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2006 IOWA CONFERENCE WOMEN'S SOCCER PREVIEW

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA . . . Loras College, winners of four of the last five Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (IIAC) women's soccer championships, is the coaches' pick to win the 2006 IIAC title. The Duhawks received seven of eight first-place votes and one second-place vote, totaling 71 points in the IIAC women's soccer Coaches' Poll.

The remaining two first-place votes went to Wartburg College, along with four second-place votes and a pair of third-place votes. The Knights are second in the preseason poll with 64 points followed by Simpson College (55 points) and the University of Dubuque (53 points). The complete 2006 IIAC women's soccer Coaches' Poll follows.

Rank	School (1st place votes)	Points	2005 Record
1	Loras (7)	71	18-4, 8-0 IIAC
2	Wartburg (2)	64	14-6, 7-1 IIAC
3	Simpson	55	12-4-2, 5-2-1 IIAC
4	Dubuque	53	12-6-2, 5-2-1 IIAC
5	Luther	47	8-9-2, 4-4 IIAC
6	Cornell	35	8-11, 2-6 IIAC
7	Coe	28	8-9-1, 2-6 IIAC
8	Buena Vista	26	7-11, 2-6 IIAC
9	Central	17	7-11, 0-8 IIAC

Conference Tournament: The top-six teams following the regular season round-robin schedule qualify for the 2006 Iowa Conference Tournament with an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament on the line. The quarterfinal matches, played at the #3 and #4 seeds, will be October 31 or November 1. The semifinals and finals are November 3-4, hosted by the top seed.

Team-By-Team Preview: A brief preview for each Iowa Conference team follows.

Buena Vista returns eight starters and 12 letterwinners from last season's 7-11 team that finished tied for sixth in the Conference with a 2-6 record. The Beavers are coming off a record setting season that saw team marks set for wins, goals (40), assists (31) and points (111) in a season. Sophomore forward/midfielder **Lindsay Rague** set the school single-season records with nine goals and 23 points. After just one season, she ranks second on the school's career list in both categories and is tied for second on the career assist list (5). Junior forward/midfielder **Dani Miller** tied for second on the team with five goals last season and is the school's career leader with 11. Senior defender **Jodi Coleman**, a two-time All-Conference selection, recorded a school record seven assists last season from her back position and has a school record 12 assists during her career. Junior midfielder **Michaela Monjaraz** scored a goal and added an assist.

Central returns eight starters and 10 letterwinners from last season's 7-11 team that finished ninth in the Conference with an 0-8 record. The Dutch got off to a strong start, scoring 39 goals in winning seven of their first eight games, but they scored just two goals in dropping their final 10 games. Sophomore forward **Tori Rittman** had a team-high 11 goals, which was tied for eighth in the Conference, and assisted on five others for 27 points (ninth in the Conference). Two-time All-Conference goalkeeper **Ashley Veigelt** played every minute of every game last year and finished with the third-best goals against average in the Conference (1.49). She led the IIAC with 7.39 saves per game, was second with an .831 save percentage and tied for fourth with five shutouts. She is joined in the back by senior **Megan Augustin** and sophomore **Erin Sheehan**, both of whom scored one goal in addition to their strong defensive play a year ago.

Central head coach **Rick Burns** says, "We have nowhere to go but up. We have added 2-3 strong freshman and two impact transfers to our eight returning starters. We believe, barring injury, we will be a more competitive side. Our strengths are leadership, enthusiasm, our goalkeeper and back line. Our weaknesses are depth and lack of tradition."

Coe returns all 11 starters and all 13 letterwinners from last season's 8-9-1 team that finished tied for sixth in the Conference with a 2-6 record. Junior forward **Jenny McArdle** is a two-time All-Conference pick and senior midfielder **Erica Baasten** was an All-Conference pick following her freshman year. McArdle finished second on the Kohawks with nine goals and 20 points last season. Four of her nine goals were game winners. Baasten was third in team scoring with four goals and 11 points in 2005. Seniors **Miranda White** and **Shannon Osborn** will anchor the Coe defense that ranked eighth in goals allowed last year (2.44 per game).

Coe head coach **Donovan Kron** says, "Our girls are excited about the season. With everyone back, our newcomers should provide the depth needed to make a run at the Conference Tournament."

Cornell returns 10 starters and 17 letterwinners from last season's 8-11 team that finished tied for sixth in the Conference with a 2-6 record. The Rams return more than half of its scoring offense as sophomores **Brianna Wallace** and **Sara Bleeker** combined for 19 of the team's 36 goals from their forward and midfield positions, respectively, as freshmen. Wallace tied for fifth in the Conference with 12 goals, including five game winners. She was tied for seventh in the IIAC with 29 points, earning Second Team All-Conference honors. Bleeker tied for second on the team with seven goals and was third with 17 points. Junior **Emily Isenberg** will anchor the defense this year after earning Second Team All-Conference honors last season.

Cornell co-head coach **Steve Robertson** says, "If we can find someone to step into the midfield for graduated senior and four-time All-IIAC performer Kim Bussiere, with 10 starters returning we will be a much improved team. It may take some time during the season, but with some hard work we should be able to get back to the top of the Conference."

Dubuque returns eight starters and 11 letterwinners from last season's 12-6-2 team that finished tied for third in the Conference with a 5-2-1 record. Senior forward **Kim Monigold** and junior midfielder **Caitlin Tero** return as a potent 1-2 scoring punch for the Spartans. Monigold, the 2005 Conference MVP and Third Team All-Central Region, finished in the top-10 nationally in points per game (5th, 3.2 ppg) and goals per game (9th, 1.3 gpg), leading the Conference with 26 goals and 64 points. Her 12 assists tied for third in IIAC. Tero tied for the Conference lead with 14 assists, finished second in the Conference in points (42) and third in goals (14) as she earned First Team All-Conference honors. Defensively, junior **Brittney Lund** and senior **Margaret Williamson** anchor the back. Lund started 18 games in goal, recorded five shutouts, and posted a 1.70 goals against average (fifth in IIAC) and a .788 save percentage (fourth in IIAC). Williamson scored two goals from her defensive position last year.

Dubuque head coach **Jason Berna** says, "Coming off a great finish last year we will look to continue that momentum in 2006 with an even higher finish in the conference. We will look to tighten things up in the back while keeping our very dangerous offensive style the same."

Loras returns seven starters and 11 letterwinners from last season's 18-4-0 team that finished first in the Conference with an 8-0 record. The Duhawks won their fourth Conference title in five years behind eight shutouts in eight Conference games. Overall, goalkeeper **Torey Murray** posted a 15-4 record with a 0.64 goals against average and an .817 save percentage as a freshman. She led the IIAC in GAA, was second in shutouts (6.2) and third in save percentage. All-Conference defenders **Lauren Schaefflein** and **Jenna Kosek** give Murray experience in front of her. Schaefflein, a junior two-time All-Conference selection, scored one goal, and Kosek, a sophomore, scored a goal and added two assists. Junior midfielder **Katee Whitney** and junior forward **Maria Prendergast** are Loras' top returning offensive threats from last year's #2 ranked offense. Whitney, an All-Conference selection, scored five goals and had two assists. Prendergast recorded 16 points on five goals and six assists.

Loras head coach **Dan Rothert** says, "We are excited to get the 2006 season underway. Building off last year's IIAC Championship and fifth straight Iowa Conference Tournament title and NCAA Tournament appearance, we have a solid nucleus returning this season. The team has worked extremely hard in the off season and pairing that, with a strong recruiting class, we hope to continue our tradition of success this year. We have a very strong non-conference schedule which should help prepare us the Conference portion of our schedule."

Luther returns seven starters and 14 letterwinners from last season's 8-9-2 team that finished fifth in the Conference with a 4-4 record. First Team All-Conference senior goaltender **Lilly Steinberg**, an All-Region selection last season, and sophomore defender **Sara Walters** anchor the Norse defense. Steinberg started all 19 games last season and finished with a 1.70 goals against average and a .784 save percentage, ranking fourth and fifth in the Conference. She has 15 career shutouts including six last year. Walters was fifth in team scoring from her back position with four goals and 10 points. Senior midfielder **Laura Heidt** and sophomore **Emily Ironside**, All-Conference selections last season, are Luther's top returning offensive threats. Ironside was second on the team with 13 goals and 32 points as a freshman and tied for the team lead with six assists. She ranked fourth in the Conference in goals scored and fifth in points. Heidt tied for the team lead with six assists, and finished third with six goals and 18 points.

Luther head coach **Doug Mello** says, "After a successful campaign, considering all the season ending injuries [five], we will again be in a position to fight for the Conference title. Seven returning starters, along with a large number of top level talent, has us pumped up for the 06 season."

Simpson returns 10 starters and 15 letterwinners from last season's 12-4-2 team that finished tied for third in the Conference with a 5-2-1 record. Sophomore goalkeeper **Whitney Franker** and senior defender **Jessica Keyser** anchored the defense last year that finished second in the Conference with a 0.92 goals against average. Franker led the IIAC with an .862 save percentage and eight shutouts (school record), and ranked second with a 0.92 GAA. Keyser is a two-time All-Conference back. Seniors **Ashley Curran**, a three-time All-Conference selection, and **Morgan Kelly** are the Storm's top offensive returnees, splitting time at forward and midfield. Curran led Simpson with 12 goals and 31 points last season. She tied for fifth in goals and was sixth in points in the Conference. Kelly led the team with eight assists, was second with 24 points and third with eight goals last season. Her eight assists ranked sixth in the Conference.

Simpson head coach **Cory Chapman** said, "The women's game is continuing to get better each year and this year should be no different. Knowing the champion gets to host the Conference Tournament makes every game that much more important."

Wartburg returns seven starters and 17 letterwinners from last season's 14-6 team that finished second in the Conference with a 7-1 record. Forward **Rachel Oswald** led the Knights in scoring last year as a freshman, ranking fourth in the Conference with 33 points, tying for fifth with 12 goals and ranking fifth with nine assists. She was the lone freshman to earn First Team All-Conference honors. Junior midfielder/defender **Katelin Gannon** scored seven goals and totaled 15 points for the Conference's top ranked scoring offense. Senior midfielder **Kristin Beck** was named Second Team All-Conference for the third time, scoring three goals and adding six assists. Senior **Jenna Dodd**, a Second Team All-Conference performer last year, anchors the defense.

Wartburg head coach **Jim Conlon** says, "We are excited about this team. We've got most of our offense, the core of our defense and a strong group of midfielders back. We also have our two goalkeepers returning. The possibilities are unlimited. The big key, though, will be having everyone understand their roles for the team."

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