

UIS Notes: Basketball season starts later for Prairie Stars

By **MARCIA MARTINEZ**

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In past years, basketball season already would have tipped off for the University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars.

The program's move to NCAA Division II from the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics has pushed the first day of men's and women's basketball practice to Thursday.

"It starts a little later than NAIA," UIS men's basketball coach Kevin Gamble said. "NAIA started practicing Oct. 1, whereas we're starting Oct. 15."

The later start date allows Gamble and his staff more time to prepare for Thursday morning's practice.

"We've just been conditioning the past month, putting together practice schedules and talking about the way we want to play as far as talent," Gamble said. "From what I see right now, we're going to be a guard-oriented team. We had a bit more size last year."

Senior guard Richard Oruche is the Stars' leading returning scorer (11.7 points per game last season). UIS lost five of its top six scorers from last season's 21-9 squad.

New coach, same players

Since becoming a first-time head coach, one subject has occupied the thoughts of new UIS women's basketball coach Marne Fauser.

"I think about recruiting 24/7," she said.

She was hired in May after the early and late signing periods had passed. Before arriving at UIS, Fauser was director of women's basketball operations at Bradley. She was an assistant coach at NCAA Division II Truman State for eight seasons prior to her one-year stint at Bradley.

Fauser has made just one addition to the UIS roster. She signed 6-foot-1 forward and Kankakee Community College transfer Paulina Pogorzelski.

Fauser's transition has been made easier with UIS returning 10 players from last season.

"It's going to be a little different in a sense," Fauser said. "They're all going to be learning a new system.

"There are different ways to coach. Some of the things I'm asking them to do are things they haven't done before."

The women's basketball team is in the opposite situation of its male counterparts. Three of the Stars' top four scorers are back, including top returnee Erin Glogovsky. She averaged 9.1 points for 8-23 UIS last season.

Goals wanted

Pete Kowall sees himself right now as the UIS women's soccer coach and a mad scientist.

Kowall is searching for a formula that will fix the Stars' offensive woes. UIS has yet to score a goal in a Great Lakes Valley Conference match.

GLVC opponents have outscored UIS 40-0 in nine games.

Injuries and illness have contributed to the lack of offense, according to Kowall. He was encouraged by what he saw Sunday in a 9-0 loss to Northern Kentucky.

"Against Northern Kentucky, we created some offense on corner kicks, which we hadn't done against other teams," Kowall said. "We've tried to improve on creating offense when we have corner kicks. We're trying to find ways to create goals.

"We do pretty well on restarts, but we don't get many and we don't have a way to show that."

UIS (2-9 overall, 0-9 in the GLVC) is on the road tonight against Indianapolis, the No. 15 team in the National Soccer Coaches Association of America Division II national poll.

Making offensive strides

The UIS men's soccer team has scored just two goals in nine GLVC matches, but coach Joe Eck has noticed a recent boost in the offense.

"You wouldn't know it by the goals, but we're creating a lot more chances," he said. "Over the last three weeks, we're getting into a much better rhythm, especially in the midfield and we're getting the ball up top. (Brian) Doellman has really picked up his play up top.

"We don't have any true strikers. Most of the players are midfielders and are creating good chances."

UIS (1-9-1, 0-8-1) faces Indianapolis tonight.

Player suspended

UIS senior soccer player Alex Bishop has been suspended indefinitely, according to Eck.

Bishop was arrested Saturday in connection with an incident that authorities are calling a hate crime. The Sangamon County state's attorney's office charged Bishop on Monday with a hate crime, criminal damage to property of more than \$300 and battery and resisting a police officer.

Marcia Martinez can be reached at 788-1547.

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