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How hometown gunslinger Clint Trickett emerged as Geno's successor at WVU

BY CODY NESPOR

CNespor@DominionPost.com

The 2013 college football season was West Virginia's second in the Big 12, but in a lot of ways it was the beginning of a new era for the Mountaineers.

WVU moved to the Big 12 in 2012, but still had the players who led them in the Big East — Geno Smith, Tavon Austin and Stedman Bailey. It wasn't until 2013, when all three were drafted into the NFL, that the Mountaineers began to take on a new identity in their new conference.

There would be no replacing Austin and Bailey, two of the most-electric play-makers in the history of WVU, but the search was on for who would succeed Smith, the team's all-time leading passer,

under center.

The three options entering the 2013 season were junior Paul Millard, freshman Ford Childress and Florida State transfer Clint Trickett. Millard and Childress both started a pair of games to start the season, but on Sept. 28, 2013, Trickett, who was raised in Morgantown, showed that he would be the man to succeed Smith.

"After losing Geno and Stedman and Tavon, we were kind of trying to figure out who we were," Trickett said during an interview with The Dominion Post this summer. "Especially on the offensive side of the ball."

The Mountaineers were limping into

SEE TRICKETT, I-4



Ron Rittenhouse/The Dominion Post

West Virginia's Clint Trickett (9) takes a snap during the team's game against Oklahoma State on Sept. 28, 2013, in Morgantown. The Mountaineers won 30-21 in Trickett's first start as a Mountaineer.

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TRICKETT

FROM PAGE I-2

week five of the 2013 season following a 37-0 defeat at Maryland, during which Childress suffered an injury. Trickett was told on the trip back to Morgantown that he would be starting the following week against No. 11 Oklahoma State.

"It was right after the Maryland game," Trickett recalled. "Ford got injured and Paul had his shot a little earlier, so they told me it was my time. I knew it was coming."

Returning to Morgantown

Trickett grew up in Morgantown while his father, Rick Trickett, was the offensive line coach under Rich Rodriguez.

"I was raised there from second grade through the second year of high school," Trickett said. "That's home."

Trickett moved to Florida to finish high school when his father was hired at Florida State in 2007. Trickett graduated from North Florida Christian High School in 2010 and had a number of college offers, but none from his hometown WVU.

"You go to high school, you win some state championships, you get highly recruited, but West Virginia doesn't want

to recruit you because you don't fit their offense," Trickett said. "It's not like it was a personal thing. I'm slow as s*** so I shouldn't have been recruited by them."

Trickett signed with Florida State, where he served as a backup for three seasons, appearing in 17 games and making two starts.

Not seeing a path to being the Seminoles' starter, Trickett graduated as quickly as he could so he could transfer elsewhere. Knowing he would fit in Dana Holgorsen's offense, Trickett wanted to go to WVU.

"Once Dana got in there and the offense fit me, then it was just a dream come true," Ticket said. "I graduated as soon as I could to get up there."

Preparing for the first start

Trickett was excited when Holgorsen told him he would be starting against the Cowboys, but that excitement was muted a bit as Trickett was still trying to master the Mountaineers' playbook.

"I had only started two games at Florida State and I knew I was the backup there so I'm now, finally, at my school and it's finally my shot," Trickett described. "You'd think that would be at the fore-

SEE TRICKETT, I-6



AP Photo

Florida State's Clint Trickett (9) and quarterback EJ Manuel (3) leave the field following Florida State's 17-16 loss to NC State in Raleigh, N.C. on Saturday, Oct. 6, 2012. Trickett transferred to West Virginia in the offseason.

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TRICKETT

FROM PAGE I-4

front of your mind, but really I was so far behind in the offense that that's all I was worried about."

Back then the NCAA's transfer rules were much stricter than they are today. The only reason Trickett was eligible to play in 2013 and not forced to sit out was because he already had his degree from Florida State and was a graduate transfer. He couldn't come in early and work all summer — he had to learn the offense in the few weeks of fall camp.

"There was a reason I was third (on the depth chart)," Trickett said. "Back then you couldn't work out over the summer with the coaches so I was just picking it up in fall camp. That offense is all about reps."

Trickett wasn't exactly easing into the starting job, either. The No. 11 Cowboys were 3-0 heading into Morgantown, outscoring their opponents, 136-41.

Slow start

Trickett's fears about not mastering the playbook showed up early in the game against Oklahoma State. The Mountaineers' first four possessions saw Trickett go 2-for-7 for just 10 yards and an interception. Oklahoma State scored on its second drive of the game to grab an early 7-0 lead.

Luckily for Trickett, his defense had his back that day as Ishmael Banks grabbed an interception of his own and returned it 58 yards for a game-tying pick-six.

"The defense played phenomenal that game," Trickett recalled. "They definitely helped me out."

A couple of series later, Trickett finally started to find his groove. An eight-play, 70-yard drive ended with Trickett throwing a 17-yard touchdown to Kevin White to take a 14-7 lead.



AP Photo

West Virginia's Ishmael Banks (34) reaches over the goal line for a touchdown after returning an interception 58 yards for the score during the first quarter of a game against Oklahoma State in Morgantown on Sept. 28, 2013.

SEE TRICKETT, I-7

TRICKETT

FROM PAGE I-6

"I was able to connect on a fade ball to Kevin," Trickett said, "and that's really when everything clicked."

Holding the lead

Isaiah Bruce recovered an Oklahoma State fumble at the beginning of the second quarter, setting up a 45-yard field goal for Josh Lambert that put WVU up 17-7. Cowboys quarterback J.W. Walsh threw a 27-yard touchdown on the next possession and Trickett was intercepted on the ensuing drive, and it started to look like things might be slipping away from the Mountaineers.

Oklahoma State couldn't produce anything off of the turnover, however, and Trickett struck right back. A 40-yard completion to Mario Alford set up a one-yard rushing touchdown by Charles Sims that put WVU up 24-14.

Sims ran for 60 yards and a touchdown against Oklahoma State and also caught five passes for 82 yards. On the year, the senior ran for 1,095 yards with 401 receiving yards and scored 14 total touchdowns.

"If we didn't have Charles Sims I don't

SEE TRICKETT, I-10



AP Photo

West Virginia running back Charles Sims (3) rushes for 25 yards in the third quarter of a game against Oklahoma State in Morgantown, W.Va., on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2013. Sims finished with 142 totals yards and a touchdown in the victory.

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TRICKETT

FROM PAGE I-7

think we win any games that year,” Trickett said of his then-roommate. “He was the guy that made that team go for sure.”

OSU missed a field goal as time expired in the first half, but Walsh threw another touchdown to open the third quarter to pull back to 24-21.

From there, the defenses dominated, forcing 12-straight stops with three missed field goals and nine punts.

“Back then, supposedly all the Big 12 had bad defenses,” Trickett said. “No, they were just doing the offenses that everyone’s doing now. It was so ahead of its time that everyone thought the defenses struggled. It’s just the offenses were that good.”

Playing Hurt

Oklahoma State was only credited with one sack in the game, but the Cowboys’ defense was getting after Trickett. Driven to the ground at least a dozen times throughout the game, it was a failed screen pass at the start of the fourth quarter that finally knocked Trickett out of the game.

Setting up a screen to the right, Trickett was tackled by Emmanuel Ogbah, coming down hard on his right shoulder.

“Going into the fourth quarter we were backed up,” Trickett recalled. “I threw a screen pass and came down on my right shoulder and separated my labrum, AC joint and rotator cuff right there.”

A shot on the sidelines showed Trickett unable to even throw a warm-up pass without doubling over in pain. Despite that, Trickett went into the locker room for treatment and re-entered the game less than four minutes later.

“The medicine does mask it to a point,” Trickett said of the pain. “If it’s stagnant, things are fine. Any movement can cause

SEE TRICKETT, I-11



Left, West Virginia quarterback Clint Trickett (9) avoids the pass rush in the third quarter. Below, wide receiver Jordan Thompson (10) hauls in a pass in the fourth quarter of a game against Oklahoma State in Morgantown on Sept. 28, 2013.

AP Photos



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TRICKETT

FROM PAGE I-10

issues so you try to keep it as stagnant as you can until you absolutely have to.”

Keeping his throwing arm idle isn't exactly an option for a quarterback.

Closing things out

Trickett pushed through the pain and actually led a scoring drive on his first possession back, taking a 27-21 lead on a 27-yard field goal.

After returning from injury, Trickett completed 7-of-10 passes for 65 yards. At times he would let his right arm fully hang at his side, trying to move it as little as possible in between plays.

“It was a rough year just trying to play through that,” he said. “Once I finally got my shot (at starting), I wasn't going to let it go, so that's what you've got to do and you've still got to be productive.”

Another WVU interception, this time by Darwin Cook, set up a 34-yard field goal that put the Mountaineers up 30-21 in the final two minutes of the game. A fourth-down stop by the defense secured the first career win for Trickett and the first big upset by the Mountaineers in the Big 12.

“I was so locked in on the game and then finally at the end of the game that's when I looked up into the crowd,” Trickett said. “It was a Gold Rush, there was gold everywhere, we were singing ‘Country Roads,’ it was a surreal feeling. I got banged up at the end so I wasn't feeling great, but for the circumstances, I was feeling pretty good.”

The aftermath

Trickett had secured his spot as West Virginia's starting quarterback, completing 24-of-50 passes for 309 yards and a touchdown.

He was not at all healthy for the rest of the season, practicing as little as once a

week to manage the pain in his shoulder.

“I played the rest of the season with that, which was why I could only throw it like 30 yards after that,” Trickett said. “That made practicing throughout the week very difficult.”

WVU went 1-6 the rest of the season to finish the year at 4-8.

“I want to forget 2013 as much as I can,” Trickett joked. “In 2013, us and TCU had the same record and it was both our second year in the conference. We both just kind of didn't know what to do.”

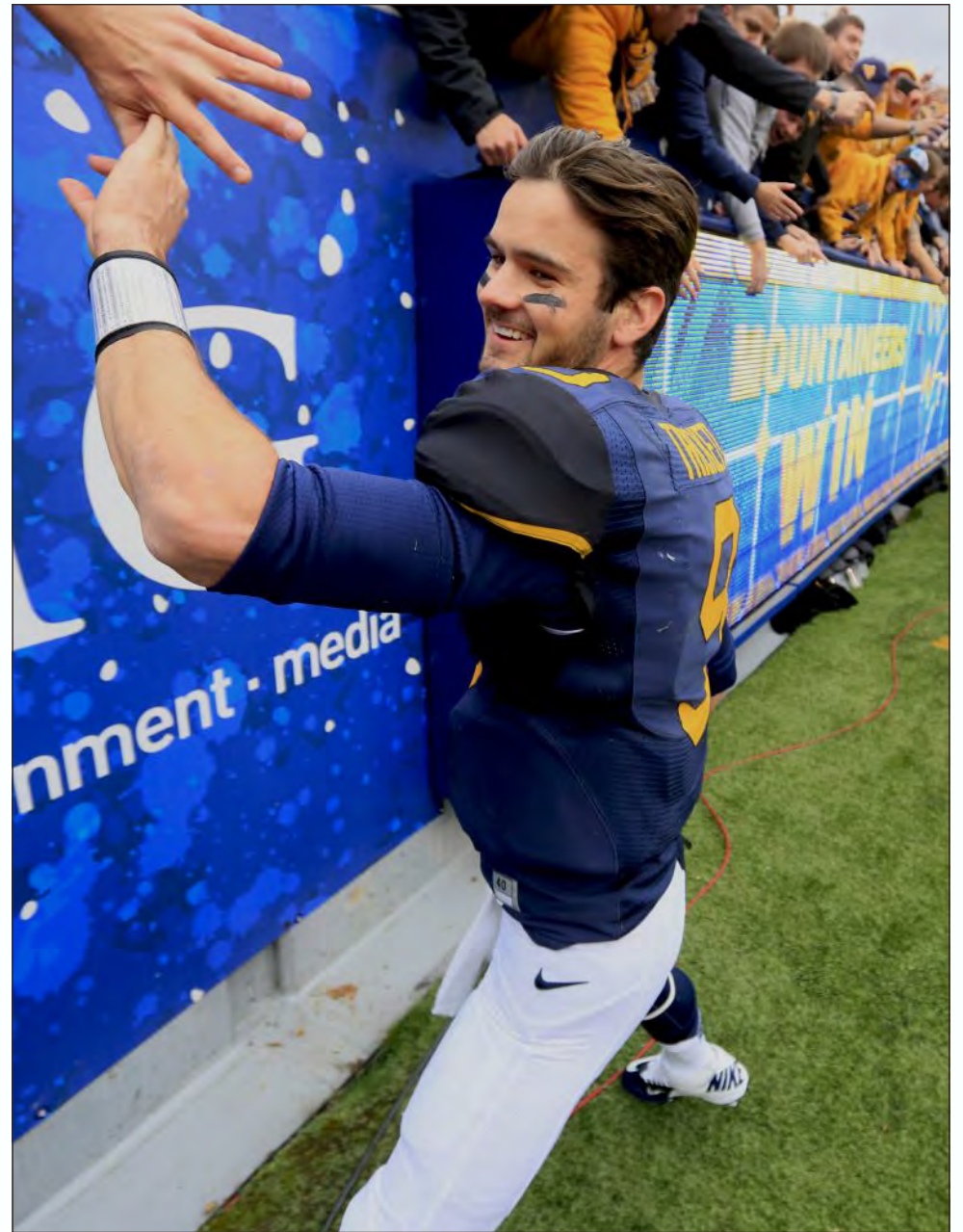
The following season was much better for Trickett and the Mountaineers. A senior, Trickett threw for 3,285 yards and 18 touchdowns as WVU went 7-6, losing to Texas A&M in the Liberty Bowl.

“I think people don't realize that year, the level of competition we were playing,” Trickett said. WVU played then-ranked No. 2 Alabama, No. 4 Oklahoma, No. 4 Baylor, No. 10 TCU and No. 12 Kansas State in 2014.

Trickett said the 41-27 win at home against No. 4 Baylor, in which he threw for 322 yards and three touchdowns, is his favorite memory from playing at WVU.

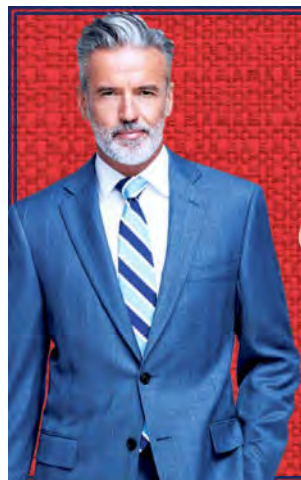
“With how highly ranked they were, that truly was the loss that knocked them out of the national championship game,” he said.

Concussions forced Trickett to retire from playing that December. He began his coaching career the next season at East Mississippi Community College. He spent four seasons at Florida Atlantic from 2017-20 and then three with Marshall from 2021-23. Trickett accepted the job as tight ends and inside receivers coach at Georgia Southern this offseason.



AP Photo

West Virginia quarterback Clint Trickett (9) celebrates with fans following WVU's 41-27 win over No. 4 Baylor during a game in Morgantown Oct. 18, 2014.



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West Virginia never felt like Cinderella on its path to winning 2017 Big 12 title

BY JUSTIN JACKSON

JJackson@DominionPost.com

The strange thing about the 2016-17 WVU women's basketball season is the Mountaineers generally didn't seem to fit the mold of a Cinderella.

WVU began that season ranked No. 22 in the country and ripped off a 13-0 start.

By the time the new year rolled around, the Mountaineers were up to No. 12, and had an established star in sophomore guard Tynice Martin, who had five games with at least 21 points during that starting stretch.

Fast forward to that March and WVU struggled through Big 12 play, finishing 8-10. The Mountaineers were the No. 6 seed in the conference tournament, an afterthought for the most part.

WVU had fallen out of the Top 25 and was on the bubble for the NCAA tournament.

"I never believed we were on the bubble," said then-WVU head coach Mike Carey, now an assistant at UCF. "At least I never talked to our players like we had to go into the Big 12 tournament and win a game or win two games. I didn't want them to be nervous. I remember telling them that we were already in (the NCAA's)."

And so, the Mountaineers walked into Chesapeake Energy Arena in Oklahoma City, Okla., as a team with potential, but not the team on paper they once were.

SEE TITLE, I-13



AP Photo

West Virginia players celebrate with the trophy after defeating Baylor in an NCAA college basketball championship game at the Big 12 Conference tournament in Oklahoma City, March 6, 2017. West Virginia won, 77-66.

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TITLE

FROM PAGE I-12

In just three nights, that all changed.

This was the route the Mountaineers had to take to win the 2017 Big 12 tournament: vs. No. 19 Oklahoma, then No. 12 Texas and No. 2 Baylor in the finals.

“Yeah, it’s not like we had an easy path,” Carey joked. “We didn’t duck anyone.”

WVU had gone 1-5 against those three teams during the regular season, with the one victory coming against Oklahoma in Morgantown.

That opening game was a no-brainer, as WVU beat the Sooners going away, 82-58.

Martin scored 21 and WVU hit nine 3-pointers. Both were signs of things to come.

“Tynice was focused in the whole tournament, maybe the most focused I ever saw her,” Carey said. “It got to the point where she probably could have thrown up shots backwards and they would have went in.”

“That carried over to everyone else. Everyone took their game to another level and so we became better at rebounding, we were better defensively and the shots just kept going in.”

The Mountaineers were becoming the textbook definition of a team getting hot at the right time, which was seen against Texas in the semifinals.

WVU’s 62-59 victory against the Longhorns ended a five-game losing streak against Texas, but it was a game filled with moments.

Texas took an early 10-point lead, but Martin just started pouring in points. By halftime, WVU had taken a 31-26 lead.

Texas guard Brooke McCarty was the Big 12 Player of the Year that season, but WVU’s defense held her to just

SEE TITLE, I-14



AP Photo

West Virginia forward Teana Muldrow (11), Texas center Kelsey Lang, center, and West Virginia guard Alexis Brewer (2) fight for the ball in the first half of an NCAA college basketball game at the Big 12 Conference tournament in Oklahoma City March 5, 2017. WVU won, 62-59, breaking a five-game losing streak against the Longhorns.



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TITLE

FROM PAGE I-13

4-of-13 shooting. McCarty finished with 13 points and seven rebounds.

“We didn’t do anything special against her, we stayed in our man-to-man,” Carey said. “What we did was collapse the driving lanes. We didn’t let her get downhill.

“We knew we had to be physical, that was what we preached before the game started. We had to rebound the ball, because that’s where they had really beaten us during the regular season.”

Martin scored 29 points and WVU hit another nine 3-pointers as a team.

WVU took the lead for good with 4:45 remaining. Chania Ray hit two free throws with seven seconds left for the final score, as McCarty’s last-chance 3-pointer banked off the rim.

Baylor, which advanced to the Elite Eight in 2017, had three future WNBA first-round picks in Lauren Cox, Alexis Jones and Kalani Brown on its roster.

So, of course, it makes sense that WVU had a 21-point lead in the third quarter that the Bears chipped away at.

“We had played some close games with Baylor, so it wasn’t like we came into the game in awe of them,” Carey said. “We were aggressive and we came out hot.”

By the late stages of the third quarter, Baylor had begun to make its run. With 4:34 left in the fourth quarter, the Bears were within 10.

“Looking back on it now, that was probably my fault,” Carey said. “Once we had that big lead, I started telling our girls we needed to run some sets and take time off the clock.

“We should have just kept attacking the way we had been. We were probably getting a little tired, too. At some point, I



AP Photo

Baylor guard Alexis Prince, right, attempts a shot over West Virginia forward Teana Muldrow (11) late in the second half of an NCAA college basketball championship game at the Big 12 Conference tournament in Oklahoma City March 6, 2017. West Virginia won 77-66.

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Left, West Virginia guard Tynice Martin (5) celebrates with teammates following the championship game against Baylor at the Big 12 Conference tournament in Oklahoma City March 6, 2017. Below, Martin (5) shoots between Baylor guard Alexis Prince (12) and forward Nina Davis (13). Martin scored 32 points and was named the tournament's most outstanding player.

AP Photos



TITLE

FROM PAGE I-14

think they were playing just on emotion.”

Baylor never completed the comeback. Martin finished with 32 points. The Mountaineers had 11 3-pointers.

For the tournament, Martin connected on 12 3-pointers and she was named the MVP after averaging 27.3 points per game.

Teana Muldrow added 14.7 points and 8.3 rebounds per game, while Katrina Pardee added eight threes and averaged 12.3 points per game.

WVU got back into the national rankings at No. 22 following the Big 12

tournament and was a No. 6 seed in the NCAAs. The Mountaineers lost to third-seeded Maryland in the second round.

Just three years earlier, Carey and WVU had won the Big 12 regular-season title.

“Obviously both championships are special,” he said. “Those nights in Oklahoma City, we just got really hot at the right time. Winning the regular-season title is much harder.”

“We had to beat Baylor on the road to win the regular-season title, so that was great. I’ll never forget either moment, because they were great for the women’s program and for WVU.”

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WELCOME TO THE LEAGUE

Harrison Musgrave starred during WVU's inaugural Big 12 season

BY MICHAEL GRIFFITH
Sports@DominionPost.com

West Virginia native and Bridgeport High School graduate Harrison Musgrave is one of several talented arms who have donned the flying WV for the West Virginia University baseball program over the years.

Musgrave missed the entirety of the 2012 season recovering from Tommy John surgery, but returned for the Mountaineers and was named the Big 12 Conference Pitcher of the Year for the 2013 season after achieving a 9-1 record and helping the WVU program to a 33-26 (13-11) record in the first year of Big 12 competition.

A redshirt sophomore because of that 2012 injury, Musgrave compiled an unbeaten record at 5-0 in the Big 12 and a league-leading 1.02 ERA. He struck out 61 batters in 53 innings of conference play, with three complete games.

"That was a fun year being able to play some of the schools that you always saw in the national spotlight with Texas and Oklahoma and teams of that caliber," Musgrave said. "We were fortunate enough to have a great staff come in with Randy Mazey and Derek Matlock, the pitching coach. They came in that first fall and let us know what was to be expected. My goal was to play, and everything worked out from then on."

SEE MUSGRAVE, I-17



AP Photo

West Virginia's Harrison Musgrave pitches in the second inning of a first-round game against Kansas in the Big 12 conference baseball tournament in Oklahoma City May 21, 2014.



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MUSGRAVE

FROM PAGE I-16

An intimidating lefty with a presence on the mound that was felt with every pitch, Musgrave totaled 81 strikeouts during the 2013 season, including three games with 10 or more. His season-high of 14 K's came on May 11, against TCU in a complete game shutout where his pitch count grew to 143.

It's safe to say Musgrave got better as the season progressed, allowing 15 of his 23 earned runs that season in his first four starts. Six of his remaining 10 starts on the bump in 2013 came without a run earned, and the other four games allowed only two runs each game.

"I think as the year went on, I got more into pitching shape," Musgrave said. "I was coming off a significant rehab and went through some bumps and bruises, but we got through it all and found a good groove. Coach Matlock and I would sit down every week and talk about what needed to be worked on or what I could focus on before my next start. After a few weeks, things started clicking, and my arm felt better and better. I was fortunate to carry it through the rest of the season after those first few starts early."

Musgrave became only the second sophomore named Big 12 Pitcher of the Year and the first since Max Scherzer in 2005. He earned Big 12 Pitcher of the Week honors four times in 2013, becoming only the second player in Big 12 history to do so.

The Colorado Rockies drafted Musgrave in the eighth round of the 2014 MLB draft and he made his MLB debut on April 23, 2018.

A native of West Virginia, Musgrave says he still holds the opportunity to represent his home and university in the national spotlight close to his heart.

"Being from Nutter Fort and going to WVU to play was great," he said. "Any kid



WVU Athletics

dreams of being able to play for WVU. We had great athletes, competed, won games, and took some series. It was awesome and a great time of my life. Being able to be that sort of old guard of WVU baseball and Coach Mazey's tenure is special, and I'm grateful to have been a part of it."

West Virginia left-handed pitcher Harrison Musgrave went 9-1 with a 2.17 ERA in 2013. It was the Mountaineers' first season in the Big 12 and Musgrave was named the Big 12 Pitcher of the Year after going 5-0 with a 1.02 ERA in league play.

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Stratford, Mountaineers enter the 2024 season focused on what's in front of them

This story originally appeared in the Aug. 21 edition of The Dominion Post.

BY MICHAEL GRIFFITH

Sports@DominionPost.com

When the No. 3 West Virginia men's soccer team takes the field this season, head coach Dan Stratford asks that his players remember one thing — last season's chapter in the book of WVU men's soccer has closed. The 64th season begins on a clean page.

The 2024 team is tasked with following in the footsteps of the most-successful year in WVU men's soccer history. After a 17-3-4 season that saw a record number of victories and its highest-ever finish in the NCAA tournament with a berth in the 2023 Men's College Cup, Stratford wants his players to keep one question on their minds when the whistle blows on Thursday to usher in the new campaign.

"It's something we brought up in the first meeting with the team, and that's what do we want this season to look like," Stratford said Monday via Zoom. "There were just so many milestones and achievements from last season that it would be easy to fall victim to comparing ourselves to last year. We made it very clear that we are not chasing our past this season. We have to make our own path this season. The last thing I want is if we are not 15 games unbeaten to start the year, we somehow judge that as a failure because we were last season. It is just not



William Wotring/The Dominion Post

SEE STRATFORD, I-19

West Virginia forward Marcus Caldeira (7) protects the ball from Marshall defender Morris Duggan (25) last season.

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STRATFORD

FROM PAGE I-18

realistic to try and look that way.”

The 2024 Mountaineers return a plethora of experience and talent from last season's College Cup participants. Eight of the 11 players that started the national semifinals against Clemson, a 1-0 defeat, return for Stratford and his crew.

The most-anticipated return is that of 2023 All-American Marcus Caldeira, who scored 12 goals in 24 appearances last season. Caldeira is the Sun Belt Conference Preseason Player of the Year for the upcoming season. He returns to Morgantown despite Minnesota United selecting him 20th overall (the highest in WVU men's program history) in the Major League Soccer SuperDraft in December.

“Marcus was on the radar of several clubs very, very quickly. I think he had seven goals after six games, and the phones were starting to ring to some extent,” Stratford said. “It was quite an extended process. I give Marcus a ton of credit because of how he navigated it. You have to understand that Marcus was being bandied around as a potential number-one pick, and he was still 18. There was a lot of pressure on him.”

Senior Dyon Dromers will return for the Mountaineers after missing the entirety of 2023 with injury, and a pair of inter-conference transfers with 2023 all-conference recognition in first-team selection Ethan Dekel Daks from South Carolina and third-teamer Simon Carlson from Georgia State are sure to bring some quality support.

Stratford said the 2024 freshman class has played well so far but admits that minutes may be difficult to come by in their first season in Morgantown with the amount of talent returning from a year ago.

“It would be logical to say that the opportunities are few and far between,” he



William Wotring/The Dominion Post

West Virginia defender Sergio Ors Navarro (20) works the ball down the field against Marshall last season.

said. “But genuinely, we have an excellent group that has come in here and are going to push some of those returning players and some of those who did very well for me last season for their positions.”

Stratford and company will open Sun Belt conference play with a road test at Old Dominion on Sept. 21 before hosting Kentucky, who defeated WVU, 1-0, a season ago, in Morgantown on Sept. 27.

The Mountaineers men's soccer team will conclude the regular season on the road Nov. 5 against Marshall University in Huntington.



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Caldeira named SBC Preseason Offensive Player of the Year; WVU picked second

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The West Virginia University men's soccer team was tabbed to finish second in the 2024 Sun Belt Men's Soccer Preseason Poll, as announced by the conference.

Junior Marcus Caldeira was named the Preseason Offensive Player of the Year while seniors Max Broughton, Ryan Baer and Frederik Jorgensen joined him on the Preseason All-Conference Team.

The Mountaineers tallied 132 points, including two first-place votes in the coaches' poll. Marshall was picked to repeat as champions with 138 points and eight first-place votes. UCF was slotted in third behind WVU with 111 points while Kentucky (108) and James Madison (106) were fourth and fifth, respectively.

South Carolina was voted sixth (83), narrowly ahead of seventh-place Georgia State (80), while Old Dominion (70), Coastal Carolina (62), and Georgia Southern (60) rounded out the poll.

It is shaping up to be a strong season for the Sun Belt as four teams are in the preseason Top 25 — No. 3 West Virginia, No. 8 Marshall, No. 18 James Madison, and No. 19 UCF — while Kentucky is receiving votes.

Caldeira is the first Mountaineer to be named Sun Belt Preseason Offensive Player of the Year in WVU's third season in the conference. In 2023, he was a First Team All-American by College Soccer News and Second Team All-American by United Soccer Coaches after tallying 27 points on 12 goals and three assists.

Baer returns to WVU for his fifth season with the Mountaineers. A captain, he has played in 72 games in the midfield for the Mountaineers and tallied six assists while contributing to one of the

2024 WVU Men's Soccer Schedule

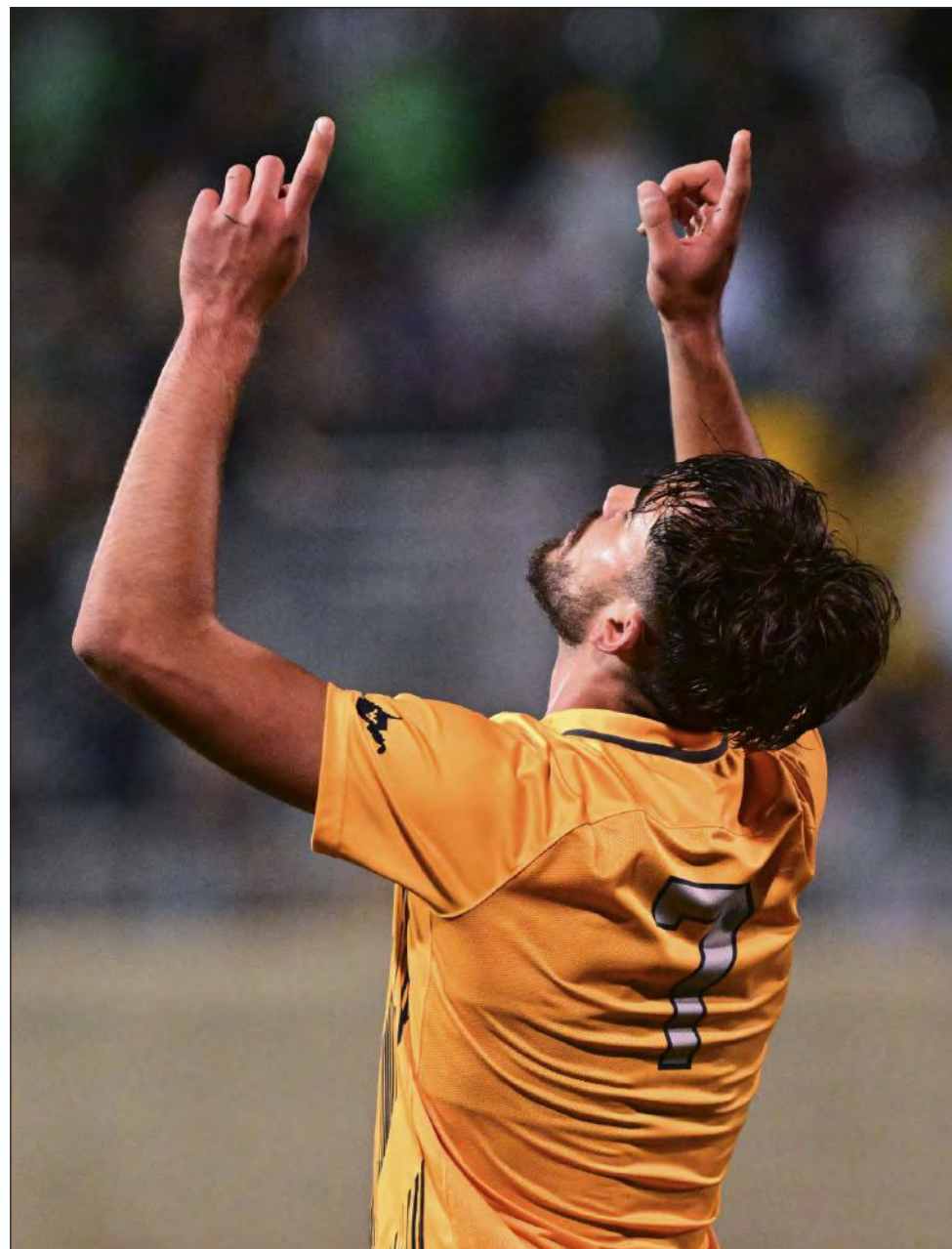
- Aug. 30 vs. George Washington, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 6 at California Baptist, 10 p.m.
- Sept. 10 at Loyola Marymount, 8 p.m.
- Sept. 17 vs. UNC Greensboro, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 21 at Old Dominion*, 7 p.m.
- Sept. 27 vs. Kentucky*, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 1 at Bucknell, 6 p.m.
- Oct. 5 vs. UCF*, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 11 at Georgia Southern*, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 15 at Dayton, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 19 vs. South Carolina *, TBD
- Oct. 23 vs. Georgia State*, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 27 at James Madison*, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 31 vs. Coastal Carolina*, 7 p.m.
- Nov. 5 at Marshall*, 7:15 p.m.

*Sun Belt Conference game

.....
best defenses in the country a season ago.

Jorgensen is back for his fourth season on the back line for West Virginia after playing in 63 games with 55 starts for the Mountaineers. An All-Sun Belt second-team selection in 2023, Jorgensen helped anchor a defense that allowed just 0.96 goals per game to go along with nine shutouts, while also contributing with a goal and four assists.

Broughton led Mountaineers with 1,895 minutes played in 2023 at center back and was a key component of WVU's strong defense. He also contributed on the offensive end with a pair of goals, including a game-winner against Vermont in the NCAA Round of 16, and three assists.



William Wotring/The Dominion Post

West Virginia forward Marcus Caldeira (7) reacts after scoring a hat trick against Marshall last season. Caldeira was named the Sun Belt Conference Preseason Offensive Player of the Year after scoring 12 goals in 2023.



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William Wotring/The Dominion Post

Top left, fans react after West Virginia forward Marcus Caldeira (7) scores a goal. Top right, West Virginia midfielder Constantinos Christou (21) reacts after scoring a goal. Bottom left, fans and players celebrate after defeating Marshall. Bottom right, West Virginia coach Dan Stratford celebrates with Athletic Director Wren Baker.

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Izzo-Brown, WVU women's soccer hopeful for rebound campaign this season

This story originally appeared in the Aug. 15, 2024 edition of The Dominion Post.

BY MICHAEL GRIFFITH

Sports@DominionPost.com

The West Virginia University women's soccer team is no stranger to success. In the last decade, it has captured multiple Big 12 conference titles and made many appearances in the NCAA tournament.

Head coach Nikki Izzo-Brown and the Mountaineers' 2023 season was the first to yield less than ten wins in over 18 seasons, with an overall record of 7-8-4 (5-2-3 Big 12). Izzo-Brown and her squad enter 2024 with heightened experience that they hope can help renew the program's winning ways from the past.

"We're just excited to kick off the 2024 season and doing it at home," Izzo-Brown said on Tuesday via Zoom. "Thursday can't come soon enough for us, and we are eager to see where we are as a team going into the new year."

WVU will play 10 home matches in the regular season, five of which are Big 12 matchups. Along with Delaware and Radford, Robert Morris, James Madison, and Liberty will all make the short trek to Morgantown for a non-conference match.

The Mountaineers will host Kansas, Kansas State, UCF, Texas Tech, and conference-newcomer Colorado for Big 12 contests while hitting the road for battles with Cincinnati, Arizona State, Arizona, Baylor, TCU, and Houston.

"We always want to go out and play the



Benjamin Powell/The Dominion Post

Left, West Virginia's Nyema Ingleton (24) takes the ball down the field during a game against TCU last season. Right, West Virginia's Lilly McCarthy (15) looks to gain control of the ball during a game against TCU last season.

teams like Penn State and Clemson that are so successful," Izzo-Brown said. "This year, we tried to put together a schedule that would allow us to have a good balance of home and away games that will challenge us and make us better."

WVU scored 28 goals in 2023, led by returning striker Taylor White. The junior netted nine goals for WVU last season, including a goal in four-straight games in October. White will again be considered a key contributor to the offense.

"Taylor had a great summer, and her confidence in being our leading scorer from last year will be huge for her early," Izzo-Brown said. "But her maturity has

SEE REBOUND, I-23



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2024 WVU Women's Soccer Schedule

Sept. 1 vs. Robert Morris, 5 p.m.
 Sept. 5 vs. James Madison, 7 p.m.
 Sept. 8 vs. Liberty, 1 p.m.
 Sept. 12 at Cincinnati*, 7 p.m.
 Sept. 19 vs. Kansas State*, 7 p.m.
 Sept. 22 vs. Kansas*, 1 p.m.
 Sept. 26 at Arizona State*, 10 p.m.
 Sept. 29 at Arizona*, 2:30 p.m.
 Oct. 4 vs. UCF*, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 10 at TCU*, 8 p.m.
 Oct. 13 at Baylor, 2 p.m.
 Oct. 17 vs. Texas Tech*, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 20 vs. Colorado*, 1 p.m.
 Oct. 25 at Houston*, 8 p.m.

*Big 12 Conference game

REBOUND

FROM PAGE I-22

also grown as one of the team's leaders and has a great understanding of who she is on and off the field and our expectations as a program."

Another player who can positively impact the Mountaineers is preseason All-Big 12 Soccer selection midfielder AJ Rodriguez.

Izzo-Brown said she is a good soccer talent with a high IQ who can be relied upon to make the right decisions constantly.

"When you watch AJ, she is a kid that rarely makes the wrong pass or decision," Izzo-Brown said. "She is enthusiastic and passionate about the game and sees it at a high level. She stayed here all summer to grow. We hope to have her be more productive in the final third and help us score goals."



Benjamin Powell/The Dominion Post

West Virginia's Taylor White (20) takes a shot against TCU during a game last season. White is the Mountaineers' top returning scorer for this season after netting nine goals in 2023.

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West Virginia volleyball set for new era under first-year head coach Jen Greeny

BY MICHAEL GRIFFITH

Sports@DominionPost.com

The West Virginia University volleyball team will enter the 2024 season under the direction of Jen Greeny, who was named head coach last December.

The Davenport, Wash., native came to Morgantown from Washington State, where she compiled nearly 350 wins and a record of 347-199 in 13 seasons leading the Cougars.

WSU appeared in eight-consecutive NCAA tournaments from 2016-23 and finished third in the Pac-12 standings in the 2022 and 2023 seasons. She reached the NCAA Sweet 16 for the first time in 2018.

Greeny said the excitement throughout the team is something that has been felt since day one.

“We are so excited that the season is here and time to get started,” Greeny said. “The team has been working extremely hard to get our lineups together in practice, but we are happy to be finally playing against someone else.”

WVU is coming off a 9-22 season, and Greeny said she and her team are determined to usher in a new era of WVU volleyball.

“Our girls are tremendous athletes and students,” Greeny said. “Our group of returners has been incredible, helping everyone adjust to the new style and what is expected. We are excited about the group we have.”



WVU Athletics

Jen Greeny, center, is entering her first season as the head volleyball coach at West Virginia University. Greeny was hired away from Washington State, her alma mater, where she had been for the last 13 season.

SEE VOLLEYBALL, I-25



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VOLLEYBALL

FROM PAGE I-24

Fifth-year seniors Sydney Reed and Lauren DeLo will captain the squad.

“Our captains are players who can excel in many different categories, whether that’s hard work, communication, energy, or whatever,” Greeny said. “We vote on the team throughout, and we are confident in the girls we have leading us this season.”

WVU won’t play its home opener, and Greeny’s home debut, until Sept. 25 against Cincinnati, which will also begin Big 12 conference play.

“Being hired a little bit late in the scheduling game was tough, so some things didn’t quite come together this year, and we will be on the road to open the season,” she said. “We’ve got some local travel, which is fine, and then a trip further west. We wanted to find the best RPI matches we could without overscheduling. The Big 12 is a great volleyball conference, so we are excited for a challenge, and I’m personally excited for some new places to coach at.”

WVU will play in three tournaments early in the season, at Wake Forest, North Dakota and Liberty.

When the Mountaineers play at home for the first time against Cincinnati, they will also debut a new court explicitly made for volleyball.

“That was my idea, actually,” Greeny said. “When I was hired, (athletic director) Wren (Baker) and I made a deal to try and get that done. I think it’s a huge advantage for our players and good for our program overall. We want people to see that we are investing in the volleyball program and are serious about it.”

The Mountaineers will travel south to Winston-Salem for the opening round of matches in the Wake Forest Invitational this weekend. They will play Navy, Wake Forest and Hofstra.



2024 WVU Volleyball Schedule

WAKE FOREST INVITATIONAL

Aug. 30 vs. Navy, 3 p.m.
Aug. 31 vs. Wake Forest, 6 p.m.
Sept. 1 vs. Hofstra, noon

NDSU/UND TOURNAMENT

Sept. 6 vs. North Dakota State, 8 p.m.
Sept. 7 vs. Northern Iowa, 7 p.m.
Sept. 8 vs. North Dakota, noon

LIBERTY TOURNAMENT

Sept. 13 vs. Virginia, 10 a.m.
Sept. 13 vs. East Tennessee State, 4 p.m.
Sept. 15 vs. Liberty, 1 p.m.

Sept. 20 at Fairfield, 5 p.m.
Sept. 21 at Binghamton, 2 p.m.
Sept. 25 vs. Cincinnati*, 7 p.m.
Sept. 28 at Iowa State*, 3 p.m.
Oct. 2 at UCF*, 7 p.m.
Oct. 4 at Houston*, 7 p.m.
Oct. 10 vs. Kansas*, 7 p.m.
Oct. 13 vs. Kansas State*, 1 p.m.
Oct. 16 vs. UCF*, 7 p.m.
Oct. 23 at Colorado*, 9 p.m.
Oct. 26 vs. Texas Tech*, noon
Oct. 31 at Kansas State*, 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 2 at Kansas*, 2 p.m.
Nov. 7 at Cincinnati*, 11 a.m.
Nov. 14 vs. Arizona State*, 7 p.m.
Nov. 17 vs. Arizona*, noon
Nov. 21 at Utah*, 9 p.m.
Nov. 23 at BYU*, 3 p.m.
Nov. 27 vs. TCU*, 7 p.m.
Nov. 29 vs. Baylor*, 2 p.m.

*Big 12 Conference game

First-year West Virginia volleyball coach Jen Greeny has a career record of 347-199, including a 235-175 mark at her alma mater, Washington State. The Cougars made eight-straight NCAA Tournament appearances under Greeny from 2016-23.

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Realignment shifts some of the top powers in women's college volleyball as popularity surges

Associated Press

Perhaps no sport will be impacted more by the most-recent round of conference realignment than women's volleyball.

Five of the last nine schools to win national championships switched conferences during the offseason. Those five schools (Texas, Stanford, UCLA, Washington and Southern California) have combined to claim 12 of the last 23 titles.

All that movement has resulted in a different kind of offseason as teams eye new conference rivals.

"You need to study film a little bit more, because when you get in your conferences, you kind of have a general idea of how they operate," said Texas coach Jerritt Elliott, whose two-time defending national champions moved from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference. "So you're just kind of learning the nuances of what they're bringing."

The season started Tuesday with Nebraska facing Kentucky and Wisconsin playing Louisville in the American Volleyball Coaches Association First Serve Showcase at Louisville, Ky. Nebraska is ranked second, Wisconsin third, Louisville sixth and Kentucky ninth in the AVCA preseason poll.

This latest wave of realignment comes at a time when women's college volleyball is exploding in popularity. The top-three attendances for a match were all set last season (92,003 for Nebraska's regular-season win over Omaha at Memorial Stadium; 19,727 for Texas' NCAA championship game triumph over Nebraska; and



Keith Srakotic

The Stanford women's volleyball team holds the championship trophy after defeating Wisconsin for the NCAA Division I women's volleyball championship, Dec. 21, 2019, in Pittsburgh.

SEE REALIGNMENT, I-27

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REALIGNMENT

FROM PAGE I-26

19,598 for the NCAA semifinals). The NCAA final drew a record 1.7 million television viewers.

Texas' move gives the SEC three of the last four national champions, as Kentucky won the crown in the 2020 season that was delayed until the spring of 2021 due to the pandemic. The Atlantic Coast Conference added nine-time national champion Stanford along with California and SMU.

But the biggest change comes in the Big Ten, which already considered itself the nation's toughest volleyball conference even before it added USC, UCLA, Oregon and Washington.

The Big Ten has seven teams in the AVCA's preseason poll, including five in the top 10: Nebraska, Wisconsin, No. 7 Penn State, No. 8 Purdue and No. 10 Oregon. The other ranked Big Ten teams are No. 18 Minnesota and No. 21 USC.

Wisconsin won the national title in 2021 and has made four Final Four appearances the last five years. Nebraska has been a runner-up three times since winning its fifth national championship in 2017. Penn State is a seven-time national champion.

"Putting a lot of power schools into the same conference, I think it's going to be even more of a bloodbath to get in the tournament," Wisconsin outside hitter Sarah Franklin said.

It's also going to require some adjustment for the West Coast teams as they adapt to the Big Ten.

"I think Pac-12 schools have a little bit of a different style as far as like defense, scrappiness and quickness," Oregon defensive specialist Daley McClellan said. "I feel like the Big Ten, it's just big girls, big blocks, aggressive swings, aggressive defense. I think everything is just a lot more physical."

USC coach Brad Keller says he's



AP Photo

Texas's Bella Bergmark (5) scores over Wisconsin's Caroline Crawford (9) and Anna Smrek (14) during a semifinal match in the NCAA Division I women's college volleyball tournament Dec. 14, 2023, in Tampa, Fla.

already adjusting his recruiting accordingly.

"I've always been someone who has been going after a lot of maybe some smaller players that are really quick-twitch fast, explosive," Keller said. "Now I've mixed and blended it with more-physical, bigger volleyball players as well."

Other conferences also will have a new look. For instance, Pitt and Stanford may be 2,600 miles from each other, but now they're ACC rivals. Pitt is seeking its fourth-straight Final Four appearance.

"I think there's probably six teams that have a really good chance of a national championship," Pitt coach Dan Fisher said. "I'd say we're in that. And then

maybe another five or six that have an outside chance."

Texas

It all starts with Texas, which is aiming to become the first team to earn three-straight national championships since Penn State won four straight from 2007-10.

"This might be the deepest team we've ever had," Elliott said.

The Longhorns got 46 of the 61 first-place votes in the AVCA poll. Madisen Skinner returns after being named the most-outstanding player of last year's Final Four. Skinner, who began her college career at Kentucky, has a chance to become part of a fourth national cham-

pionship team. She's joined this year by former Kentucky teammate Reagan Rutherford. Other preseason all-SEC selections for Texas include Emma Halter and Ella Swindle.

Nebraska

Nebraska received the other 15 first-place votes. The Cornhuskers return every starter from a team that won its first 27 matches and finished second in the NCAA Tournament last year. That list of returners includes 2023 AVCA All-America selections Merritt Beason (first team), Lexi Rodriguez (first team), Bergen Reilly (second team) and Harper Murray (third team).

Wisconsin

Franklin, the AVCA national player of the year last season, heads a list of eight returners from a team that went 30-4 and lost to Texas in the national semifinals last year. Wisconsin brings back three 2023 AVCA All-Americans: Franklin (first team), Anna Smrek (second team) and Carter Booth (third team).

Pitt

Pitt brings back five starters after going 29-5 and falling to Nebraska in last year's semifinals. Olivia Babcock was a first-team AVCA All-America selection and the AVCA's freshman of the year last season. Other returning 2023 All-Americans for Pitt include Rachel Fairbanks (first team) and Torrey Stafford (third team).

Stanford

Stanford adjusts to a new conference after winning 12 of the last 18 Pac-12 titles. The Cardinal went 29-4 and lost to Texas in a regional final last year. Kami Miner, a two-time Pac-12 setter of the year, was an AVCA first-team All-American last season. Elia Rubin made the second team.



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WVU COACHES

Dan Stratford, head men's soccer coach Mountaineer alumnus Dan Stratford was named West Virginia University's 10th men's soccer head coach in January 2020 and enters his fourth season at the helm in 2024.

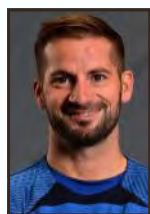
Stratford, who played for the Mountaineers from 2004-07 and served as an assistant coach at WVU from 2011-13, returned to Morgantown after a three-year stint as the head coach at the University of Charleston, from 2017-19. While at UC, he compiled a record of 61-4-5 and led the Golden Eagles to a pair of Division II National Championships.

It hasn't taken long for him to elevate his alma mater, as he has gone 42-16-15 in four seasons in Morgantown.

In 2023, Stratford led the Mountaineers to new heights as WVU went 17-3-4 to set a new program record for wins and advanced to the College Cup for the first time in program history. The Mountaineers finished the season ranked No. 3 in the United Soccer Coaches poll and Stratford was named the TopDrawer Soccer National Coach of the Year.

The season saw many highlights including wins over No. 1 Marshall and No. 3 Portland as well as ranked wins in the NCAA Tournament over Louisville, Vermont, and Loyola Marymount. West Virginia reached as high as No. 2 in the United Soccer Coaches Top 25 while going to No. 1 in both the TopDrawer Soccer and College Soccer News polls at various points throughout the season, the first time the Mountaineers have been in the top spot in any poll in program history.

Marcus Caldeira and Yutaro Tsukada each earned All-America status under Stratford's leadership while Jackson Lee, Frederik Jorgensen, and Luke McCormick joined the high-scoring duo on the United Soccer Coaches All-Southeast Region team as well as the All-Sun Belt team.



Dan Stratford

Prior to his return to West Virginia, the London, England, native was named the Mountain East Conference (MEC) Coach of the Year for all sports in 2017 and 2019, and was a two-time United Soccer Coaches Division II Coaching Staff of the Year winner (2017, 2019).

Under Stratford's tutelage, UC won three conference regular-season championships and two conference tournament titles in his three years in charge.

From 2014-16, Stratford served as an assistant coach at UC, helping the Golden Eagles to three trips to the Division II Final Four, with two National Runner-Up finishes.

Prior to his time at Charleston, Stratford was an assistant coach for three seasons at WVU from 2011-13.

One of the most-decorated players in program history, Stratford played for the Mountaineers from 2004-07, finishing No. 1 in WVU history in matches played in a season (23) and career (85), as well as No. 1 in career game-winning assists (13) and game-winning points (31). Additionally, Stratford, an All-Big East and all-region selection as a senior, currently sits No. 2 in school history in career assists (27), shots on goal (86) and multi-assist games (4), No. 4 in matches started (79), No. 4 in game-winning goals (9) and No. 9 in career points (67).

Drafted by D.C. United in 2008, Stratford played one season in Major League Soccer (MLS) before joining Scottish club Inverness Caledonian Thistle from 2009-10. He finished his professional career at Hereford United (England) from 2010-11.

Stratford graduated from WVU with a bachelor's degree in physical education teacher education in 2009. He also earned a master's degree at WVU in 2015.

Nikki Izzo-Brown, head women's soccer coach

Entering her 29th season as the only coach in Mountaineer women's soccer history, Nikki Izzo-Brown has built a one-time infant program into one of the nation's elite teams.

In 28 seasons, Izzo-Brown has coached 40 players who went on to play professionally, 25 different players to 60 total All-America honors, 17 different players to 30 total Academic and Scholar All-America accolades, 24 conference players of the year and 23 Missouri Athletic Club (MAC) Hermann Trophy candidates. She also coached the 2016 Hermann Trophy award winner, the 2016 espnW National Player of the Year, a pair of Olympic Gold and Bronze Medalists and FIFA Women's World Cup participants, as well as a FIFA Women's World Cup Best Young Player honoree.

The 2016 season remains the team's best-ever campaign, as the squad made its first NCAA College Cup appearance and finished as the NCAA National Runner-Up. WVU has appeared in the NCAA Tournament in 22 of last 24 seasons, including a 21-year streak from 2000-20.

To date, Izzo-Brown has led the Mountaineers to an impressive 390-138-73 overall record and a 165-53-32 conference mark that includes 10 regular-season titles and eight tournament championships, including most recently the 2022 Big 12 Soccer Championship title. The Mountaineers won the conference regular-season title in each of their first five years as members of the Big 12 (2012-16), and a title sweep in 2016 was the third time the squad earned both championships.

Women's soccer won the school's first Big 12 championship in 2013 and was the only WVU program to win multiple Big East Tournament titles.

Izzo-Brown's teams have been a consistent force in the national rankings and reached new levels in 2016, as the program earned its first national No. 1 rank-



Nikki Izzo-Brown

ing. WVU spent eight weeks ranked No. 1 nationally and was never ranked lower than No. 7. Additionally, WVU has defeated at least one top-10 opponent in 15 of the last 18 seasons.

In addition to the success she has enjoyed with the Mountaineers, Izzo-

Brown has several years of experience with U.S. Women's National Teams, including serving as an assistant at the teams' 2012 training camps with the U.S. U-18, U-20 and U-23 squads. She also served as a scout for the 2017 U.S. U-20 squad.

In 30 seasons as a head coach, Izzo-Brown has 29 winning seasons and led WVU to 23-consecutive 10-plus-win seasons. Additionally, she has earned 13 combined conference and regional coach of the year awards since 2000.

In addition to her duties at WVU, Izzo-Brown is certified as an advanced national level coach by the NSCAA, has her USSF "B" license and is a Region I senior staff Olympic Development member. She has served on several regional and national ranking committees for the NSCAA. She also is qualified internationally with Brazilian, KNVB and Czech Republic certification.

In May 2010, Izzo-Brown was named to the West Virginia Executive Sports Hall of Fame. Later that fall, she was inducted into the University of Rochester Athletic Hall of Fame for her outstanding achievement in the sport of soccer.

A decade ago, she was named a 2011 Frontier Field Walk of Fame inductee.

In March 2018, Izzo-Brown was inducted as a meritorious member into the West Virginia Soccer Association Hall of Fame.

She and her husband, Joe, have three daughters, Samantha, Gracie and Gabriella.

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WVU COACHES

Andy Wright, associate men's soccer head coach

Former West Virginia University men's soccer All-American Andy Wright enters his ninth season on the Mountaineer men's coaching staff and his fifth as associate head coach in 2024.

Wright, a Mountaineer from 2004-07 and one of the top players in program history, returned to Morgantown after concluding a successful playing career, in which he played for five clubs from 2007-15.

In his eight seasons back at WVU, he has helped guide the Mountaineers to two conference titles, four NCAA Tournament berths, a trip to the College Cup, multiple weeks in the national rankings and numerous national athletic and academic honors.

A three-time All-American, Wright ranks in the top-10 in team history in numerous statistical categories. During his time at WVU, he helped lead the Mountaineers to three NCAA Tournaments and was named the Big East Midfielder of the Year in 2007. In all, he was a three-time Big East All-Conference selection from 2005-07.

Nick Noble, assistant men's soccer coach
Former West Virginia University men's soccer All-America goalkeeper Nick Noble returned to WVU as an assistant coach in 2018, and is entering his seventh season on staff at his alma mater.

Noble, a First Team All-American in 2006, set numerous school records as a Mountaineer and joined the WVU staff following an 11-year professional career. As a four-year starter in goal at WVU from 2003-06, Noble set 17 career or single-season program records.

Noah Sheldon, men's soccer technical director

Nolan Sheldon joined the West Virginia University men's soccer coaching staff in July, 2024.

A native of Thornton, W.Va., Sheldon joins the Mountaineers after spending two seasons as an assistant coach for Austin FC of the MLS.

Sheldon earned his bachelor's degree in Psychology from Wingate University in 2008 while also playing soccer for the Bulldogs.

Lisa Stoia, senior associate women's soccer head coach

With nearly two decades of coaching experience to her name, Lisa Stoia begins her 18th season with the Mountaineer women's soccer program at her alma mater. An integral piece in the emergence of the Mountaineers' presence on the national stage, Stoia has helped guide WVU to multiple Big 12 and Big East titles, as well as 14-consecutive trips to the NCAA Tournament from 2007-20 and the 2016 NCAA College Cup Final.

A four-year letterwinner at West Virginia from 2000-03, Stoia set Mountaineer career records for assists (33) and matches played and started (87). As a senior, she set a program record with 12 assists and was second on the squad with seven goals and 26 points en route to Big East Midfielder of the Year along with NSCAA and Soccer Buzz All-America accolades.

Eric Beltran, assistant women's soccer head coach

Eric Beltran joined the WVU women's soccer staff in August 2023 and was elevated to assistant head coach in May 2024. He works primarily with the goalkeepers,

while assisting with the team's daily training sessions and game preparations.

Beltran graduated from The University of Texas of the Permian Basin with a Bachelor of Arts in communications in 2016 and earned his Master of Science in Kinesiology with a special focus on athletic administration and coaching in the spring of 2024. Beltran holds United Soccer Coaches Goalkeeping credentials and a USSF "D" license.

Beltran and his wife, Jacqueline, reside in Morgantown.

Lisa Seifert, assistant women's soccer coach

Lisa Seifert joined the WVU women's soccer staff in July 2024. After spending time as a graduate assistant on WVU's staff from 2020-23, she returns to the staff to assist with the team's daily training sessions and game preparations.

Prior to returning to Morgantown, Seifert coached the Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Club in Castle Rock, Colorado, for one year. While there, she was the head coach for two elite teams and one regional select team.

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WVU COACHES

Jen Greeny, head volleyball coach

Vice President and Director of Athletics Wren Baker announced Jen Greeny as the fifth volleyball head coach in the program's history in December of 2023.

Greeny came to WVU from Washington State, where she spent 13 seasons at the helm of the Cougar volleyball program and led WSU to three-consecutive seasons with 20 wins or more. She brings a 347-199 (.636) career record to West Virginia, while she compiled a 235-175 (.573) overall mark during her time in Pullman.

A native of Davenport, Washington, Greeny brought Cougar volleyball back into the national spotlight with eight-consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances from 2016-23 and 12 American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) All-America selections. The Cougars finished in the AVCA Top 25 six times during her time at WSU, including the past four seasons.

Having been a part of the two-best postseason runs in program history as both a player (1996 NCAA regional appearance) and an assistant coach (2002 NCAA regional appearance), Greeny inherited a Washington State team that went 0-18 in conference play in 2010, the year before her return to Pullman. She and her staff transformed the program into a perennial force in the Pac-12, reaching the NCAA Round of 16 as a head coach for the first time in 2018.

The Cougars matched the volleyball program record for most conference wins (14) in a single season in 2022 and 2023 and finished third the final Pac-12 standings in each season, marking the best conference finish during Greeny's 13-year tenure and the best since the 2002 WSU team that reached the NCAA regional championship.

A two-time Pac-12 Coach of the Year (2016 & 2021), Greeny has coached 12 of the Cougars' 16 AVCA All-Americans while



Jen Greeny

her teams have produced 39 total postseason all-conference honors, including 17 first-team All-Pac-12 selections. A former CoSIDA Academic All-American during her time as a Wazzu student-athlete, Greeny's teams also have produced 45 Pac-12 All-Academic nods and a pair of Pac-12 Scholar Athlete of the Year award recipients.

Greeny began her collegiate coaching career with a five-year stint at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho. Prior to turning around the LCSC program, which she led to a 112-24 (.824) record during her tenure, Greeny spent four years on WSU coach Cindy Fredrick's coaching staff. Her time as an assistant coach at WSU was highlighted by the Cougars' second-ever appearance in the regional championship of the NCAA Tournament in 2002.

As a volleyball student-athlete at WSU, she became the seventh player in Washington State history to reach 1,000 career kills and was a three-time All-Pac-10 Conference selection. Greeny (Stinson) still ranks eighth in career block assists (360), fourth in total blocks (419) and eighth in solo blocks (59). Greeny received invites to train with the U.S. National Team during her playing days and has since held roles as a talent evaluator and assistant coach with USA Volleyball. She was an assistant coach on the 2016 USA Volleyball Collegiate National Team and was later invited to join the USA volleyball staff for the 2022 Women's National Team Open Program.

Greeny earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Washington State in 1999. She and her husband Burdette, a former standout pitcher at WSU and an assistant coach on Greeny's staff in Pullman, have two daughters, Lauren and Leah.

Burdette Greeny, associate volleyball head coach

With 16 years of coaching experience under his belt, Burdette Greeny was named the associate head volleyball coach at West Virginia in January of 2024.

Greeny recently completed his 13th season at Washington State in 2023 and was instrumental in WSU's eight-consecutive NCAA tournament appearances. He joined the Cougar volleyball program in March 2011 as an assistant coach and was promoted to associate head coach in February 2017. Washington State finished the season in the AVCA Top 25 in four of the last five years, including each of the past three seasons.

With a coaching style that emphasizes serving, passing and defense, the Cougars have finished in the top 50 in the NCAA in blocks per set each of the past nine seasons including the third-best mark in Division I volleyball back in 2016 (3.23 b/s). Washington State finished the 2022 season with the 16th-best team hitting percentage (.280) in the nation, the second-best all-time mark in Cougar volleyball history.

Greeny consistently brought in top-level recruiting talent with some of the Cougars' most-highly touted classes raising the level of play in recent years. Among Greeny's WSU recruits are six PrepVolleyball.com Top 100 players and two Gatorade State Players of the Year.

Aubrey Becker, assistant volleyball coach

Becker joined the Mountaineer coaching staff in January 2024 after two seasons as an assistant coach at Iowa. Previously, she spent one year as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator for Oral Roberts.

At Iowa, Becker assisted in all aspects of training, scouting, recruiting, scheduling, media content and summer camps.

Prior to that, Becker was an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at Davidson from 2019-21.

The Tulsa, Oklahoma, native was a three-year starter at Austin Peay, where she played setter and opposite. She was a two-time all-tournament selection and 2015 team MVP. She ranks among the program's career leaders in assists (7th) and total blocks (16th).

Becker earned her bachelor's degree in communications and public relations and graduated magna cum laude from Austin Peay in 2016. She added a master's degree in coaching and athletic administration from Concordia University Irvine in 2017.

Mike Becker, assistant volleyball coach

Becker joined the West Virginia volleyball staff in January of 2024 after spending one season at Iowa as an assistant coach and was the Director of Volleyball Video Analytics.

In Iowa, Becker oversaw the production of practice and gameday video as well as data analytics. Becker also was responsible for coding in-match and providing the statistical breakdown of the Hawkeyes and their opponents. He created and implemented camp plans for Iowa's volleyball camps and assisted in the creative and marking side of student-athlete recruitment.

Prior to his time in Iowa City, Becker served as an assistant coach at Michigan State for one season.

A native of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Becker was a standout collegiate student-athlete at Springfield College from 2009-13. He earned his Bachelor of Science in sport management from Springfield College in 2013 and a Master of Science in athletic administration from the University of the Pacific in 2016.

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Sean Covich, head golf coach

A nationally recognized program builder and relentless recruiter who specializes in player development, Sean Covich has engineered one of college golf's top stories nationally — restarting the West Virginia University men's golf program from scratch in 2014 and leading it to the national championships in record time.

After guiding the Mountaineers to the NCAA Championships during the 2023-24 season, Covich was named the 2024 Big 12 Conference Golf Coach of the Year and tabbed a finalist for the 2024 Dave Williams Award presented by Golf Pride Grips, given annually to the nation's top coach.

Covich was selected to be WVU's 12th men's golf coach on May 22, 2014, as West Virginia reintroduced men's golf as a varsity sport following a 31-year hiatus. Covich's program centers around player growth and development, maximizing each player's full potential on and off the course.

He has developed all-conference players and All-Americans, while multiple players have gone on to play professionally on the PGA & Korn Ferry Tours, including Chad Ramey (PGA Tour), Mark Goetz (Korn Ferry Tour) and Etienne Papineau (Korn Ferry Tour).

**Sean Covich**

enne Papineau (Korn Ferry Tour). Covich has signed numerous state junior players of the year, No. 1-ranked junior college players, as well as players from over 10 different countries from across the globe during his college coaching career.

West Virginia's 2024 NCAA Championships appearance was its second in program history (first since 1947) after finishing tied for third place as a No. 10 seed at the Rancho Santa Fe Regional. WVU won two tournaments (Red Bandanna Invitational and Mountaineer Invitational) and posted its highest Big 12 Conference finish (5th out of 14 teams), while carding nine top-10 finishes for the season.

West Virginia racked up a program-best 97 victories on the year including wins over fourth-ranked Arizona State, 15th-ranked Washington, 14th-ranked Texas Tech, and several Top 50-ranked teams including Stanford, Houston, SMU and BYU, to solidify the greatest season in program history.

Covich and his wife, Kate, have one child, John Keenan.

Will Koras, assistant golf coach

Will Koras was hired as Assistant Golf Coach in August 2023 and was elevated to Assistant Coach/Director of Player Development a year later.

In Koras' first season at WVU, the Mountaineers made the 2024 NCAA Championships, their second appearance in program history (first since 1947) after finishing tied for third place as a No. 10 seed at the Rancho Santa Fe Regional. WVU won two tournaments (Red Bandanna Invitational and Mountaineer Invitational) and posted its highest Big 12 Conference finish (5th out of 14 teams), while carding nine top-10 finishes for the season.

Koras was a five-time letterwinner in golf at Maryland with four career top 10 finishes, including a sixth-place finish at the Mountaineer Invitational at Pete Dye Golf Club in April.

Koras attended Loyola Blakefield High in Towson, Maryland, where he also competed in football and lacrosse. He has two brothers who play lacrosse at Maryland and a sister who plays at Towson.

COACH BIOS COURTESY OF WVU ATHLETICS**2024 WVU Golf Fall Schedule****GOPHER INVITATIONAL**

Sept. 8-9 at Windsong Farm Golf Club Independence, Minn.

NEMACOLIN COLLEGIATE INVITATIONAL

Sept. 30 - Oct. 1 at Mystic Rock Golf Course Farmington, Pa.

BIG 12 MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIP

Oct. 7-9 at The Clubs at Houston Oaks Hockley, Texas

WHITE SANDS COLLEGIATE

Oct. 25-27 at The Ocean Club Golf Course Paradise Island, Bahamas

2025 WVU Golf Spring Schedule**BATTLE AT BRIAR'S CREEK**

Feb. 3-4 at The Golf Club at Briar's John's Island, SC

FLORIDA GATOR INVITATIONAL

Feb. 15-16 at Mark Bostick Golf Course Gainesville, Fla.

LAKE LAS VEGAS INTERCOLLEGIATE

Feb. 24-26 at Reflection Bay Golf Course Lake Las Vegas, Nev.

THE JOHNNIE-O AT SEA ISLAND

March 17-18 at Sea Island Golf Club St. Simons Island, Ga.

SCHENKEL INVITATIONAL

March 21-23 at Forest Heights Country Club Statesboro, Ga.

MOUNTAINEER INVITATIONAL

April 14-15 at Pete Dye Golf Club Bridgeport, W.Va.

BIG 12 GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

April 22-24 at Southern Hills Country Club Tulsa, Okla.



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