or did they have to be persuad-

ed to get with the action? It would appear the Normal Eyte staff did its best to get the student body to become viewers of the action on the field and in the bleachers. A Nov. 1, 1902 article points to this. It reads, “There is a lesson to be given this afternoon on the Normal campus by Captain Jones and ten assistants [this translates to the number of men playing on a football team at one time]. The lesson will probably be divided into two halves [the normal way in which a game is played] and two facts will be set forth – that Coe cannot score – that Normal can score. Original investigations have been made and the results will be given in public to all those paying 40 cents and retiring to the bleachers. If your head aches, if you have dizziness, or indigestion resulting in scolding your room-mate, growling at a short lesson of thirty pages [obviously some assigned homework], why, go to the game and be cured. ‘All work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy.’” [Now here’s a colloquialism that goes back a long time ago.]

It should be noted that cheer leaders or yell leaders and those that made up the group, were all men. The women may have yelled the loudest, but they did not get into the act of being the cheer leaders until World War II, when so many of the young men were tied up with military service. Along the way, ISTC had the “Roaring Forty”, a group of 40 young men who told the student council that they would be at all of the home athletic events and keep the team, as well as the crowd, in good spirits. In so doing, this group had special seating so they could sit together, a tradition that is carried on today and can be observed by the student section in the arenas where the good fight is fought.

But let’s get back to the name of the athletic teams. As the Tutors’ escapades were written up in one newspaper or another, other nicknames began to emerge, i.e. pedagogues and teachers. Why not give Iowa State Teachers College [the new school name as of 1926] a mascot which signifies something more dignifying of athletics? By now, Iowa State Teachers College had been participating in intercollegiate athletics on an organized basis for over 35 years with teams within and



A 1930 photo of the cheerleading squad made up of only men as was the custom at the time. Check out those fancy duds!



With the advent of World War II, women joined the cheerleading ranks. This 1947 group attests to this fact and Red Ellerston shows off one of their famous moves.



outside the state in baseball, football, basketball, and track and field.

So a contest was announced in the Sept. 8, 1931 College Eye to come up with a new name for the athletic teams. The College Eye announcement indicated that Paul Bender, acting head of the Department of Physical Education for Men; George Holmes, professor of Journalism; Robert Burley, president of the Student Council; and the sports editor of the College Eye would judge the entries. The winner would receive a leather brief-

case from the Berg Drug Company. Second place would get an alarm clock from Chase Jewelry and third place would get a season football pass.

In the end, it was Burl Berry, a center on the football team who submitted the winning entry; the Iowa State Teachers College athletics teams would be known as the Purple Panthers. The College Eye announced the winner and noted the characteristics of the panther that Berry said made it the appropriate name. "The sinuous grace and bestial ferocity of the panther make him one of the most savage and respected of the animals. He never leaps upon his prey without first sizing up the situation, and once he does strike, he seldom misses." And with the new name change, the Purple Panthers played their first game against Columbia College (now Loras College) on Sept. 26, 1931. Keith Stapley and Kenneth Erwin won second and third places respectively.

The students picked up on the new name with small purple and gold panther heads gracing the cover for the ISTC Homecoming dance. A stylized panther profile appeared in the 1938 College Eye, and Jack Stephenson, the art editor for the Old Gold used a two-dimensional Panther on the cover of the 1952 yearbook. A three-dimensional mascot personifying the nickname did not appear for some years to come.

There were first names given to the Panther. In an appeal for financial contributions, the alumni magazine, the *Alumnus*, said, possibly with tongue in cheek, that it believed the Panther's first name was actually Pericles, with "Perky" as a nickname.

The Panther mascot, as we know it today, is someone dressed in a costume. The first such individual to ever appear like that was at a January 1957 basketball game. The presence of the Panther was a hit and considered for a while as "Pepi" Panther. The nickname



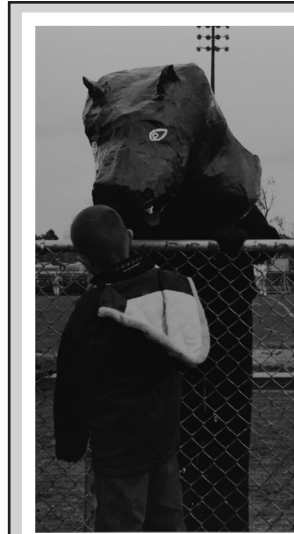
The first active Panther at a basketball game in the West Gym. The fans thought it was great to have a mascot. No poll was taken as to whether this was a good looking mascot though.

spelling was later changed to "Peppy."

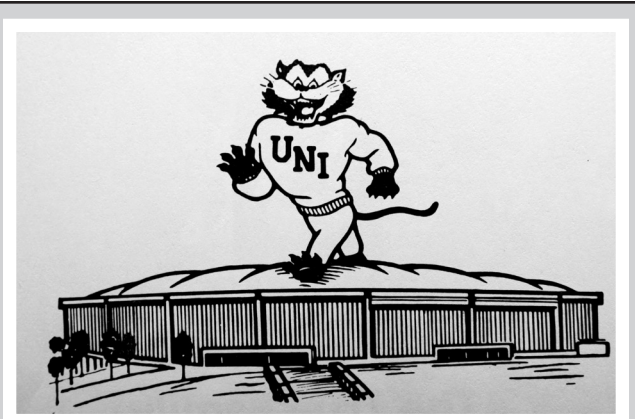
John Shannon, who wore the costume in 1960, was a very active mascot. He had played quarterback for the freshman team, but broke his thumb and was sidelined for the season. After attending several games as a spectator, he decided that the ISTC teams needed an active, outdoor mascot like Herky the Hawk and CY the Cyclone. He made a Panther head and raised the spirits at the last several regular season games with his antics.

The Pep Council was so impressed with Shannon's rousing display that it sponsored a brand new costume for the mascot to wear when the football team participated in the postseason Mineral Water Bowl. The suit was complete with tail, claws, a gold "I", and a new head all for the cost of, shall we say \$43.18, or some such figure under \$50.

The presence of the Panther was a hit and it continued to evolve in its looks. In 1973, the committee promoting the building of the UNI-Dome used a jaunty Panther striding across the proposed Dome roof



This might be John Shannon in his costume at a football game convincing a young man that he is helping the team towards a victory.



A more stylized Panther is used to help promote construction of the UNI-Dome.



A more realistic Panther. It is believed that this rendering may have established the idea that the Panther would be known as T.C., the initials for "The Cat."



Cheerleaders JoAnn Wilke and Mary Paulk putting the final grooming touches on "Peppy" – the Panther.

in pamphlets and other printed material. The mascot was becoming synonymous with UNI athletics.

Intercollegiate athletics, with the help from advertising agency Timmerman, Schreirs and Associates of Waterloo, put together a new marketing campaign in the middle 1980s, "Watch for the Cat." This campaign featured a more realistic Panther logo with a sleek, menacing appearance. Artist Tom Bookwalter designed a limited edition print of the new Panther in purple, gold and black in 1985.

The Panther icon has stood the test of time, but that doesn't mean there weren't moments when others thought that maybe there should be a different name, maybe one more synonymous with Iowa since there are no panthers in Iowa. Suggestions were given. Names like Unicorns (UNI and corn, our state's leading farm product), Campus Squirrels (there are squirrels running around campus but no panthers), or Corn Borers might be worth some level of consideration. Hmmm. Who were these naysayers?

The middle 1990s version of the Panther mascot did not please everyone; there always seemed to be critics. Some thought the lean, mean look should be replaced with a bulked up version. In 2001, the Panther, now curiously referred to as “Tommy Cat” instead of “The Cat” did bulk up a bit and did get involved with mascot competition that involved team mascots. By 2001 T.C. was ranked 12th in the nation among school mascots. In 2008 he placed fourth in overall performance for the University Cheerleading Association (UCA) College Mascot Championship and ended up seventh in national competition. The 2010 T.C. earned the “Best Up and Coming Mascot” award at the UCA Camp in Milwaukee.

How does one go about getting nationally recognized? To get to this level, a two-minute highlight video of the mascot’s community events and appearances, along with athletic appearances, has to be submitted. T.C., who wishes to remain anonymous, commented in a November 2003 Northern Iowan interview, “We had hours and hours of awesome footage with UNI fans. It was hard to choose, but the tape turned out great.”

Only a select few ever get to work with T.C. Known as T.C.’s Posse, this special group helps him throughout the year, and let it be known that T.C. enjoys doing what he does. The anonymity of his position allows him to create his own style without being self-conscious. He makes the point, “Very few people know I am the mascot. I can be crazy and it’s fun because no

one knows who I am. I can do anything I want.” But do we ever know who T.C. is?

When a mascot graduates, he or she might be revealed if you look carefully. The mascots are given the option of wearing T.C.’s or T.K.’s feet-paws underneath their graduation gown at commencement. This

One of the earlier Panthers was Justin Stockdale, who is now the director of Bremwood in Waverly, Iowa. Here’s what he had to say about being T.C.

“I got involved with T.C. when asked by one of the cheerleaders. To become T.C. then was really a word of mouth or who you knew type of thing. My brother, Matt, served for five years simply because he knew me. To be T.C., you have to have a desire to be an ambassador of good will and fun. It’s a huge time commitment and one that if approached with a light hearted sense of humor can allow you to really have fun and experience UNI. Being T.C. is all what you make of it. Wearing the mascot costume is extremely hot, which is why sometimes there will be a couple of students who serve as the mascot at the same time. I remember the days of taking off the costume and everything being drenched with sweat. It’s quite the workout!

“The best part about living as T.C. is the smiles you can bring to children and adults, young and old. Knowing you can make a positive impact and help strengthen the positive image of UNI in the community is very rewarding.”



T.C. can be the crazy cat that he is. His character is mischievous, curious, caring, and he loves to interact with Panther fans of all ages. He is a respectable role model for young Panther fans and will bring a smile to anyone who is around him.



The Panther (T.C.) as we know him today with his counterpart (T.K.) who does preside over some activities. T.K. is T.C.’s sister. She aspires to the gender equality issue. She’s shy, timid, and slowly becoming more and more curious. She is a caring Panther who loves to interact with Panther fans of all ages. She loves to be a role model for young Panthers and provide Panther spirit wherever she goes.

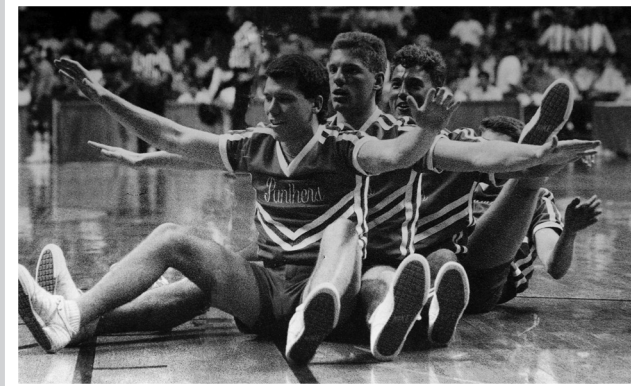
way they can be recognized for their dedication to the athletic program and to the University in front of their peers, faculty, staff, family and the UNI community.

Today’s mascot program exists to serve as an ambassador to the University through interactions with students, faculty, staff, alumni and the greater UNI community: by promoting school spirit, serving as a role model, providing entertainment, and performing with thoughtful and meaningful action.

The Cheerleaders, the Dance Team and the Bands; They do Make a Difference!

We know there have been cheerleaders/yell leaders since the early 1900s. It was considered to be a great opportunity to be chosen the one who would cheer on our team. The concept of cheerleading evolved over time from those who would lead yells to those who would provide more antics to the day or night of the games; such was the presence of the caterpillar. The caterpillar was a routine that became popular with a number of the men who aspired to embrace cheerleading with their antics. Everyone knew what was coming when they would come sliding out onto the floor and begin their piling gymnastics; the crowd always let them know that they liked their performance.

The cheerleaders of today are more acrobatic than actually what might be called leaders of cheers. They entertain while the game goes on and the demand-

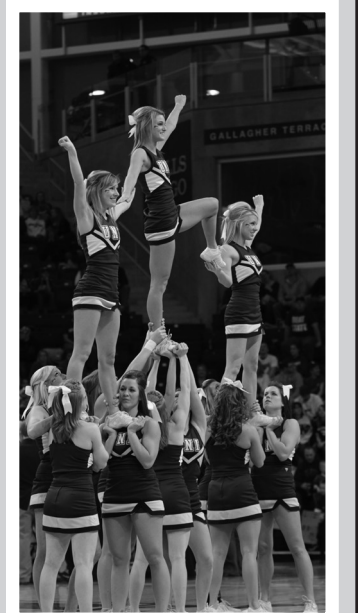


The caterpillar: Mike Reyhons, Mike Repp, Kirk Updahl and one hidden cheerleader performing the omnipresent caterpillar at the 1990 Mid-Continent Conference Tournament. The crowd loved it when these guys would rush onto the floor coming to a sliding halt. Everyone knew it was “the caterpillar.”



The 1973 Pom Pon squad wasn’t the beginning, but they are able to show off their look in this photo. The squad eventually evolved to a more dance routine group by the early ‘90s, as can be seen here performing with the UNI Marching Band at a football game in the Dome.

Cheerleaders practice as much as the teams, perfecting their acrobatic options they perform today. Young men are often part of the cheerleading team when they can be convinced to join the squad. In years past, there have been as many as seven and eight young men at one time. But the lack of men does not deter the UNI cheerleaders from performing acrobatic stunts with perfection.



The dance team performs throughout the game with precision. It requires hours of practice for it to do what it does. Fans are used to seeing the excellence that this team brings to the game floor and because of this, would probably not tolerate anything less.



is no question the help the team needed, at that time, was there because of the heroic antics of the cheerleaders getting the crowd to become that all important 12th player.

Everyone has their stake in the outcome of a game and one cannot discredit the value of any one individual, i.e., T.C., T.K. or the cheerleaders, or for that fact, the dance team.

The Dance Team was once the Pom Pon girls. Every bit as visible as the cheerleaders, this group did its own routines to help with the entertainment of the fans at athletic events. It is not clear when the Pom Pon girls were formed. Certainly the use of pom poms goes back to the '20s and '30s when cheerleaders used them as a highly visible part of the uniform they wore.

The dance team concept began to grow in the late '90s. Similar, yet different than the Pom Pon squads before them, the dance team choreographed dance to synchronized precision, and as a result, they have added an entirely different dimension to athletic events than their predecessors. The UNI dance team has been a major part of the athletic scene for many years. The team was rewarded as national champions in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

And let's not forget the marching band and the pep bands. They play a very important role with athletic events. How would we ever have a half-time performance at football games if it weren't for the band under the direction of their outstanding directors? And clearly, the Pep Band is the preferred choice to broadcast music at basketball games. Most of these players are not music majors, but students who have played with respective high school programs and love to share their talent. We all know the band members have a lot of fun; just watch the "tuba guys."

The Pep Band performs during the women's and men's basketball games. With a great sound, they help provide a super ambience.

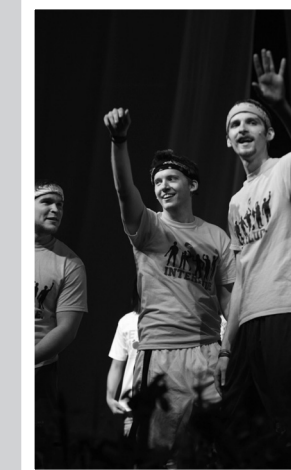


The 1999 Athletic Hall of Fame inductee Richard Seider is seen here celebrating homecoming with the spirit squad. Spirit squad now means cheerleaders, dance team and mascots. Richard was a 1947 graduate of ISTC.

ing hours of practice show as they display their routines. On some occasions, they have been the reason the crowd got into the game. The year was 1992. The Panthers were hosting Southwest Missouri State in an always very important football game. It was a packed house (only the third time for a sellout crowd) and the crowd was loud, but the team needed something more from the fans. One group of cheerleaders got on the east side of the Dome, while the rest got on the west side. Then the chant began. The cheerleaders goaded the east side crowd to yell "Go!" Then the west side would respond "Cats!" The rhythmical sound to that chant grew and grew and grew! The Panthers won the game and there



The Marching Band is made up of students with majors throughout the UNI gamut. They rehearse their moves and practice as a group throughout the football season. The sound they are able to generate and the pageantry offered by the choreographic flag team is always appreciated by the Panther fans.



(left) Tyler Wright, Ian Goldsmith and Scott Connerley, the creators of the dance to *The Interlude*.

(below) First Lady Michelle Obama, along with Governor Terry Branstad, show off their version of the fist-pump move to *The Interlude* along with 10,000 children at the Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines. Who would have thought that

three University of Northern Iowa students would attain international acclaim with six simple dance moves?

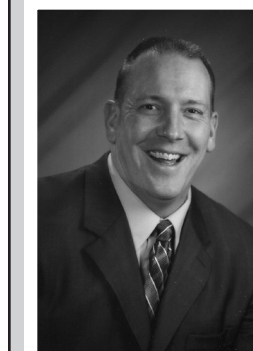


And then there's a crazy go lucky dance that everyone loves to perform -- *The Interlude*. Who would have thunk it? Something real quirky happened a couple of years ago when three good friends, Scott Connerley, Ian Goldsmith and Tyler Wright created a dance composed of six specific moves to the *Interlude* song by Attack Attack. The composition began in the dormitory and made its way to You Tube and UNI athletic events.

Popular isn't the right word to describe this, but to imagine a football game or a basketball game without a chance to dance *The Interlude*; it would be heresy. Word about this dance got out and the dance has found its way around the world. Iowa troops in Afghanistan performed it on the war front. Youth groups in South Africa performed it. A tribe of Maasai women from Tanzania performed it. And the Sam Castro 2012 photographs below serve as visual proof that First Lady Michelle Obama and Governor Terry Branstad were dancing it with 10,000 children at the Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines as a part of Mrs. Obama's "Let's Move" program tying into Iowa's Healthiest State Initiative.

Weight Training

The team would not be the team if it did not have Jed Smith and his weight training regimens designed for the athletes. While it is understood by sports fans that athletes do a lot of work in the weight room, even the golfers speak about it as a part of their training. UNI has one of the best weight training facilities under the careful guidance of one of the few Olympic credentialed coaches.



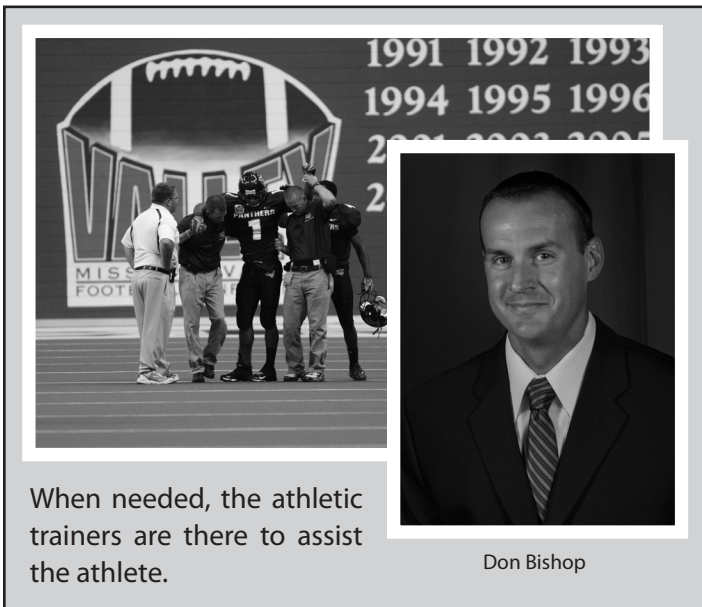
Jed Smith

The athletes go through a lot of weight training to keep up with the level of athletic competition.



Athletic Training

When the athletes are injured, they need to have the athletic trainers there to assist them and as fans will attest, they hurry to assist their athletes. Part of the athletes' time is spent before a game with taping and padding from previous injuries. Each taping is specific and each rehab is also specific to the injury. Under the direction of Don Bishop, the training room and program is at the highest level.



When needed, the athletic trainers are there to assist the athlete.

Don Bishop

The Team Behind the Team

As you have read through this book, whether it is from cover to cover or simply a chapter or two you need to be aware that there has been “a team behind the team.” Certainly, this chapter addresses those groups that support the action of the teams, but there is another team that needs to be introduced, for without it, a lot of what is now UNI athletics may not have happened.

In 1963, Stan Sheriff put forth an idea to form what was to be called “The Century Club.” In essence, it meant that people would donate \$100 to Panther athletics and the money would assist the program with its expenses. The first year, this club was able to give Panther athletics approximately \$6,000. The money was

to be used by athletics as it saw fit. The Century Club was then named the Athletic Club and later the Panther Scholarship Club.

The purpose for the Panther Scholarship Club hasn't changed since its beginning. Its stated mission is to raise funds in order to assist the athletic department in providing scholarship support for UNI's student-athletes. Today, the Club generates more than \$1 million in cash and \$500,000 in gifts-in-kind from supporters across the country. Funding support allows UNI to give student-athletes and coaches the additional resources necessary to compete at the highest levels in the classroom and on the playing surface.



Many who solicit funding from the patrons of Panther athletics, Merlin Taylor, Noreen Hermansen, and John Eveland are congratulated by Athletic Director Troy Dannen, for their part. These three are members of the Million Dollar Club having raised over one million dollars for Panther athletics.

As evidenced throughout this chapter, there is a history for underscoring support for athletics in many forms. Let's leave this section with a quote from the Aug. 31, 2010 Northern Iowan. “School spirit is not only supporting athletic teams, but supporting those students involved in national organizations and campus groups. Praise for one another is a great goal for all of us.” Oh so true. Go Panthers! Go UNI!

Appendix A

The University of Northern Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame

Throughout its history, the University of Northern Iowa has had many of its student-athletes, coaches and administrators excel to heights that would suggest they are candidates for “Hall of Fame” designation. The administrators, coaches, and young men and women who actively work and participate in athletics today, do so with the expectation that they will be successful and live up to the mark of excellence established by their predecessors; that they will personally demonstrate the passion that was evident from those who wore the purple and gold before them. Established in 1985, the University of Northern Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame honor has been bestowed upon the following individuals have been bestowed entrance fitting of their accomplishments.

1985 Charter Class

Dr. Eleanor Crawford	Athletic Administration	1949-79
A.D. Dickinson	Coach	1925-62
Bill Koll	Wrestling	1946-48
Gerald Leeman	Wrestling	1946-48
Dave McCuskey	Coach	1931-52
L.L. Mendenhall	Coach/Athletic Director	1921-60
O.M. “Hon” Nordly	Coach	1935-54
Bill Smith	Wrestling	1948-50
Clyde “Buck” Starbeck	Coach	1936-57
Lawrence “Mon” Whitford	Coach	1926-65
Dr. Jim Witham	Coach/Athletic Director	1956-70
Keith Young	Wrestling	1949-51

Class of 1986

Dick Beetsch	Football/Basketball/Baseball	1952-56
Finn Eriksen	Coach/Wrestling Official	1929-31
Ruby Miller	Softball/Athletic Admin.	1934-38
Stan Sheriff	Coach/Athletic Director	1960-83
Bill Weick	Wrestling	1952-55

Class of 1987

Bill Dotson	Wrestling	1961-63
Duane Josephson	Baseball/Basketball	1960-65
Bill Nelson	Wrestling	1947-50
Randy Schultz	Football	1963-65
Connie Shafar	Coach/Athletic Administrator	1965-69
Eddie Watt	Baseball	1959-66

Class of 1988

Loren Buser	Football	1963-65
George Dutcher	Football	1937-39, 45
James Jackson	Basketball	1958-61
Chuck Patten	Wrestling/Golf Coach	1957-60/1965-82
Patty Stockman	Softball	1973-77

Class of 1989

Dan Boals	Football	1959-62
Gene Lybbert	Wrestling	1948-52
Mike McCready	Wrestling/Track & Field	1970-72
Howard Pigg	Basketball	1950-55
Peter Spoden	Basketball	1959-64
Dr. Raymond Schlicher	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 1990

Dr. Wanda Green	Coach	1968-77
Larry McCready	Track & Field	1967-69
Jerry Morgan	Football	1959-60
Davis Natvig	Wrestling	1934-38
Charlie Pastorino	Football	1938-41
Wayne Duke	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 1991

August “Pudge” Camarata	Football	1942 & 1946
Wayne Carpenter	Track & Field	1967-70
Dr. Nancy J. O’Connor	Athletic Administrator	1955-57
Dennis Remmert	Football/Coach	1956-59/1964-88
Russ Smith	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 1992

George Asleson	Football	1959-60
Raymond Cheney	Wrestling	1933-37
Diane Braun Eckhardt	Field Hockey/Basketball/Softball	1972-76
Kelly Ellis	Football/Track & Field	1977-81
Bill Fowler	Swimming	1972-75
Norm Jespersion	Basketball	1947-50

Class of 1993

Burl Berry	Football/Track & Field	1928-32
Paul DeVan	Football	1945-49
Dr. Jane Mertesdorf	Coach	1970-78
Cecil Mott	Wrestling	1941-46

Class of 1994

James Fox	Football/Wrestling	1940-43
Jim Harmon	Wrestling	1951-54
Pauline Kelly	Golf	1982-85
Randy Krejci	Tennis	1973-76
Frederick "Curly" Steinkamp	Football	1939-42
Clare Rampton	Dr. Jitu Korhari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 1995

Carole Baumgarten	Coach	1966-70
Randy Kraayenbrink	Basketball	1982-86
Norm Stewart	Coach	1961-67
Wendell Williams	Football/Wrestling	1958-62

Class of 1996

Barbara Wahlstrom Carter	Field Hockey/Softball/Basketball	1974-77
Franc Freeman	Wrestling	1960-62
Paul Jones	Football	1935-37
Dr. Lewis Harned	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 1997

Bill Bergan	Track & Field	1960-65
Don King	Coach	1951-53
Jeanne Sutherland	Golf	1979-83
Steve Wright	Football	1977-81

Class of 1998

Barbara Bakker	Coach	1970-74
Carl Boyd	Football	1984-87
Jack Jennett	Coach	1962-75
Phil Minnick	Football	1961-65

Class of 1999

Kathy Shogren Fell	Basketball/Softball	1972-76
Kirk Myers	Wrestling	1978-82
Richard Seidler	Basketball	1941-46
Lee Wachenheim	Football	1947-51

Class of 2000

Lisa Geske Bluder	Basketball/Coach	1979-83
Russ Bush	Wrestling	1946-49
Don Erusha	Coach	1963-77, '83
Craig Knepe	Basketball	1963-66
Ruth Ann Meyer	Coach	1965-75
Dr. Darrell Mudra	Coach	1959-87
Elmer Kortemeyer	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2001

Mary Bernhardt	Volleyball	1984-87
Eugene "Bud" Fisher	Football	1948-50
Jill Fjelstul	Golf	1982-86
John "Jersey" Jermier	Athletic Administration	1980-2001
Jim Miller	Wrestling	1971-75
Bryce Paup	Football	1986-89
Bill Salmon	Football	1972-75
John Aldrich Sr.	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2002

Dr. Iradge Ahrabi-Fard	Coach	1981-2000
Lou Bohnsack	Basketball/Football	1949-53
Richard "Dick" Dotson	Track & Field/Coach	1958-61
Deb Drenth	Basketball	1980-83
Glen Henry	Coach	1966-81
Eldon Miller	Coach	1986-98
Kent Stephenson	Football/Coach	1961-64
Dr. Jack Wilkinson	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2003

Gary Bentrim	Wrestling	1974-78
Leroy Dunn	Football	1952-55
John Gregory	Football/Coach	1958-61
Bill Lawson	Track & Field/Coach	1975-80
Bobbi Petersen	Volleyball/Coach	1986-89
Dr. Lyle Schwarzenbach	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2004

Robert Bowsby	Athletic Director	1983-91
Kate Galer Hawkins	Volleyball	1993-97
Kara Galer Kimm	Volleyball	1992-96
James Jones	Football	1987-90
Dr. Peter Mazula	Coach	1965-93
Maynard Henderson	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2005

Brent Geringer	Track & Field	1976-79
Pat Mitchell	Football	1959-63
Schantel Twiggs	Track & Field	1990-94
Mike Woodley	Football	1970-74
Kaye Don Young	Wrestling	1954-59
Dr. Sandra Williamson	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2006

Jim Berry	Coach	1973-86
Maryellen McCann Durow	Volleyball	1984-88
Mike Smith	Football	1983-87
Ron Sturch	Track & Field	1954-58
Bill Smith	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2007

Roy Fielding	Swimming	1970-73
Ken Snyder	Wrestling	1973-76
John Raffensperger	Track & Field	1959-62
Krista Fosbinder	Softball	1986-89
Mike Timmermans	Football	1972-75
Dixon Riggs	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2008

Joe Fuller	Football	1982-85
Lynn King	Track & Field/Coach/Admin.	1966-84
John Martin	Basketball	1967-70
Kenny Shed	Football/Track & Field	1989-92
Tom Simpson	Baseball	1963-65
1977 Softball Team (<i>Won the National Championship over Arizona. Dr. Jane Mertesdorf - Coach</i>)		
Bob Beach	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2009

Don Briggs	Coach	1983-97
Lisa Miller	Golf	1978-82
Mark Onstott	Swimming	1971-75
Joey Woody	Track & Field	1993-97
1950 Wrestling Team (<i>Won the National Wrestling Championship. Dave McCuskey - Coach</i>)		
Nancy Justis	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2010

Joel Greenlee	Wrestling	1986-89
Molly O'Brien	Volleyball	2000-03
Lindsay Wood Stanford	Softball	1999-2002
Dedric Ward	Football	1993-96
1964 Football Team (<i>Won the Pecan Bowl over Lamar Tech 19-17. Stan Sheriff - Coach</i>)		
Lee Miller	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

Class of 2011

Ken Green	Coach	1971-95
Allison Starr Pohlman	Basketball	1997-2000
Jacob Pauli	Track & Field	1999-2001
Kevin Meacham	Swimming	1974-78
Gary Steffensmeier	Wrestling	1989-92
1989-90 Basketball Team (<i>NCAA post-season win over Missouri. Eldon Miller- Coach</i>)		
Dr. Chris Edington	Dr. Jitu Kothari Meritorious Service Award	

