

UW Oshkosh Athletics Hall of Fame welcomes three inductees

by Contributor - Wednesday, May 09, 2012

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/18773/uw-oshkosh-athletics-hall-of-fame-welcomes-three-inductees/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Athletics Hall of Fame increased its roster to 166 members on Sunday, May 6 with the inductions of Tiffany (Speckman) Ebensperger, Jamie Ford and Braugeor Zeitler. The induction ceremony was held in UW Oshkosh's Reeve Memorial Union.

The UW Oshkosh Hall of Fame was established in 1974 to give tribute and deserved recognition to former athletes, coaches and friends of the university. It is also intended to enhance school tradition by honoring those people who have shown exceptional ability while on the UW Oshkosh campus and since graduation.

In the 34-year history of the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Cross Country Championship, only one woman has run to three individual titles. That person is Ebensperger, who also led UW Oshkosh to six national championships and 10 conference titles in cross country and track and field from 1994-98.

Ebensperger's senior year, the 1997-98 campaign, was an outstanding one. In the fall, she captured her third WIAC cross country title with a time of 18:01. Ebensperger was named the league's Scholar-Athlete of the Year, and UW-Oshkosh earned its fourth straight WIAC championship. The Titans placed fourth at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III Championship as Ebensperger won the individual crown with a time of 18:29. Laura Horejs (1991) is the only other person in UW-Oshkosh history with a national cross country title.

When the indoor track and field season came around in 1998, Ebensperger led UW-Oshkosh to the WIAC championship with individual titles in the 3,000- and 5,000-meter runs. She also won both of those events at the WIAC outdoor meet. At the NCAA Division III Indoor Track and Field Championship, Ebensperger was victorious in the 5,000-meter run with a time of 17:16. She nearly gained two more national titles when she finished second in both the 3,000- and 5,000-meter runs at the outdoor competition.

Ebensperger received the 1998 Honda NCAA Division III Woman Athlete of the Year Award, becoming the first winner from the WIAC. She was also a three-time selection to the Successful Farming All-American Team. Ebensperger's national awards contributed \$6,000 to UW-Oshkosh's general academic scholarship fund.

In cross country, Ebensperger was part of four WIAC championship teams. In three of those years (1994, 1996, 1997), she won the individual conference title and earned NCAA Division III All-America status. UW Oshkosh also took the team crown at the 1996 national championship.

UW-Oshkosh captured NCAA Division III indoor track and field titles in 1995 and 1996. Ebensperger helped the Titans to WIAC indoor crowns in 1995, 1996 and 1998, while also winning the 3,000-meter

run in 1995.

Outdoors, Ebensperger achieved a three-peat (1996-98) in the 3,000-meter run at the WIAC Track and Field Championship. The Titans then won the WIAC title and the NCAA championship from 1995-97.

Ebensperger, a four-time Academic All-American by the College Sports Information Directors of America, was named to both the WIAC Women's Cross Country and Track and Field All-Centennial Teams in 2012. She was inducted into the Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2005.

The Juda High School graduate still races competitively and has completed 13 marathons. At the 2012 Boston Marathon, she finished in 3:24:29 to lead all women from Wisconsin.

Ebensperger graduated from UW Oshkosh in 1998 and is currently a science teacher at Albany High School. She lives in Juda with her devoted husband, Eric.

Jamie Ford played only two years at UW Oshkosh, but her impact on the women's volleyball program was immense. She was a NCAA Division III All-American both seasons, while leading the Titans to a 75-18 record and their first Final Four appearance.

The St. Charles (Ill.) High School graduate started her collegiate volleyball career at Elgin Community College (Ill.). Ford guided that team to a 91-12-4 record over two years while earning National Junior College Athletic Association All-America honorable mention status in 1990.

Ford transferred to UW Oshkosh for the 1991 season and helped the Titans compile a 42-8 record. The record, which included a 19-game winning streak, established the second-highest victory total in school history. UW Oshkosh won both the WIAC championship and the NCAA Division III Midwest Regional to reach the Final Four in St. Louis, Mo.

At the Final Four, UW Oshkosh fell to eventual national champion Washington University (Mo.) by a 3-1 score. Ford, a setter, posted 40 assists in that semifinal match. During the third-place contest, she totaled 45 assists as Juniata College (Pa.) defeated UW Oshkosh, 3-1. For the season, Ford compiled 1,526 assists, 352 digs and 30 service aces to collect NCAA Division III All-America first team honors.

Ford missed the 1992 season with an injury. When she returned in 1993, UW Oshkosh tallied a 33-10 record and made another national postseason appearance. In the first round of the NCAA Division III Championship, UW-Eau Claire ousted UW Oshkosh in a five-set battle. Ford compiled 44 assists in that match as the Titans finished 17th in the nation. An All-America second-team pick, Ford finished with 1,422 assists, 230 digs, 57 service aces and a .378 hitting percentage.

In 93 career matches, Ford counted 2,948 assists, 582 digs and 87 service aces. The 1995 UW Oshkosh graduate was also named twice to the NCAA Division III All-Central Region and All-WIAC first teams.

Ford lives in Milwaukee, where she has been a professional nail technician for the last 13 years. Ford currently owns a nail business in Wauwatosa while working as a national educator. Each summer, she returns to UW Oshkosh work as a clinician at the school's volleyball camps.

Braugeor Zeitler didn't have the traditional four-year college career. Playing mens tennis for UW Oshkosh in 1957, 1960, 1961 and 1963, his performance on the court was also anything but ordinary.

Zeitler graduated from Fond du Lac Goodrich High School and immediately thrived at UW Oshkosh. During his freshman season, he tallied an 11-2 singles record and was named the Titans' Most Valuable Player. Although Zeitler was defeated in the WIAC Tournament, he would not lose again for the next six years.

Zeitler didn't compete during the 1958 and 1959 seasons because of work obligations. Returning to the court in 1960, he was unstoppable. Zeitler played No. 1 singles and finished the season with a perfect 10-0 record. Due to WIAC restrictions, Zeitler could only play in one bracket at the league tournament. He chose No. 1 doubles, where Bill Simon joined him for a 6-1, 6-4 victory over a tandem from UW-La Crosse in the title match. Zeitler and Simon went 11-0 for the season as the Titans captured the WIAC championship.

In 1961, Zeitler captured the WIAC No. 1 singles title. He rolled through a flawless regular season and gained the league championship with his 12-0 record. Zeitler also played on UW Oshkosh's top doubles team that qualified for the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Championship.

The Wisconsin National Guard called Zeitler to active duty in 1962. While stationed at Fort Lewis in Washington, he was still able to display his talents. Zeitler won the base's individual championship with a 6-2, 6-0, 6-1 decision over Roman Jimenez.

Zeitler's senior year of 1963 featured another perfect regular season. At the WIAC Tournament, he defeated his first four singles opponents by a combined score of 48-7. Zeitler then topped UW-La Crosse's Jim Stenson, 6-1, 6-3, in the final. That victory sent him to the NAIA Championship, where he compiled a 1-1 record. For his career, Zeitler owned a 53-3 record in singles play.

After earning his bachelor's degree from UW-Oshkosh in 1964, Zeitler obtained two more degrees in art. He was an art teacher at Oshkosh West High School from 1972-99, while also spending time as a tennis pro at several local clubs.

Zeitler utilized his experience as the Oshkosh West High School tennis coach. He led the boys team from 1972 to 2003 and the girls team squad from 1987 to 2003. During that time, each squad won two Fox Valley Association championships. In 1999, The Appleton Post-Crescent named Zeitler as its Boys Tennis Coach of the Year.

Zeitler continued to play after college, winning the Wisconsin Open Doubles Tournament with Kip Whitlinger in 1967. He remains a lifetime member of UW-Oshkosh's Alumni Association, Titan Booster Club and National "O" Club. Earlier this year, Zeitler was named to the WIAC All-Centennial Men's Tennis Team.

Zeitler and his wife, Donna, live in Pine River. They have two children, including daughter Jancee who played women's tennis for the Titans.

[Kennan Timm](#) submitted this announcement. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to contribute

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