

McKinney Named Softball Mvp

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For the second year in a row, **Mallory McKinney** has been named the UW-Eau Claire softball MVP.

Fifth-year coach Leslie Huntington announced her award winners following a stellar campaign in which the Blugolds finished with a 37-6 record and were ranked No. 10 in the final NFCA (National Fastpitch Coaches Association) Division III national poll.

McKinney (*Jr.-Brooklyn Park, MN/Champlin Park*) broke six school pitching records as she fashioned a 26-3 record with an 0.72 ERA and 183 strikeouts in 184 2/3 innings of work. She threw 13 shutouts this season and at one point pitched 61 consecutive scoreless innings. For the second time in her career, she was named WIAC (Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference) Pitcher of the Year, sharing it with UW-Oshkosh's Ronessa Stampfli, and also was named to the AFCA All-American Second Team for a second time. With one season remaining, she has already broken the school career strikeout record with 408. Her other new single season standards are strikeouts (183), shutouts (13), complete games (24), wins (26) and earned run average (0.72).

Besides her pitching, McKinney batted .333 and led the team in RBI with 33 as she boasted a .553 slugging percentage.

The Big Stick Award went to sophomore **Casey Leisgang** (*Seymour*) who had won the Golden Glove Award last year. Leisgang was the top hitter among the regulars with a .403 average. She had a .748 slugging percentage as she broke the school home run record with 11, five of which came leading off a game. She topped the team in hits (56), doubles (11) and runs scored (44) and was second in RBI (31).

Junior **Shannon Barone** (*De Pere*) received the Golden Glove Award this year after winning the Most Improved Award last year. She had a .947 fielding percentage at second base, handling 151 chances during the season.

Two freshmen shared Rookie of the Year honors. They were pitcher **Bri Sturm** (*Zumbrotta, MN/Zumbrotta-Mazeppa*) and catcher **Robyn Fennig** (*Muskego*). Sturm fashioned an 8-1 record in 17 appearances on the mound and tied the school record with two saves. Fennig worked her way into the starting lineup as the backstop and threw out five runners attempting to steal while starting 26 games.

The Most Improved Award went to freshman Megan Ellenbecker (Athens) who spent much of the season as the designated hitter. She batted .290 and had a .435 slugging percentage with three doubles, two triples and a home run. She drove in 11 runs.

Winning the Blugold Award for the second straight year was senior **Mandy Freidel** (*Tomahawk*). The award recognizes the hustle, enthusiasm, spirit and dedication that a player brings to practice and games on a regular basis.

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