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Mark Womack

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YELLOW JACKET

TEAM EFFORT: THE KEY TO YELLOW JACKETS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS

BY MARK WOMACK '83

The academic awards have been rolling in for Cedarville University Athletics. The Yellow Jackets assembled an incredible 3.44 combined grade point average among all 16 varsity programs in 2021–22.

A total of 183 men and women earned G-MAC Academic Team status. Among the accolades, most notable was that Cedarville achieved the NCAA's prestigious Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence for the ninth-consecutive year.

With success comes sacrifice both in competition and in the classroom. What happens behind the scenes between the student-athletes, coaches, and professors is just as strategic as any game plan.

"It's stressful at times," admitted nursing major and women's soccer standout Mary Kate Wyr '23. "I have to be intentional in organizing my time, plus it's important to work ahead and be involved with a good study group. My support system of teammates and classmates have been a big help."

Despite the challenges of dual excellence in the classroom and on the pitch, Wyr's performance exceeded expectations. The Florida native is not only an NCCAA All-American, but she's just the second Lady Jacket soccer player to be named a CoSIDA Academic All-American®.

As a team, Cedarville women's soccer is exceptional in the classroom. Their combined 3.55 grade point average earned them the United Soccer Coaches Team Academic Award again. Even though intercollegiate athletics have become a year-round endeavor, the Yellow Jackets are "student-athletes first."

Head Coach Jonathan Meade explained, "Our academic expectations are clearly communicated because it's ultimately the players' responsibility. We want them to do well and

graduate. Along with game days, there are always conflicts to work around like labs and late classes. We're proactive in making sure professors are informed so there are no surprises."



As a former athlete and coach herself, Faculty Athletic Representative Teresa (Cooper) Clark '75 is the perfect mediator between the Athletics Department and her fellow faculty members.

"Student-athletes must be proactive in their studies and in communicating with their professors," she said. "That responsibility along with the policies in the University's faculty handbook help make it all work. It's a team effort between the student-athletes, coaches, and professors."

Mark Womack '83 serves as the Sports Information Director at Cedarville University.