



Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Men's soccer team selected for NCAA Tournament

The **Oakland University men's soccer team** is one of 48 teams to be selected to the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championships. The Golden Grizzlies received their first at-large bid, but will be making a second consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance.

Oakland will travel to Tulsa, Okla., to face the Golden Hurricane in the first round game on Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2 p.m. Central Time (3 p.m. Eastern Time) at the Hurricane Soccer and Track Stadium. This will mark the first-ever meeting between Oakland and Tulsa. The winner will go on to play UCLA (18-1-1) in the second round on Wednesday, Nov. 26.

Oakland completed its 2003 regular season with a 12-4-5 overall record and tied for first in the Mid-Continent Conference with a 5-1-0-league mark. The Golden Grizzlies opened their season with a 2-1 double overtime win over then-No. 22 Portland in the Portland Nike Tournament. Oakland broke into the national rankings on Sept. 1 in the College Soccer News Poll and reached as high as No. 12 in the NSCAA/Adidas National Rankings on Sept. 22. Oakland went 4-3-3 against region-ranked teams and is undefeated (2-0-1) against the NSCAA Top 25.

Oakland currently is tied for 39th in the country in scoring offense, averaging 1.89 goals per game. OU also averages 5.4 points per game. The Golden Grizzlies registered 37 goals and 40 assists in 21 games to finish third and second in the Mid-Con, respectively. Oakland has a 5-2-3 overall road record and is averaging 1.0 goals in away games. They have scored 17 goals in the last nine games.

Defensively, the Golden Grizzlies have allowed just 16 goals in 21 games, holding opponents to 0.71 goals per game. They have compiled seven shutouts this season and have allowed only three goals in the last nine matches. All four of Oakland's losses have been by only one goal.

Individually, Oakland is led by junior Philip Braathen (Oslo, Norway), who was a first-team all-conference selection and has 21 points on eight goals and five assists, and sophomore Chris Edwards (Glasgow, Scotland), who was a second-team all-conference pick. Edwards is first on the team with nine goals and second with 20 points. Senior Jason Perry (Southfield, Mich.) was the Mid-Con's first Defensive Player of the Year selection and joined Braathen on the all-conference first team. Fellow defender and co-captain Ryan Rzepka (Novi, Mich.) also was a first-team all-conference selection as well as being chosen to the Mid-Con All-Tournament team.

Oakland placed a total of seven players on the All-Mid-Con squad, including a league-high six on the first team. Oakland boasts one of the top goalkeepers in sophomore Jeff Wiese (Omaha, Neb.). Wiese ranks in the top 20 in the country with a 0.69 goals against average, allowing just 14 goals in 20 games while posting five shutouts.

Oakland made its first NCAA Division I Tournament appearance last season and lost at Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2-1, in the first round.

Tulsa completed the 2003 regular season with a 12-5-2 overall record and second-place finish in the Missouri Valley Conference with a 6-1-2-league record. The Golden Hurricane broke into the national rankings at No. 21 on Sept. 8 and has been ranked for 11 consecutive weeks in the various national top-25 soccer polls, including as high as No. 10 in the "Soccer Times" poll on Oct. 20.

TU currently ranks ninth in the country for its scoring offense, averaging 2.36 goals per game, and has a scoring average of 7.0 points per game. The Hurricane registered 45 goals and 43 assists in 19 games, which was the most among MVC teams. TU also notched a 6-2-1 overall home record this season and is averaging 2.56 goals on its home field.

Individually, the Golden Hurricane attack is led by the nation's top scoring forward combination of sophomore Ryan Pore, the MVC's Most Valuable Player this season, and three-time All-MVC First Team performer junior Kyle Brown. Together, Pore and Brown combined to score 28 goals and produce 19 assists for 75 points. Pore currently is the nation's leader in total points with 43 on 17 goals and nine assists, and he is also tied for first for goals scored. Brown posted 11 goals and 10 assists for 32 points, which ranks him 12th in the country.

Oakland and Tulsa have faced three of the same teams this season, including Ohio State, UMKC and Oral Roberts. The Golden

Hurricane defeated all three teams, while the Golden Grizzlies tied Ohio State, defeated Oral Roberts twice and was 1-1 against UMKC.

For more information on OU's men's soccer team, visit the [OU Athletics](#) Web site.

SUMMARY

The Oakland University men's soccer team is one of 48 teams to be selected to the 2003 NCAA Division I Men's Soccer Championships. The Golden Grizzlies received their first at-large bid, but will be making a second consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance. Oakland will travel to Tulsa, Okla., to face the Golden Hurricane in the first round game on Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2 p.m. Central Time (3 p.m. Eastern Time) at the Hurricane Soccer and Track Stadium. This will mark the first-ever meeting between Oakland and Tulsa.

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