

# Lady Rams soccer reaches new milestone: ranked 22nd



Lady Rams' Christina Zimmerman celebrates beating after qualifying for nationals.

Photo: Courtesy of the Athletic Department

**Joakim Soederbaum**  
jsoederbaum@mail.txwes.edu

For the first time ever, the Texas Wesleyan University Lady Rams have been nationally ranked. After receiving votes in the final two ratings last season, the Texas Wesleyan University Lady Rams ended up as No. 22 in this year's preseason coaches' poll. The Lady Rams, who have captured three out of the last four Red River Athletic Conference Championships, look to build on the success.

"We have been there [nationals] and done that," head coach Josh Gibbs said. "Now we are looking for consis-

tency. We were only five games away from a national title and must have as a goal to keep raising the bar."

The accomplishment is even more impressive considering that the women's soccer program saw its first days in 1998 and didn't even compete in the 2001 season. The last couple of years, the program has seen a rapid development curve.

"We are always trying to improve compared to the previous season, and by continually raising the bar, it only makes sense to aim for top 16 now after we made the top 32 last year," Gibbs said.

Two factors that will help the

Lady Rams to further improve are the increased quality of other programs in the conference and a schedule that will prepare the Lady Rams for tougher games. This year, Our Lady of the Lake will add to the competitiveness of the Red River Athletic Conference Championship, and traditionally strong opponents like Oklahoma City and Oklahoma Baptist are other obstacles facing the Lady Rams during the fall.

Gibbs looks forward to an intense season despite losing three seniors.

"We have brought in 14 top-notch players who all possess the skill to start and contribute to us having our deepest team ever," he said.

Last year, the Lady Rams won both the Red River Regular Season and Tournament Championships before their season ended after a 2-0 loss at seventh seeded California Baptist University in the first round of the National Championship.

Gibbs is determined that last year's success wasn't a one-time wonder.

"The program has improved every year, and we will continue in the same direction in the future," he said.

Once getting a taste of the national soccer scene, the Lady Rams are looking to establish themselves as competitive regulars among the best programs in the country.

## Volleyball team gets ready for successful season

**Trisch Doengers**  
epdoenges@mail.txwes.edu

Head coach Christy Clawson anticipates the Lady Rams volleyball team to have a successful year.

"The girls are beginning this season on a better footing both mentally and physically," she said.

In addition to the relatively young group of players at her disposal last year, Clawson has brought on several new recruits.

The eight returning players will be accompanied by freshmen Christina Daniel, middle blocker; Devin Warren, middle blocker; Carleigh Dollar, outside hitter; and setter Angelica Arroyo. In addition, currently injured junior transfer Brooke Shelton, an All-American selection and Most Valuable Player of the NJCAA Division III National Tournament last season, led Brookhaven College to a National Championship. Clawson said Shelton is expected to be back in play by the conference playoffs. Another junior transfer, Kaitlyn Lowes, was recruited from Tarleton State University where she played for two years.

Clawson also enhanced the team's training repertoire by adding strength and conditioning coach Robert Brown to the staff.

Clawson saw last year as a time of rebuilding for the Lady Rams, as the team was younger and less experienced than present. She said the freshmen arriving this year have already played on a more competitive level.

Aware of the tough competition, Clawson is looking forward to a challenging but rewarding year.

"UT Brownsville and Wiley College are both expected to be competitive as they've recruited lots of international students, but this season our girls are a year older and more mature compared to last year.

Taking one set at a time, Clawson said the goal is to win conference and qualify for nationals.

"I anticipate a good season," she said.

**"Our girls are a year older and more mature compared to last year."**

**Christy Clawson**  
Head Coach

# Men's golf team places second at nationals

**Daniel Bravo**  
dabravo@mail.txwes.edu

While most students and faculty were back home enjoying the beginning of their summer vacation, the Texas Wesleyan men's golf team was still hard at work. After placing first in a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Qualifier Tournament in late April, the team qualified for the 58th NAIA Men's Golf National Championship, which took place in Silvis, Ill., May 19-22.

The Rams, ranked 18th nationally going into the tournament, were considered underdogs throughout most of the year. At the tournament, they placed second overall as a team, while Junior Armando Villarreal placed second

individually.

The second place finish was nothing new to the Rams, who have a long-standing tradition of producing great golf teams and individual players. However, the team hadn't reached this level of success since the 1998 season when the team brought home an Individual Championship.

Over the years, the team has produced six national titles, which is a tie for the most national titles in golf by any one institution.

Aside from the great golfing weather and the superb golf courses North Texas offers, Kevin Millikan, Texas Wesleyan's athletic director and last year's head coach, credits Wesleyan's success to good coaching and dedicated players such as Villarreal.

"He (Villarreal) is a very methodical player," Millikan said. "He's very consistent and makes a lot of good decisions on the golf course."

The team looks to build on last year's success by returning nine out of 12 golfers and bringing in three new freshmen.

Millikan expects Wesleyan to be mentioned among the top-10 or even the top-five teams when the NAIA preseason polls are released in early December. By then, the team would have already played a handful of tournaments. Millikan said by that time, he will have a good feel as to what kind of team the Rams will have.

The team might not have brought home the first place hardware last year but cer-

tainly gained valuable experience and confidence for the upcoming season.

"By far, this is one of the most rewarding experiences I've had as a coach," Millikan said.



Armando Villarreal finished second individually.

Photo: Courtesy of the Athletic Department

Upcoming Sports		
	Game	Time/Place
Saturday	Women's Soccer vs. Oklahoma Baptist	5:30 p.m. Wesleyan
	Men's Soccer vs. Oklahoma Baptist	7:30 p.m. Wesleyan
Sunday	Women's Soccer vs. Schreiner	1 p.m. Wesleyan
	Men's Soccer vs. Schreiner	3 p.m. Wesleyan
Tuesday	Women's Soccer vs. Oklahoma City	5 p.m. Wesleyan
	Men's Soccer vs. Oklahoma City	7 p.m. Wesleyan
Wednesday	Volleyball vs. Texas Woman's	7 p.m. Denton

## Wesleyan week-in-sports

- The **Lady Rams Soccer** team beat Wayland Baptist University (3-0) Aug. 28 and Ouachita Baptist University (6-2) Aug. 30.
- The **Rams Soccer** team beat Wayland Baptist University (2-1) in double over time Aug. 28 and followed up with a win against Ouachita Baptist University (3-1) Aug. 30.
- The **Lady Rams Volleyball** team recovered after losing the first two games against University of Arkansas Fort Smith (0-3) and Oklahoma Baptist University (0-3). On Aug. 29 they beat Southern Nazarene University (3-2) to record their first win of the season.

## Next week: Rams and Lady Rams soccer gear up for another season



Photo: Laura Rosser

Three of many new soccer players at Wesleyan: Sean Maloney, Tyler Keith, and Roberto Campuzano.

**"I owe a lot to my parents, especially my mother and father."**

**Greg Norman**  
Pro Golfer