

MSSU Athletics Report

1. Sport Program Reports

- a. **Baseball** – (40-14) The MSSU baseball team won the MIAA regular season and conference tournament championships this season. The team finished the season ranked 24th nationally and qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the second time in the last three years. The Lions had eight players named All-MIAA, including Cody Hutchinson who was named the MIAA Pitcher of the Year. Coach Bryce Darnell was also named the MIAA Coach of the Year. The Lions also had four All-Region players and three named All-America.
- b. **Softball** - (15-37) - The Lions softball team finished the season 15-37 and had four named All-MIAA. The team also broke a MSSU single-game record with six home runs in a game against Rogers State.
- c. **Track and Field** – the MSSU men's and women's track and field teams concluded the season recently with a successful run at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships. The Lions' men recorded four All-America performances, while the women had two All-America performances. Both programs were ranked as the top overall program in the MIAA, while the men were ranked as the 7th-best program in Division II and the women were ranked as the 11th-best in Division II.

2. MIAA News:

- a. Rachel Burleson is representing MSSU on the MIAA Strategic Planning Committee. The 2015 MIAA Strategic Plan has been approved. Currently, the committee has assigned and prioritized the time line for the implementation process. The committee is meeting in person in Kansas City today to monitor progress and make adjustments.
- b. An agenda item is scheduled for the AD's to have time to discuss Football Conference Affiliation

3. NCAA News:

- a. At the National level there is discussion about changes to women's basketball including a significant shift to quarters versus two half's. Stay tuned to see if the changes are approved by the NCAA.
- b. During the NCAA National Convention in Washington, D.C. a new moniker was voted in for Division II. The moniker *Make It Yours* will be implemented Fall 2015.

4. Athletic Department Information:

- a. Academic Success- Overall the following numbers were recorded by the MSSU Athletic Department: With 350 student-athletes, 178 had a GPA of a 3.0 or higher, 79 carry a 3.5 or higher and 19 have perfect 4.0 marks. The Lions had 178 MIAA Academic Honor Roll members; 23 earned Academic All-MIAA distinction and 17 were MIAA Presidential Scholar Winners.
- b. State Farm Trophy Series Update - The athletic department won the State Farm Trophy Series with Pittsburg State for the fourth time in the seven-year series run.
- c. Recognitions and Competitive Success-
 - i. The MSSU athletic department had 77 All-MIAA athletes, 30 All-Region, 13 All-America and seven Academic All-America.
 - ii. The men's and women's cross country coaches were the MIAA Coaches of the Year. Both cross country teams won the MIAA Championship.
 - iii. The Baseball team was the MIAA Regular Season and Tournament Champion, while the team had the MIAA Coach of the Year and Pitcher of the Year.
 - iv. The track and field teams had 23 athletes qualify for NCAA Championships, while both Cross Country teams qualified for nationals.

- v. The golf team had a regional qualifier, while the baseball team qualified for the NCAA Tournament.
- d. Free admission to kids for all MSSU home contests- The athletic department will be implementing free admission for kids 12 and under to all MSSU sporting events this upcoming season. We are confident that we will see gains in overall attendance and concessions sales with this policy, and will make for a positive game-day experience for families with multiple young children.
- e. Roary's Cub Club- With the redistribution of duties, Nathan will be overseeing Roary's Cub Club during the upcoming season. We are currently rebranding the Cub Club and coming up with gifts and incentives to encourage parents to sign up their kids.
- f. Concessions- We are working closely with our Athletics Concessions Coordinator to come up with a new pricing strategy for our concessions menu. This includes new prices; new concessions hardware including signage, boards, Square devices and registers; as well as combo meal items.
- g. Sports Broadcasting schedules- We have talked to KGCS about the upcoming sports schedule next year, including in-house commercials during our broadcasts and supplying a student to work the video board for basketball games and special events. They said a student worker would be the best route, and they would think of students who they consider to be a good fit for the position. We will pay for this student worker through athletics.
- h. Ticketing- will stay with our current ticketing vendor, ExtremeTix, for the 2015-2016 season. After communicating with several ticketing vendors (University Tickets, Vendini, TicketReturn, Glitnir, Tickets.com). We believe ExtremeTix to make the most financial sense with our current budget.

5. **Lionbacker Annual Campaign:**

- a. Adjustments are being made to structure of the campaign due to the departure of Kate Mata. We want to thank the foundation and the development office for assisting in the transition.
- b. With our campaign for this year, all of our head coaches will be receiving a list of Lionbackers to call to thank for their support, answer questions, and talk to them about renewing. Then starting in May and June, the Membership Committee will take on the job of making the next wave of renewal calls. Our goal is to really focus on upping our renewal rate this year along with growing the membership.
- c. The brochures have been mailed out to all the previous year's Lionbackers.

6. **Recent Events:**

- a. 110% Club Event – Sunday April 26th at 2pm – snacks and refreshments were provided in the Football Dome. Coach Denver Johnson spoke to the members of our 110% Club to give insight into how spring practices are going and his general plans for our football program.
- b. Student Athlete Awards Banquet – Monday May 4th – Male Athlete of Year Finalist include: Jeffrey Fraley, Darion Boure, Giresse Forchu, Chris Hoffman and Ryan Buerk; The winner was Chris Hoffman. The Female Athlete of the Year finalists included Callie Whetstone, Emily Harris, Nik Hartzog and Ronise Miller. The winner was Callie Whetstone. EO and Virginia Humprey winner was Jeffrey Fraley while the other finalists were Nik Hartzog, Sydney Potts and Ryon Phillips. For a complete list of other award winners see attached Press Release.

7. **Upcoming Events:**

- a. Lionbacker Annual Campaign – May through middle July
- b. LaFerla Fundraising Event for Football – June 11th – Dr. Mike and Bre LaFerla are hosting an event in conjunction with MSSU Athletics at their house as they did last year for our Men's Basketball Program. Tickets will be \$100 and will include your dinner and drinks (beer and wine included). All proceeds will

go towards the football program.

c. SouthernFest 2015

- i. Dinner/Auction at Downstream Casino – Thursday July 30th
- ii. Rod Smith Green & Gold Golf Classic – Friday July 31st

8. Athletic Facility Updates:

- a. **North End Zone Facility Project:** See Rob Yust, Vice President of Business for updated and detailed report.
- b. **Fred G. Hughes Stadium Turf Project:**
 - i. The old turf has been removed from the field at the football stadium. Fixing the drainage that was underneath the turf is the next step before putting down the new turf that has been designed. The project is expected to be down before August assuming everything progresses well.
 - ii. An RFP and the bids are currently under review for a Lionbacker entertainment Deck known as the LaFerla Ortho Deck Zone.
- c. **Leggett & Platt:**
 - i. We have quotes for new basketball goals. We have no back-up goals, so if something were to happen to one of our goals or backboards during a game, we would not have a good contingency. We have currently received a quote from three companies including Spalding. Spalding is the supplier of backboards/goals for Pitt State and Missouri State, and was requested by both MSSU men's and women's head basketball coaches.
 - ii. We are still examining the cost of more useful lighting for pre-game introductions and other special events.
- d. **Young Gym:** The renovation of the floor in Young Gym has been approved. It will take place this summer and will start after our Sports Academy and be finished before our summer volleyball camps. The renovation is slated to begin June 8th and be done before July 20th
- e. **Warren Turner Field/Baseball Stadium:** The Joplin Outlaws season began at Warren Turner Field this past Saturday, May 30th. The season will go through July 14th. MSSU has a sponsored day with the Outlaws on July 10th where all faculty/staff can attend the game for free.