



HISTORIC SEASON

FOR LADY PATRIOTS SOCCER

HEARTLAND CONFERENCE CHAMPS FINISH AMONG TOP IN THE NATION



When previewing her team before the 2011 season began, fourth-year Head Soccer Coach **Michelle Lenard** was asked about her thoughts on the talent level of her upcoming team. She replied, "We are going to have to out work teams; we are going to have to grind out some wins; and we are just going to have to be physically and mentally tougher than whoever is on the other side of the field."

Her words were almost prophetic as the Lady Patriots willed themselves to a 16-6-1 record; a regular season Heartland Conference Championship;

a trip to the round of 16 in the NCAA Division II Soccer Championship; and a final ranking of #15 in the country, the best in school history.

After winning the 2011 Heartland Conference Championship with a 9-1 conference record, the Lady Patriots were selected for an at-large berth to the NCAA Division II South Central Regional Tournament in Edmond, Oklahoma. After knocking off the University of Central Missouri 3-1 in the opening round, the Lady Patriots upset host Central Oklahoma 1-0, while posting their 14th shutout of the season.

The win over OCU earned the Patriots a trip to Los Angeles, California, and a rematch of their first game of the season against Abilene Christian University. In a carbon copy match, ACU defeated the Lady Patriots, 2-1, in overtime to stop the DBU run at a championship – but not the momentum generated by the historic season.

Lenard, who was selected by her peers as the Heartland Conference Coach of the Year, reflected on the season and on the run through the NCAA Tournament. "After our win against Central Missouri in the first round of the tournament, the team started to believe for the first time that they could compete for a national championship," she said.

"That's what this season meant for our program," continued **Lenard**, "a belief that we deserved to be playing on a national level and that we could compete with anyone. We're very happy with our year, but we're not satisfied. We're hungry for more. Every player on this team wants that Round of 16 game back and can't wait for next year to try to get back there and win that game."

On top of the new heights reached by the program, several players were recognized for their individual play during the season. Freshman **Lea Sedwick** (who led the club with 13 goals) was named to the NSCAA/Continental Tire NCAA Division II All-American Third Team, and was the only freshman in the country named to a Division II All-American team.

Sedwick was also named NSCAA All-Region, NCCAA All-Region, Heartland Conference First Team, and was voted as the Conference Freshman of the Year and Offensive Player of the Year.

Andrea Hutchins, Baylie Hill, Brittany Layne, Kerry Edwards, and Kourtney Edwards were also named to the NSCAA All-Region Team. **Hutchins** was likewise voted Heartland Conference Defensive Player of the Year and First Team All-Conference—as was **Edwards and Hill**.

Layne, Jake Cox, and Kerry Edwards were selected to All-Heartland Conference Teams. All of the already-mentioned players were also named to the NCCAA All-Region Team. **Hope Adams** also joined the award honorees by garnering All-Heartland Conference honors.