

## Student-Athlete of the Week: **Jessica Kinzler**, Eastern University

for games November 2 - 8, 2015



Eastern University junior forward, Jessica Kinzler, is our Student-Athlete of the Week. On the field, Kinzler is noted for her clever stick skills and elusive speed. She led the Eagles in goals, assists, and points and notched a team-high four game-winners. Eastern wrapped up their season with an impressive record of 13-5; they dropped in the MAC Conference Finals. The Eagles climbed the ranks to #19 among NCAA Division III teams in late October. Kinzler led a balanced attack that notched an average of 2.5 goals per game and saw ten players register goals. For her stellar performance, Kinzler was named to the MAC All-Conference Second Team.

Equally impressive – if not more – is Kinzler’s star performance in the classroom. The junior will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Middle Level Education this December after only two-and-a-half years.

“I dedicate a lot of my time to my studies. As of right now, I am planning on graduating a year and a half early, student teach in the spring at the grad level, and continue on next year to earn my masters degree in Multicultural Education while playing hockey,” shared Kinzler. “I have a huge support system here at school with my teammates, friends, and coaches pushing me to do the best that I can, but I could not have been so successful in the classroom without my parents. They have really pushed me to my full potential everyday in the classroom and on the field.”

Kinzler was able to accelerate her degree at Eastern – all the while carrying a 3.644 GPA – in part because of the college credits she earned while in high school and summer course work.

In addition to her heavy academic load and field hockey commitments, Kinzler said she spends a lot of time with her family. “My family and I are very active in the church, where we will be spending time making Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for those less fortunate very soon.”

Kinzler added: “This year has been amazing. My teammates and I have worked extremely hard to get back to the playoffs and we did just that. This year may not have ended the way any of us wanted it to, but we grew together and we played hard together, and together, we learned a lot about the sport and about ourselves.”

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## Team of the WEEK: West Chester University

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Our team of the week is West Chester University. Last week, the Golden Rams advanced their overall record to 16-4, secured a #3 national DIII ranking, placed six players on PSAC All-Conference Team, and secured a #3 seed in the NCAA DII National Tournament. Not a bad week at all.

And, if last week's week is any indication, the Rams are on the upswing and peaking at the right time. In game one of last week, the team overpowered Kutztown, beating them 6-1; earlier in the season they posted a marginal victory of 1-0. Also last week, West Chester lost a highly competitive game to #1 East Stroudsburg University, 3-1; earlier in the season they were held goalless in an 0-4 match.

West Chester has been ranked in the top four of Division III teams throughout the season; in last week's poll, they stood at #3 in both the RPI and NFCA Coaches Poll.

Also last week, six West Chester players earned PSAC honors including Kristina Scheerer, who was named Defender of the Year. Joining Scherrer on the first team all-league squad are senior midfielder Alexis Versak (Spring-Ford), junior forward Marnie Kusakavitch, and junior midfielder Dayle Paustian. Sophomore forward Rachal Toppi was a second-team selection while junior back Nikki Bennett was a third-team choice.

The Golden Rams will travel to second-seeded Millersville (18-2) on Saturday Nov. 14. It marks the fifth straight year in which West Chester has been picked to participate in the NCAA Tournament since re-classifying to Division II.

"The key to success, I believe, is hard work that is honestly put in before the season even begins. When your talent works hard, you have the ability to be very successful as a team," shared Head Coach Amy Cohen. "The goal for the post season is to win a few more games! Every team obviously sets out to win a national championship each year and we are 3 wins away from that. To be in this position for 5 straight years has been an honor and a privilege for our program. We are excited about competing this weekend."

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## Attacker of the Week: **Meredith Ross**, Conestoga High School

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Conestoga forward Meredith Ross had a stellar week – the kind that she’ll remember for a while. The junior notched two goals and an assist in the #5 Pioneers 5-1 upset victory over #3 Central Bucks West in the District One Playback game. The win secured Conestoga as third place in Districts and set them up for a higher position in States. Earlier in the week, Ross scored one of the two team’s goals versus top-seeded and undefeated Unionville in District semi-finals.

Ross is ranked #7 in average goals scored per game (1.57) among all Phila-area high school players. She comes in at #10 in points (3.61). She is committed to play NCAA Division I field hockey for Michigan State, a member of the Big Ten, beginning fall 2017.

In addition to playing Conestoga field hockey, Ross is a member of the USA Women’s National U17 Team, a Junior Olympic Gold Medalist, and a member of WC Eagle FHC.

“Meredith is a consistent contributor for the Conestoga Pioneers,” shared Megan Smyth, Head Coach. “She sets the bar high for our attack, working extremely hard on and off the ball. She is our leading goal scorer for the Pioneers and is a team player with a true passion for the game.”

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## Defender of the Week: Colleen Kearney, Academy of Notre Dame

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On a team with shining offensive stars and mighty midfielders, a defender can sometimes be overshadowed. Not the case for Colleen Kearney.

Kearney, our Defender of the Week, plays right back for the Academy of Notre Dame and has been a solid contributor to the team's 13-3 record. Last week, the Irish posted a 2-0 record, allowing only one goal, in Inter-Ac League play with games versus Germantown Academy (8-1 win) and William Penn Charter (6-0 win). The junior defender was steady and unwavering.

More so, Notre Dame's only losses this season were to Episcopal Academy (#4 national ranking) and Villa Maria (2014 PIAA AA State Champions). Kearney and her fellow defenders have been integral in the team's defensive prowess and overall success.

"Colleen continues to be a key player in our defensive unit. She has been consistent throughout the season making some key defensive saves," shared Notre Dame Head Coach Adele Williams "She is extremely poised and instrumental in breaking up plays."

Williams notes that Kearney's dedication to the sport she loves is evident and contagious. "Colleen plays with a great amount of passion and that can be seeing each time she steps on the field whether it is practice or a game."

At Notre Dame, Kearney has been involved with Respect Life, Speak Up and school community service. She is a member of WC Eagles FHC and is interested in continuing her field hockey career in college.

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