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Prairie Stars decide to pass on football in D-II conference

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The Great Lakes Valley Conference is expanding its sports program by adding football with the inaugural season slated for 2012.

The University of Illinois Springfield Prairie Stars, who are new to the GLVC and NCAA Division II, will not be among the league's football-playing schools. UIS is "absolutely not" starting a football program, athletic director Rodger Jehlicka said Tuesday.

"It will not happen," Jehlicka said.

William Jewell College is scheduled to join the GLVC in 2011-12. That gives the conference six football-playing schools and enough to sponsor a sport. Kentucky Wesleyan, Missouri S&T, Quincy, Saint Joseph's and Indianapolis are the other schools with football programs.

Because there are just six GLVC schools with football, Jehlicka said the conference is looking to possibly add "a couple schools in Ohio" as affiliate members. That means they would compete in the GLVC solely in football.

Even though UIS will not have a football team, the Stars still could benefit.

"It makes your conference a more viable conference throughout the country when you offer football," Jehlicka said.

The GLVC Council of Presidents already has approved a timeline for adding football. The 2012 schedule most likely will be adopted at the GLVC Spring Meeting in St. Louis May 24-26.

Men's and women's indoor track and field was the most recent sport added by the GLVC in 2000.

Marcia Martinez can be reached at 788-1547.

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Ol Roy

6 hours ago

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this is why UIS will always be a mickey mouse sports program, jeers to the prairie stars

Spiral Cut Ham

5 hours ago

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Look, Ol Roy, this is disappointing, but not tragic. Why would UIS want to sink money into yet another athletic program? UIS is the Harvard of central Illinois (okay, that's a stretch), but they have always been very academic oriented. Don't waste the money!

thatguy

44 minutes ago

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To bad UIS could probably produce a very good football team. A lot of talent in this area go elsewhere. Recruiting would be the key.
IllinoisBiz
16 minutes ago
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Too much to start a program. You need about 1 mil minimum on an annual to sustain a program. Maybe UIS will add this in the future, but for now makes no sense.
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