2016 PIONEERS

Women’s Soccer

GRINNELL COLLEGE

Women’s Soccer
With a nice blend of experience and newcomers, the Grinnell College women’s soccer team is seeking a solid season in 2016.

Coach Kirsten Koester has been happy with what she's seen so far. “This group is showing its buy-in every day with its attitude and work ethic,” she said.

Leading the way for Grinnell are seniors Carolyn Silverman ’17, Hannah Truesdale ’17, Nora Sahel ’17, and Sasha Baumann ’17. “These women are doing an excellent job, both vocally and by example,” said Koester, whose team was 6-11 last season. “Their strength as a class lies in the variety of their character strengths. Each senior has a specific quality that guides her leadership style. Their close friendship sets a strong foundation for team unity.”

Those traits carry over to the other returnees. “With the roller-coaster season we had last year, the team learned a lot and gained valuable on-field experience,” said Koester. “We are showing great focus in training and a willingness to do more for each other and the program.”

The newcomers have added a nice spark to the team. “We graduated a big class of seniors last spring and knew the 2020 class would be an important one,” said Koester. “They showed up fit and excited to engage with their new teammates and with each other.”

The biggest replacement for the team comes via the graduation of record-setting keeper Katy Oldach ’16, making way for Polly Carr ’18. “Polly is doing a great job” said Koester. “She is taking over for a wonderful goalkeeper, but she finished strong last year and that’s carried over to this season.”

GC PRIDE

The term “GC Pride” was coined in recent years to express the honor and privilege involved in being a part of Grinnell College athletics.

The Grinnell student-athlete takes pride in committing to academic excellence, having a strong and healthy mind and body, being a passionate and accountable leader, exhibiting integrity in competition and in daily life, and embracing diversity and self-governance.

This is GC PRIDE!
2016 Roster

1. Polly Carr  
   GK  
   Jr.  
   New York City/Beacon School

2. Simona Bambi  
   F  
   Fy.  
   Madison, Wis./West

3. Lauren Hurley  
   M  
   Jr.  
   Homewood, Ill./Homewood-Flossmoor

4. Carolyn Silverman  
   F  
   Sr.  
   Bettendorf, Iowa/Bettendorf

5. Hannah Truesdale  
   F  
   Sr.  
   Longmont, Colo./Skyline

6. Juliet Torres  
   M  
   So.  
   Oak Lawn, Ill./Oak Lawn Community

7. Valencia Alvarez  
   F  
   Fy.  
   Yucaipa, Calif./Yucaipa

8. Sasha Baumann  
   M  
   Sr.  
   Madison, Wis./West

9. Nora Sahel  
   M  
   Sr.  
   Madison, Wis./Madison East

10. Shaina Zarkin-Scott  
    F  
    Jr.  
    Portland, Ore./Lincoln

11. Annika Helverson  
    D  
    Jr.  
    Valley Village, Calif./Sherman Oaks Center

12. Elyse Salpekar  
    M  
    So.  
    Takoma Park, Md./Montgomery Blair

13. Abigail Hellweg  
    D  
    So.  
    Cedar Rapids, Iowa/Kennedy

14. Francesca Varias  
    M  
    Jr.  
    Chicago/Jones College Prep

15. Gwen Holtzman  
    M  
    So.  
    Las Cruces, N.M./Las Cruces

16. Jordan Maddaus  
    M  
    So.  
    Minneapolis/Benilde-St. Margaret's

17. LilyRose Weiss  
    M  
    Sr.  
    Brooklyn, N.Y./Berkeley Carroll School

18. Regan Kasprak  
    M  
    So.  
    Winfield, Ill./St. Francis Preparatory

19. Sangjun Hornewer  
    M  
    Fy.  
    Gurnee, Ill./Warren Township

20. Kitt Richards  
    F  
    Jr.  
    Appleton, Wis./North

21. Eliza Bunnell  
    D  
    So.  
    Concord, N.H./Concord

22. Michelle Thurman  
    M  
    So.  
    Colorado Springs, Colo./Air Academy

23. Michellie Thurman  
    M  
    So.  
    Colorado Springs, Colo./Air Academy

24. Lauren Edwards  
    D  
    Fy.  
    Lincoln, Calif./Lincoln

25. Marli Remash  
    M  
    Fy.  
    Seattle/Roosevelt

26. Lila Cardozo  
    D  
    So.  
    New York City/Millennium

27. Halle Remash  
    M  
    Fy.  
    Seattle/Roosevelt
Head Coach Kirsten Koester

Kirsten Koester was named Grinnell College women’s soccer coach in June 2014, after serving as head coach at Cornell College.

In 2013, Koester guided Cornell to its best season since 2002 as the Rams went 9-8-1 overall. Prior to coaching at Cornell, Koester was head soccer coach and athletics recruiting coordinator at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland for two years.

The Stoughton, Wis., native attended Luther College, where she was a standout player. A two-time All-Iowa Conference midfielder for the Norse, she also served as team captain and was voted the team’s most valuable player as a senior while leading the squad to the league title. Koester also played basketball three years at Luther.

Koester received a bachelor’s in English and art in 2005 and remained in Decorah as an assistant basketball coach for Luther during the 2005–06 season.

She earned her master’s in English from Washington College in Maryland in 2009. She was assistant women’s soccer coach at Washington 2006-08 and also assisted the women’s basketball squad for a season.

Koester holds a U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF) national “D” license and has been active in the Maryland Youth Soccer Association District Development Program. She held previous positions as a U–12 club coach for the Winneshiek Area Soccer Program in Decorah and the Phoenix Soccer Club in Minneapolis.

She also coached the club team FC United in Marion, Iowa.

Koester is married to Pioneer men’s assistant soccer coach Parker Koester ’09.

Assistant Coach Connie Herchek

Connie Herchek joined the Grinnell women’s soccer coaching staff in 2016.

During her high school soccer career she was a four year varsity soccer letter winner, rookie of the year for 2004, two year all-district and captain her senior year. This led to receiving a scholarship to play soccer at Ursuline College in Pepper Pike, Ohio, where she earned her bachelor’s degree in Political Science and Sociology.

She played 39 games for the Ursuline Arrows during her four years, mostly in the center back position. In 2011, the Arrows ended their record-setting season in the Ohio Independent Championship Tournament.

After college, Herchek continued her soccer career in Nashville, Tenn. She played in several different co-ed leagues throughout the area, including the Nashville Sports League and YMCA League as both a defender and starting forward. Her team won the YMCA tournament in 2014, where she was a leading scorer for the team. Based on her outstanding performance and leadership she was named captain for the 2015 and 2016 season.

Herchek has been active in youth coaching both for her high school’s soccer team as well as youth basketball through her church.

She currently works in the Division of Student Affairs for Grinnell College, assisting in Intercultural Affairs, Office of International Student Affairs and the Office of Wellness and Prevention.

She lives in Grinnell with her partner and their dog.