A first time women’s basketball undisputed conference title, the largest crowds at men’s basketball in quite some time and a football player headed for the National Football League highlight the UW-Stout athletic program.

Women’s Basketball

For the first time since the 1997 season, the UW-Stout women’s basketball team captured the WIAC title, but this time with a twist—they did not share the crown with anyone else. Stout went 23-5 overall and 15-1 in conference play—both school records.

Two-time team MVP and two-time first team all-WIAC performer Amy Zelinger (Sr., Racine) led a very balanced attack that led the league in scoring, but did not have a player average more than 9.6 points.

Tanya Halbach (Jr., Janesville) joined Zelinger on the all-WIAC first team. Lindsey Ericson (Fr., Spring Valley, Minn.), Staci Anderson (Sr., Clayton) and Laura Verdegan (So., Tony) were honorable mention. Mark Thomas was named coach of the year for the third time.

Men’s Basketball

Even though they finished below .500, the men’s basketball team set a school attendance record when they tallied nearly 20,000 to the games. The Blue Devils and their noisy crowd finished the season at 12-13, 7-9 in league play to finish tied for sixth in an extremely balanced league that saw Stout twice knock off conference champion UW-Stevens Point and split with the other three teams that shared the WIAC title. The Blue Devils lost seven games by five points or less.

Steve Krueger (Sr., Three Lakes) was a first team all-WIAC pick.

Football

Stout continues its resurgence on the football field and moved into a new home when the Don and Nona Williams Stadium was opened Sept. 29. The Blue Devils christened the field with a 28-14 win over UW-Platteville.

Stout finished 6-3 overall, 4-3 in league play and tied for third.

Cornerback Tony Beckham (Sr., Oconomowoc) was a first team All-America choice and went on to play in the Blue Gray All-Star game and turned heads at the NFL Combines. Beckham was claimed by the Tennessee Titans as the 115th pick (fourth round) in the NFL draft.

Joining Beckham on the all-WIAC team were fellow All-America picks Eric Baker (Sr., Saron), Tanya Petcher (So., Marshfield) and Daniel Taylor (Sr., Remington). Joe Kersten (Sr., Colfax) and Luke Bundgaard (Sr., Clayton) were honorable mention.

Women’s Tennis

Luther Olson promises to build a tennis team with new attitude and he has a very young team to work with. The Blue Devils finished with a 2-6 record and were led by sisters Tammy and Tanya Petcher (So., Marshfield).

Hockey

Seems as if every other year, the Blue Devils fortunes take a downturn. That speaks well for next season. But this season an exciting young goalie stepped out of the shadows. Jeff Dotson (So., Chanhassen, Minn.) was named to both the NCHA and WIAC all-conference squads. Dotson was named the national Division III player of the week after stopping 59 shots in a 2-1 overtime win over UW-River Falls, Stout’s first win over the Falcons since 1979.

The Blue Devils were snake-bit in overtime games, putting together a 1-5-1 record in extra periods.

Gymnastics

Tasha Pasch (Sr., Northfield, Minn.) advanced to the national gymnastics championships for the third consecutive year, but for the first time did not achieve All-America status.

Injuries played a big part in the Blue Devils overall season.

Women’s Indoor Track and Field

Jennifer Luer finished third in the NCAA Division III Indoor Track and Field Championships in the pole vault.

Men’s Indoor Track and Field

Jeff Rotering (Sr., Waumbek) won the WIAC pole vault title, broke the school record in the event and placed third at the national meet.

Soccer

Nellie Sivertsen (Sr., River Falls) returned to the all-WIAC first team after a one-year hiatus and led the young team in scoring with 11 goals and five assists. Sivertsen holds nearly all of the Blue Devils scoring records, including career goals (12) with one more year to play. Stout finished at 10-9-1 overall, 4-4 in league play.

Men’s Cross Country

Keith Ellingon took over the coaching reins for the Blue Devils and Stout finished 13th at the NCAA Midwest Regionals and seventh at the WIAC meet.

Women’s Cross Country

Where the Blue Devils cross country team used to look like a few women out for a run, the Blue Devils have now posted some numbers with coach Joe Harlan building the team to more than 25 competitors. The numbers helped, as Stout placed seventh at the WIAC Championships, up a notch or two from the previous years.

Lacey Osuldsen (Fr., Ladysmith) was named the team MVP.

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