

# athletics

## UPDATE FROM THE FIELD HOUSE

*Track and Field All-American, new men's basketball coach, All-HCAC honors, postseason play, and more*



*Sophomore Tim Pitro makes a play at second base.*

*by Seth Mikel, Sports Information Director*

### **BASEBALL**

The 2008 campaign was a season full of growing pains for a very young Yellow

Jacket squad. The roster featured 21 new faces, including 18 freshmen, and was led by first-year skipper Derek Woodley. Defiance opened the year with a 3-5 showing during its spring break trip to Port Charlotte, Fla.,

before struggling after heading back north.

The Jackets suffered some key injuries to an already thin pitching staff and ended 5-28 on the season. Despite the disappointing record, the 2008 season was not without highlights, many of which came from a pair of sophomore middle infielders who developed into two of the top hitters in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference during their second seasons with DC. Tim Pitro and Kirk Jesse anchored the Yellow Jacket lineup throughout the season en route to earning All-HCAC honors. Pitro batted over .400 through the first 28 games before ending with a team-best .361 clip. Along with posting the team's top batting average, Pitro also led the squad with a .475 slugging percentage and 26 runs scored. Jesse was one of Defiance's most improved hitters at the plate, blossoming under Woodley's watchful eye, and ending the season with a .295 average and 13 extra-base hits from his leadoff position. Jesse led the Jackets with 132 at bats, nine doubles, and three home runs, while setting new career highs in nearly every offensive category. Pitro and Jesse will look to lead Defiance back into contention for the HCAC Tournament in 2009 on a team set to return all of its starters. DC will also achieve a milestone in its first victory of the 2009 season, notching the 600th win in program history.

### **SOFTBALL**

The Defiance College softball team finished its season 24-18, its fifth consecutive season of 20 or more wins. The Jackets went through the HCAC Tournament unblemished on their way to the school's second HCAC Tournament title, earning a berth in the NCAA Regional Tournament. DC has won either the HCAC regular season or tournament title in three of the last four years. Defiance continued its stellar play in



*Aarika Davis*

the NCAA Regional Tournament, advancing to the NCAA Regional Final Four for the first time in school history. After a loss to nationally-ranked Ithaca College in the opening round of the double-elimination NCAA Regional Tournament, the Jackets rebounded with a 2-1 victory over Lebanon Valley College. DC continued to roll on in the tournament as Justine Johnston shutout No. 13 Ramapo College, 1-0, to help Defiance advance to the regional Final Four. The Jacket's season came to an end in the next round with a heartbreaking 1-0 loss to Rochester College. Three players earned All-HCAC honors following the season, led by HCAC Freshman of the Year Marah Robinson. The freshman led the team with a .375 average and seven homeruns, while also driving in 27 runs on the year. Mallory Faling and Johnston also earned All-HCAC honors for Defiance, as Faling hit .296 with five long balls and a team-high 29 RBI from her catcher position. Johnston earned All-HCAC honors for the third consecutive season, going 18-8 with a 1.69 ERA and five shutouts. The junior hurler was a three-time HCAC-Pitcher-of-the-Week honoree, while also being named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic

All-District IV Second Team and the NCAA Ithaca Regional All-Tournament Team.

### TRACK

The Defiance College track and field team had another outstanding season, led by several record breaking performances. This outdoor season saw five HCAC Champions, two HCAC Freshman-of-the-Year selections and three individuals reach NCAA provisional marks in their respected events. Both the men's and women's teams earned third-place finishes at the HCAC Championships meet with each team having its best championship meet performance since 2003.

Trevor Matuszak had a breakout season for DC, winning All-Ohio and HCAC titles in the hammer throw on his way to automatically qualifying for the NCAA Outdoor Championships. Brad Zarembski won his second consecutive conference high jump title, while also recording a NCAA provisional mark for

the second time in his short career at Defiance. Eric Swartz also recorded a NCAA provisional mark for the second-straight season, tallying 6080 points in the decathlon at the Gregory Invitational. Matt Fosnaugh cleared 13-09.25 to claim the HCAC pole vault title and edge teammate Austin Trivett, who was named HCAC Freshman of the Year after scoring in four different events at the HCAC Championships.

Holly Stein, a three-time HCAC Field Athlete of the Week, led the women's squad with 28 points in the championship meet. The Fort Recovery, Ohio native was named the HCAC's Most Outstanding Female Field Athlete, as well as earning HCAC Freshman-of-the-Year honors after winning both the discus and the javelin events. Emily Cole was the only other HCAC Champion on the women's team, clearing a school-record 9-08.00 to win the pole vault. Laura Derov and Alex Thiel were each named All-HCAC

Honorable Mention after scoring more than 16 points in the championship meet.

### MEN'S GOLF

One year after restarting the men's golf program, Defiance College began taking the next step towards becoming a successful team in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference picture. The Jackets made strides in that department in 2008, competing in seven spring tournaments and improving their total score in the HCAC Tournament by 55 strokes over 2007. One major reason for the strong improvement was the addition of a trio of freshmen to the program. Jace Neal, Aaron Konold and Josh Calame joined seniors Cody Anderson and Craig Holman in leading the Yellow Jackets this season. Neal and Konold combined to turn in DC's top finish in the first five events of the year, before Anderson led the way at the ONU Invite and HCAC Tournament to close his collegiate career. With another strong recruiting class, DC's men's golf program could be on the verge of making its presence felt around the Heartland Conference in the very near future.

### MEN'S TENNIS

The 2008 men's tennis team was one of nine Defiance College athletic programs to experience a taste of postseason play, as the



*Austin Kleman*

Jackets posted a 4-4 mark in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference and entered the HCAC Tournament as the No. 5 seed. On the season, DC's nine wins marked the team's second-highest win total in the past five seasons. The Jackets were led on the court by Tim Kurtz who picked up 12 wins at the top singles position en route to earning All-HCAC honors for the third-straight year. Kurtz was one of four players to record double-digit win totals in singles competition, as Austin Kleman, Adam Fausey and Lachmond Bratton all accomplished the feat as well. That group combined to help Defiance post a 16-14 record at the top four singles slots in conference action. Other season highlights included Kleman being named as the HCAC Player of the Week on April 21 and team victories over Adrian, Bluffton, Manchester and Anderson. ♦



## Brumett Named Men's BB Coach

Defiance College has hired Kyle Brumett as its new head coach for the men's basketball program.

"I am elated that Coach Brumett has accepted the position," Athletic Director Dick Kaiser stated. "I believe his personality and his basic coaching philosophies are a great match for the players that are currently in the program."

Kaiser added, "Coach Brumett comes from a blue collar background and knows what hard work is all about. I know he is going to roll up his sleeves and get after it the minute he walks on the DC campus. There is no doubt in my mind that he will have success at Defiance College. Fortunately for us, I believe that we have caught another rising star that will make a solid impact on the men's basketball program, the College and the community as a whole."

Brumett, who was selected out of a pool of over 160 candidates, will come to Defiance after leading his Lakeland College squad to a 33-22 record and a 2008 Northern Athletics Conference Tournament championship during his two-year tenure with the Muskies.

Along with his time as the Lakeland head coach, Brumett has also worked the sideline as an assistant for DePauw, Southern Indiana and Hanover and has 11 years of collegiate coaching experience.

"I would not have left Lakeland without a special opportunity, which is exactly what I feel DC has provided," Brumett said.

Brumett will be taking over a Yellow Jacket team which won the HCAC regular season championship and advanced to its second-straight HCAC title game. Defiance has won 36 games over the past two seasons and will lose only two seniors as it looks toward another strong campaign in 2008-09.

"I really embrace attempting to work harder than my competition. That is a philosophy that I will bring with me and implement with this team." Brumett stated.

He and his wife, Steffanie, have a year-old son, Leon Maxwell.

## Matuszak Named Outdoor All-American



Trevor Matuszak's second-place finish at the 2008 NCAA Outdoor Championships in the hammer throw helped him garner Division III Outdoor All-American honors. The senior becomes Defiance's eighth All-American selection, marking the second consecutive season that a DC athlete has earned such a distinction. His eight points in the meet led the Jackets to a 37th-place finish.

Matuszak threw 189-06.00 on his fourth throw to take the lead, before Mark O'Connell of St. Thomas over-

took that lead with a toss of 191-00.00 on his final attempt to win the event.

The NCAA Outdoor Championships wraps up a spectacular final campaign for Matuszak. It's been a great experience representing Defiance College this season," Matuszak said. "I've tried to embody the school's spirit of sportsmanship, while competing to the best of my abilities."

Matuszak became Defiance's eighth track & field All-American. The Ottawa Lake, Mich. native also earned All-American honors at the 2008 NCAA Indoor Championships, while breaking DC's weight throw record at the meet with a toss of 62-02.25. He shattered his own school record in the hammer throw at the Billy Hayes Invitational, recording the top throw in the nation this season with a toss of 196-06.00.