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New Ultimate Frisbee Team Competes in National Tournament Series

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – In its first full season of Ultimate Frisbee, Cedarville University’s team was ranked fifth in the nation for Division III and qualified to compete in the USA Ultimate College Series this past weekend. Now, with a strong showing in the College Series, Cedarville’s team will compete in the national tournament in Columbus, Ohio, on May 17.

The Yellow Jackets advanced to the national tournament by going 3-2 in their pool play this past weekend. At the end of the tournament, Cedarville was tied with two other schools, but its 14-13 victory over Franciscan University propelled Cedarville into the national competition. Franciscan had defeated Cedarville earlier this season.

Seniors Eric Shomo of Marshalltown, Iowa, and John Laubscher of Cedarville said they didn’t know what to expect when they started an Ultimate Frisbee club last year. In its first competition, the team lost only to professional players. “That’s when we first saw our team had the potential to do really well,” Shomo said.

This year, the team applied for sanctioning to compete in USA Ultimate’s national tournament. Shomo said this increased expenses for the team, but players have rallied around the goal of making it to nationals.

“To be a one-loss team going into the postseason is crazy,” Shomo said. “This is our first year, and we’re coming out of nowhere.”
According to Ultimate Frisbee news site Ultiworld, Cedarville’s team burst onto the national scene and dominated Midwestern tournaments. “Their mindset and play is not that of a new team,” wrote Jesse Moskowitz for Ultiworld. “They are one of the hottest teams to watch going forward.”

Cedarville’s team won its first tournament in March, then placed second in the Kentucky Classic on March 29 after losing by two points to Chicago.

Shomo said the team is a highly athletic, close-knit group of players. 38 students are members of the Ultimate Frisbee club, and 20 make up the varsity team that travels to tournaments. Junior Kyle Bradley of New Holland, Pa., said the players have bonded not only through their love for Frisbee, but also through their goal to represent Christ to other teams. Bradley, who will lead the team next year, said the students always support each other and pray with their opponents after each game. “That mindset really changes how our team comes together,” Bradley said. “It’s an added common goal.”

Cedarville University, located east of Dayton, Ohio, has 3,459 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 100 areas of study. A Baptist university of arts, sciences, professional and graduate programs, Cedarville is recognized nationally for rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. Visit the University online at www.cedarville.edu.