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Ten players sign volleyball letters of intent

WAHPETON — Ten student-athletes from North Dakota, Minnesota and South Dakota have signed National Junior College Athletic Association letters of intent to play volleyball at the North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton for the 2008 season.

The ten are: Tracy Mauch, Wyndmere; Sarah Erickson, Fergus Falls, Minn.; Jodi Gallagher, Drayton; Whitley Abrahamson, Dickinson; Brooke Backhaus, Pollock, S.D.; Kayla Marie Dougherty, Sartell, Minn.; Kacie Reardon, East Grand Forks, Minn.; Amanda Hennen, Halstad, Minn.; Lexi Braun, Wahpeton; and Julia Fisher, Wahpeton.

“I am so excited about our incoming class of freshmen this year,” said head coach Jane Passa. “I believe we have a great core at every position, especially at the setter spots. I feel that these freshmen will help the Wildcats stay on top. We look forward to competing for another region title and national tournament berth.”

Mauch, a 5-foot-7 outside hitter, was her team’s MVP for two years, was a two-time all-district player, and was named to the all-conference team. She was the team’s passing leader and team captain.

Erickson, a 6-foot setter/RS, was named her team’s best setter for two years and was named to the all-conference team her senior year. Erickson was also a four-year letter winner in track and a two-year letter winner in basketball.

Gallagher, a 5-foot-7 outside hitter, was named 2006 NDHSCA District 5 outstanding senior athlete. She was named all-conference for two years and led her team in kills for two years.

Abrahamson, a 5-foot-6 setter, was on the 2006 all-state tournament team and received her team’s hardest worker award. In 2007 she was named to the All-West Region team, all-state team and was named Dickinson High School team MVP. She holds the school records for assists in a season, points served and career assists at Dickinson High School.

Backhaus, a 5-foot-6 setter, was an all-conference selection her senior year. She also is her school’s co-valedictorian, an A-honor roll student and class vice president.

Dougherty, a 5-foot-7 setter, was top ten in her conference for two years in serve aces and set assists, a two-year letter winner and starter, and conference honorable mention. She had more than 1,000 career assists at Sartell High School and was the 2007 Coaches' Award winner for her excellent dedication and achievement.

Reardon, a 5-foot-11 middle and outside hitter, was a three-year letter winner, all-conference player, all-state nominee and academic all-state player. Reardon set the school records in matches played and single season blocks, assists and attack efficiency.

Hennen, a 5-foot-4 defensive specialist, is an active high school student participating in volleyball, basketball, Junior Olympic volleyball, National Honor Society, student senate, Jazz I, band, choir and Close-Up.

Braun, a 5-foot-10 outside hitter, led her team in kills, was the team MVP and was an all-conference selection in 2007. She also was an all-conference and second-team all-state selection in basketball and a standout jumper in track.

Fisher, a 5-foot-10 outside hitter, was named captain of her 2007 volleyball team and was a *Wahpeton Daily News* athlete of the week. She won the Huskie Sportsman Award and serves as her senior class secretary.

The Wildcats, 27-13 overall last year, won the Mon-Dak Conference and the Region XIII titles. They competed in the NJCAA Division II National Tournament in Scottsdale, Ariz. NDSCS returns five players: Katrina Brekke, East Grand Forks, Minn.; Jenna Bjerke, Volga, S.D.; Megan Theis, Shakopee, Minn.; Breann Anderson, Burlington; and Sarah Stahlke, Waconia, Minn. The Wildcats are coached by Passa and assistant Lindsey Wasland.

NDSCS is a two-year, comprehensive, residential college in Wahpeton. The State College of Science offers degrees, certificates and diplomas in over 80 academic options in traditional career and technical studies and in the liberal arts. Last year, 98 percent of NDSCS graduates entered the workforce or continued their college education.

Unlike most two-year colleges, NDSCS offers a university atmosphere for its students, complete with residence halls, 35 affiliated clubs and organizations, music groups, theater productions, intercollegiate athletics, intramural athletics and numerous social activities.