

Coming Together As a Team

Hansen and Lady Bears Continue to Grow and Win

By Jake Loftus

It has been, without a doubt, a good season for the Concordia women's basketball team, as well as junior point-guard Rachel Hansen (#11). Having already surpassed their win total of 11 from last season, Hansen said the reason for the improvement has been, "We have come together as a team, believing in ourselves and each other. With another year experience and some key additions this year, a positive attitude has developed, leading to major improvements." Hansen has a point, considering last year Concordia had one of the youngest teams in the NSIC, the starters including two freshmen, two sophomores (including Hansen) and one junior for most of the season. Although Hansen had a good season that year, she is focused more on the current season and winning more games, "Last year is in the past, and our focus is week to week and what we can do to keep improving throughout the season and keep winning."

Being the starting point guard is a major responsibility, of which Hansen has thanked the players before her for helping her grow. "Being able

to play as a freshman with experienced senior guards allowed me to gain college experience with key leadership," said Hansen. "That has helped me as a sophomore and now a junior to gain game experience, that, and working hard and getting stronger in the offseason." As of her strengths as a player at her position, Hansen said, "I feel that some of my strengths include, court vision, ball handling skills, passing, and finding lanes to drive the basket." And Rachel seems to be equally successful in her studies, seeing that she was named Academic All-NSIC last season. "Education is very important to me," exclaimed Hansen. "And being a student-athlete teaches you the importance and discipline to use time wisely so that you can be successful on the court and in the classroom." Rachel and her teammates, more than likely, hope to continue their winning ways to the end of the season and into the NSIC Tournament, and from there, well, the sky's the limit.

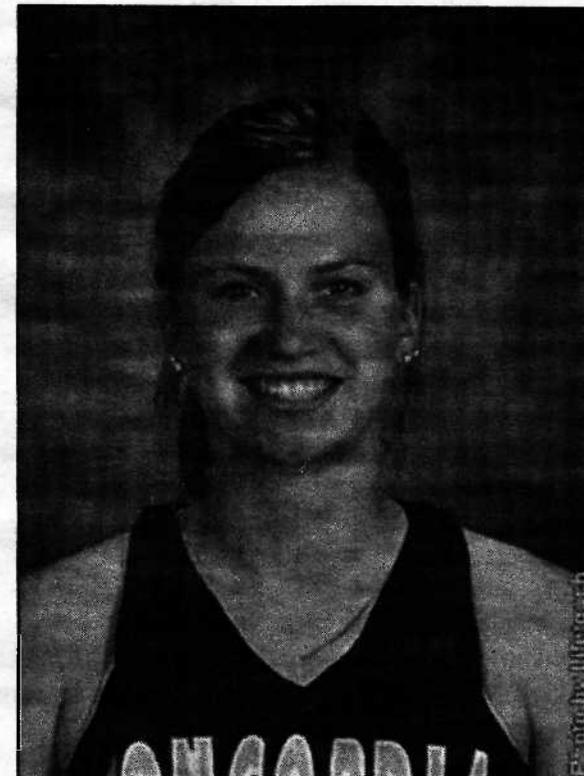


Photo By Lifetouch

Olstad Grows Through Adversity

Cole Olstad Continues to Make a Name for Himself in Men's Basketball

By Jake Loftus



Photo By Jarrin Williams

quicker shot," Olstad explained. He continued "I also believe I am a better defensive player this year mentally and physically and I've become more confident as a player and comfortable on the court."

It's been a tough season for Concordia's men's basketball team, and it seems unlikely that coach Kelly Bo's young team will be making the NSIC Tournament this season. Though, in a season of hardships, people can still appreciate the effort these young student-athletes put into each game. That is especially true for sophomore guard Cole Olstad. The second year native of Elgin, Minn. is having a career season after a stellar freshman season last year. Olstad himself has noticed his steady improvement, "I feel I have improved in my overall strength and my ability to take it stronger to the basket off

Olstad would like to see himself as a team player who can do multiple things on the court to help his team. And he has certainly moved closer to that role, he is near the top of the team in rebounds this year, is second in scoring, and leads it in steals. "I still need improve on getting my shots off with a quicker release because defensive players at this level are really good and there is no such thing as an open shot," Olstad pointed out. "My overall condition has improved but it still needs to be much better."

Cole, however, isn't the only Olstad on the roster, his older brother Clay is also on the team. "It is great to be at college with my brother," said the younger of the two. He continued "This was one of the main reasons I selected Concordia. My brother and I have been playing basketball and other sports together since third grade." In fact, the Olstad family seems to have basketball in their veins, his older sisters, Candace and Kali, made their marks playing basketball for Concordia years back. But as of now, Cole is focusing on finishing the season strong and continuing to grow as a player. And though the season is a disappointing one for Concordia, Olstad has found some positives. "It is very frustrating to experience this type of disappointing season but I am still enjoying my time at college with my brother, Clay and my teammates." As for the rest of the season, Olstad said "I would like to win at least five of the last eight games and hope our team can try to make each other better and win some games."