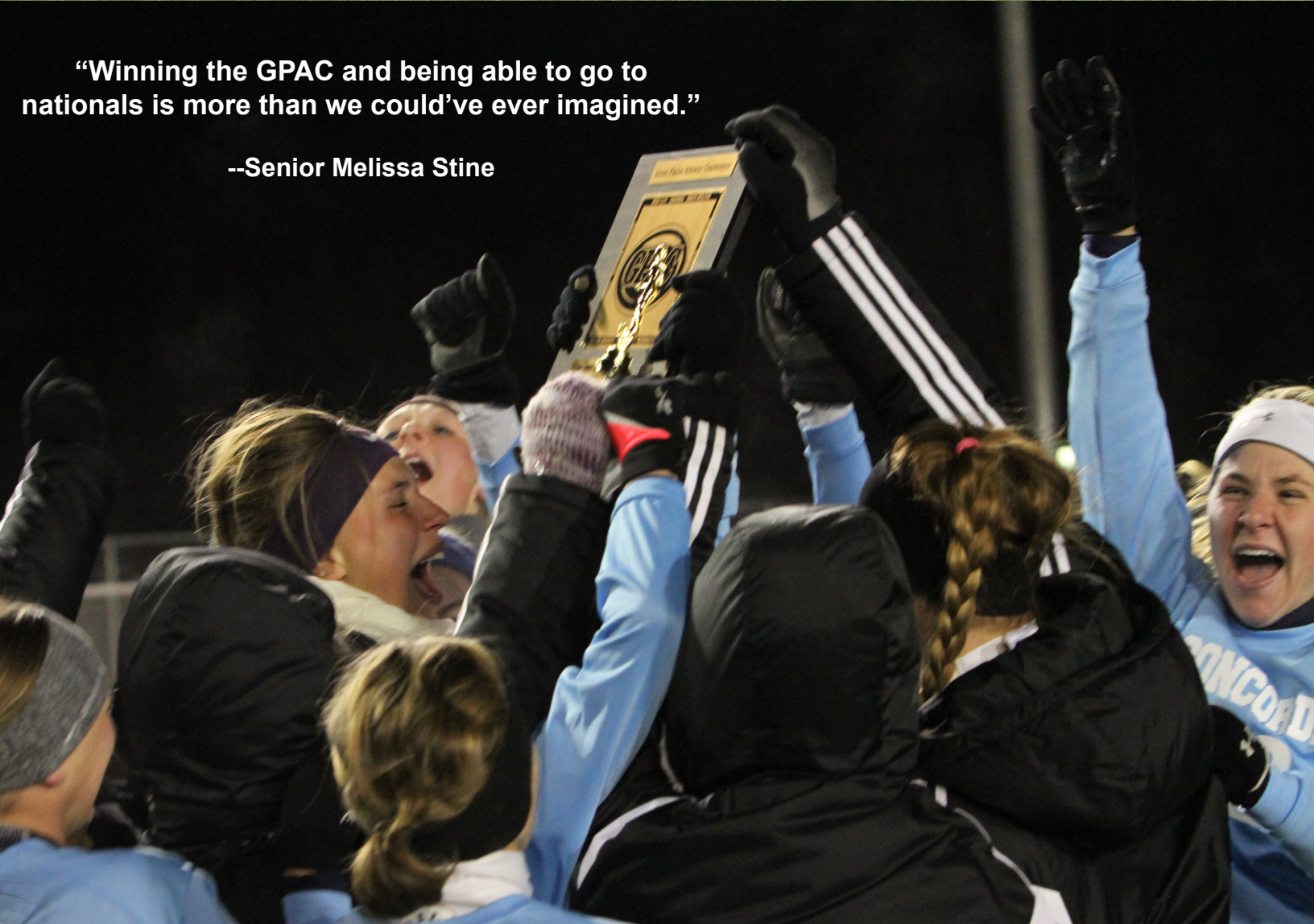


Story of the 2014 GPAC Tournament Champions



**"Winning the GPAC and being able to go to
nationals is more than we could've ever imagined."**

--Senior Melissa Stine



Overall: 15-3-4 • GPAC: 6-0-4 (2nd) • Home: 8-1-1 • Road: 7-2-3

Aug. 29	AIB (Iowa)	Seward, Neb.	W, 1-0
Sept. 3	Bellevue	Omaha, Neb.	L, 3-4
Sept. 5	Grace	Omaha, Neb.	W, 6-0
Sept. 6	Bethel (Kan.)	Newton, Kan.	W, 2-0
Sept. 12	Sterling (Kan.)	Sterling, Kan.	W, 1-0
Sept. 13	Friends (Kan.)	Wichita, Kan.	W, 4-1
Sept. 20	Mount Marty	Yankton, S.D.	W, 2-1 (2 OT)
Sept. 24	College of Saint Mary	Seward, Neb.	L, 2-4
Sept. 27	Morningside	Seward, Neb.	W, 1-0
Oct. 1	York	Seward, Neb.	W, 2-0
Oct. 4	Dordt	Sioux Center, Iowa	T, 0-0 (2 OT)
Oct. 8	Doane	Seward, Neb.	W, 5-1
Oct. 15	Nebraska Wesleyan	Lincoln, Neb.	T, 1-1 (2 OT)
Oct. 18	Northwestern	Seward, Neb.	T, 0-0 (2 OT)
Oct. 22	Midland	Fremont, Neb.	W, 2-1 (2 OT)
Oct. 25	Briar Cliff	Sioux City, Iowa	T, 0-0 (2 OT)
Oct. 29	(16) Hastings	Seward, Neb.	W, 2-1
Nov. 1	Dakota Wesleyan	Seward, Neb.	W, 2-0

GPAC Tournament

Nov. 4	Doane	Seward, Neb.	W, 2-1
Nov. 8	Dakota Wesleyan	Seward, Neb.	W, 2-0
Nov. 13	(20) Hastings	Hastings, Neb.	W, 1-0

NAIA National Tournament Opening Round

Nov. 22	(9) Benedictine (Kan.)	Atchison, Kan.	L, 0-4
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New program standards set in 2014

- Single-season record for wins (15)
- Single-season record for shutouts (12)
- First-ever GPAC tournament title
- First-ever national tournament appearance
- First-ever NAIA national ranking (24th)
- First undefeated GPAC season (9-0-4)
- Fewest goals allowed in a season (19)
- Longest unbeaten streak of 13 (9-0-4)
- Sophomore Chrissy Lind broke GK record for shutouts (10)
- Freshman Jessica Skerston broke record for game-winning goals



Greg Henson



Head Coach

Jordan Donohoue



Assistant Coach

Annika Uden



Assistant Coach

Kim Uetrecht



Grad Asst. Coach

#00 Elyse Muhle



JR • GK

#1 Taylor Wolf



JR • GK

#2 Jeannelle Condamine



FR • D

#4 Leigha McConnell



FR • MF

#5 Kiera Bengtson



FR • D

#6 Esther Soenksen



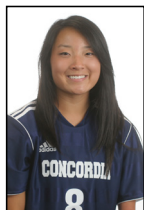
FR • MF

#7 Marcie Sindt



SR • D

#8 Meredith Hein



SR • MF

#9 Jenna O'Laughlin



FR • F

#11 Ashlie Sklenicka



SR • MF

#12 Jessica Skerston



FR • F

#13 Jordan McCoy



SO • F

#14 Annalisa Condamine



SR • D

#15 Jaimi Stelk



JR • F

#17 Emmalynn Rodriguez



SR • F

#18 Kristin Manley



SO • D

#20 Katrina Muther



JR • D

#21 Leah Shohat



FR • D

#22 Melissa Stine



SR • F

#24 Madison Hawkins



JR • MF

#27 Megan Brunssen



SO • D

#28 Megan Barz



FR • D

#29 Rachel Musselli



SR • D

#30 Chrissy Lind



SO • GK

2014 SEASON PREVIEW



With 10 players returning who started at least half the team's games in 2013, head coach Greg Henson's second Concordia women's soccer squad will feature plenty of familiar faces. The abundance of senior leadership in the form of Katrina Muther, Rachel Mussell, Marcie Sindt and Melissa Stine will help ease the losses of four-year stalwarts Jordan Donohoue and Emily Fleming.

Henson is now fully aware of the talents and limitations of his roster and what to expect in an always competitive GPAC.

"We have a good, strong returning class coming back," Henson said. "From our senior class to juniors and sophomores – there are a lot of players who played vital minutes for us last year. Knowing them and what they're capable of – strengths, weaknesses and all those things and also just knowing the conference (will help)."

There's also momentum, coming off the program's second ever appearance in the GPAC semifinals, and an atmosphere in which it's clear that everyone has bought in. Sindt, who has made her way back from an ACL tear that sidelined her for much of 2013, worked tirelessly over the summer along with many of her teammates.

Sindt, a midfielder from Scottsbluff, Neb., and a host of fellow Bulldogs have worked out on a regular basis while sticking around in Seward.

"It's been an unusual summer because it's been my first summer in Seward – and a lot of my teammates it's been their first too," Sindt said. "We played a lot of soccer. We

played four times a week or more. It's a lot of us on the women's team and a few on the men's team. We got a lot of touches on the ball. It's been fun. I've been proud of my teammates for their dedication and commitment."

Those are far from the only positive traits on the rise. There's a new level of comfort now that Henson has been at the helm for more than a calendar year. Last season the former Lutheran High School (St. Charles, Mo.) head coach dove into the new gig with the season opener already on the horizon.

Sindt and others were impressed with how seamlessly the transition flowed despite the time constraints.

"He did a really good job at making it smooth for us," Sindt said. "Now we're getting into more of his style of play. It's a testament to him already the fact that we've stayed here this summer and maybe there's a little more commitment to the program than there was. We're definitely heading in the right direction as a program."

In terms of last season's GPAC all-conference teams, forward Ashlie Sklenicka (second team), Mussell (honorable mention) and Stine (honorable mention) represent the headlining returners. Mussell racked up nine goals to lead the team for the second-straight year while Sklenicka (seven goals) came up with a breakthrough season and Stine (three goals, one assist) provided another attacking option from the forward position.

Henson tinkered with his formula during the spring scrimmage season by putting Mussell on the backline to help

compensate for the loss of Fleming. No matter where she plays, Mussell is one of the squad's more athletic performers. Henson simply reevaluates each of his teams and says that his squads won't necessarily carry over a similar style from year-to-year. That means significant position changes can sometimes be part of the equation.

"We might have to make some adjustments. We did in the spring with what we had available to us," Henson said. "We changed some key positions for some key players. We'll have to figure how this team's going to be successful based on the strengths and weaknesses of this roster. That includes the freshmen coming in."

Last year's team ended up with a plus-six goal differential and proved to be the stingiest defensive Bulldogs in program history. Freshmen such as goalkeeper Chrissy Lind and defender Megan Brunnsen helped solidify a unit that allowed 27 goals – the fewest in a single season in the 19-year history of Concordia women's soccer.

Lind, who persevered after being a passenger in tragic car accident last summer, won a starting job about a month into 2013. She flashed big time in the GPAC quarterfinals

in which she earned her third shutout and saved a pair of penalty kicks that helped carry the Bulldogs to the semifinals.

"She came in in a tough spot," Henson said. "Hats off to her and her family for the way that they handled that situation. With the injury she sustained she wasn't able to train with us during preseason."

"Once she (came back) she took off. She's a player that plays that sometimes plays at a faster pace than she needs to, but she's full go when she gets on the field. Once she was on the field she was able to do the things necessary to win the job."

While Lind and company hope to concede even fewer goals in 2014, the biggest question may center upon who will find the back of the net on the attacking end. Last season 15 different players combined on the team output of 33 goals. This season may see similar goal-scoring by committee results.

"Every coach is always scratching their head trying to find that true goal scorer," Henson said. "Ashlie scored some very timely goals for us last year. So did Melissa Stine, and we expect Jordan McCoy going into her sophomore year to have a good season. We also have some freshmen that have the ability to put the ball in the back of the net."

Better fortune in the injury department would also provide a significant boost. Last season Kayla Asche (graduated), Sindt and Jaimi Stelk all suffered ACL tears and Muther was sidelined late in the campaign. The likes of Muther and Sindt rallied around each other in their rehabs and will be counted upon heavily in 2014.

There will also be room for impact from a select number of new faces – some with familiar last names such as midfielder Esther Soenksen (younger sister of current men's soccer player, Gideon) and Jeanelle Condamine (younger of teammate, Annalisa). In addition, Henson welcomes in a former player of his from Lutheran High School, prolific goal scorer Jessica Skerston.

While pegged for fifth in the GPAC preseason coaches' poll, Sindt and other veterans believe the team can get back to the conference semifinals and possibly reach even greater heights.

"We want to win the GPAC," Sindt said. "That's the goal. Maybe we're not going to be the most skilled team coming up against some, but that's going to happen. Will we be outworked? No. We're definitely going to work harder than every opponent. We're coming for the GPAC championship."



Late Skerston header lifts Concordia to season-opening win

Aug. 29, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 1, AIB (Iowa) 0

GOALS

76' - (C) Jessica Skerston (1)

SEWARD, Neb. — A well-played cross from senior Melissa Stine to freshman Jessica Skerston for a 76th-minute goal proved to be all head coach Greg Henson's Bulldogs would need to claim victory in their 2014 season opener. The Concordia women's soccer squad moved to 1-0 for the second-straight season by shutting out visiting AIB (Iowa), 1-0, on Friday evening.

"After two weeks of preseason the girls were excited to get out and play an opponent for real," Henson said. "I thought we did some real nice things early in the game, just being composed and being able to move the ball out of the back at times. There were a lot of positives to take away from the first half.

"We were able to get the goal late in the second half to seal the win."

While the Eagles limited the Bulldogs to five shots, Concordia capitalized on an opportunity in the 76th minute. That's when Stine, just outside the 18-yard box, delivered a perfectly-placed cross from left to right to find Skerston near the right post. A record-setting goal scorer at St. Charles' Lutheran High School, Skerston headed the ball past goalkeeper Kaylin Swart for the game's only tally.

"There was some miscommunication among their defenders so I ran through the ball and played it to (freshman Esther Soenksen)," Stine said. "She played it right back to me and Jess was there on the cross and she headed it in. It was a really good goal."

So far so good for senior Rachel Mussell's transition to center back. She helped sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind keep clean throughout most of the 90 minutes. Lind saved two shots and picked up the fourth shutout of her young collegiate career.

Mussell, the team's top goal scorer the past two seasons, was flanked in the back by the likes of Kristin Manley and Megan Brunssen.

"Rachel Mussell did a great job in the backfield, leading that," Henson said. "We talked about that at halftime — that was her first true game as a center back at the college level. Even with her being a cagey veteran, so to speak, she was still kind of a rookie. She did a great job for us."

Henson liked the way his group of veterans mixed with some of the young starters, three of whom were freshmen. With seniors Katrina Muther and Ashlie Sklenicka sidelined, Henson used only 12 players while relying on 10 of them to play all 90 minutes.

Soenksen was active, getting off three shots. Meanwhile, Jeanelle Condamine set up some scoring chances with corner kicks that put AIB in danger on two occasions.

"We've got three freshmen that we inserted into the lineup and we expect them to step up and be impact players and I think they proved that tonight," Henson said. "We've got three seniors out there as well that balance that out."

AIB, a member of the Midwest Collegiate Conference and located in Des Moines, Iowa, outshot Concordia 10-5.



Three different Bulldogs score in tight loss at Bellevue

Sept. 3, 2014

FINAL: Bellevue University 4, Concordia 3

GOALS

25' - (C) Jessica Skerston (2)
 31' - (B) Mercy Darkoah
 40' - (B) Own Goal
 44' - (C) Megan Brunssen (1)
 57' - (C) Marcie Sindt (1)
 75' - (B) Mercy Darkoah
 80' - (B) Lauren Clark

OMAHA, Neb. — Seeking its first win over Midlands Collegiate Athletic Conference power Bellevue University since 2010, the Concordia University women's soccer team fell just short of an upset win on Wednesday night. The host Bruins got an 80th-minute goal from Lauren Clark to break a 3-3 tie, lifting Bellevue to a 4-3 win in a high-scoring, seesaw battle at Tranquility Park in Omaha.

Despite the loss, the Bulldogs proved productive on the attacking end as three different players found the back of the net. The offensive outburst helped Concordia maintain a 3-2 lead as late as the 75th minute and a 3-3 draw until the final 10 minutes.



Head coach Greg Henson's squad, now 1-1 overall, had hoped to blemish a Bruin home mark that has jumped to an impressive 26-3-3 since the beginning of the 2010 season.

"Bellevue's a good team. Hats off to them," Henson said. "It was a back-and-forth game. Unfortunately we

came up a little short. I'm very proud of the effort we gave and I think it will be a good building block moving forward.

"Last year we were content just to be able to hang with them. Tonight we're disappointed that we didn't do the things we needed to get the win. That (attitude) is a positive."

Concordia showed resilience on the road by fighting back from a 2-1 deficit to take the lead. Sophomore Megan Brunssen knotted the score just before halftime on a goal assisted by senior Melissa Stine. Then in the 57th minute, senior Marcie Sindt collected a pass from freshman Jeanne Condamine and beat keeper Bailey Petzoldt for a 3-2 advantage.

Contributions came from a variety of Bulldogs on this night.

"Annalisa (Condamine) got her first start and she did a great job," Henson said. "Brunssen was asked to move to a different role and she passed with flying colors. And Chrissy (Lind) probably made the save of her career in the second half. Across the board, I'm proud of the effort."

It looked like the Bulldogs might escape Omaha with the win until top Bruin striker Mercy Darkoah equalized with her second goal of the game, this one in the 75th minute. Five minutes later Clark provided the game winner, pushing Bellevue to 2-0.

Named GPAC offensive player of the week earlier in the day, freshman forward Jessica Skerston gave Concordia a 1-0 lead with her goal (assisted by senior Marcie Sindt) in the 25th minute. Five days prior, Skerston headed in the game-winning goal in the 1-0 victory over AIB (Iowa).

The Bulldogs went more than 120 minutes to open the season before relinquishing a goal in the 31st minute of Wednesday's contest. Bellevue got the equalizer on the first goal of the night for Darkoah, assisted by Madison Lambert. That made it 1-1 in the latter part of the first half.

Concordia's last win over Bellevue came on Sept. 12, 2010, when the Bulldogs won 2-1 on the road over a Bruin team that finished the season at 15-4-2 overall and 5-1 at home.

Bulldogs dominate Grace in 6-0 road win

Sept. 5, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 6, Grace University 0

GOALS

17' - (C) Melissa Stine (1)
23' - (C) Jessica Skerston (3)
26' - (C) Esther Soenksen (1)
29' - (C) Jessica Skerston (4)
57' - (C) Jeannelle Condamine (1)
66' - (C) Rachel Mussell (1)

OMAHA, Neb. — Continuing its early-season run of proficiency on the attack, the Concordia University women's soccer team rolled up a 6-0 blowout win over Grace University (1-3) at Tranquility Park in Omaha, Neb., on Friday. Two days after getting goals from three different players in a loss at Bellevue, five more Bulldogs found the back of the net to beat the Royal keeper.

Concordia now sits at 2-1 overall with wins over AIB (Iowa) and Grace.

"It was a good opportunity to go deep into the bench and get a lot of players some action in a varsity contest," second-year head coach Greg Henson said. "We were able to get just about everybody on the field today. We did a nice job early on controlling the tempo of the game, controlling the ball and controlling possession. We limited their attack and kept them without a shot on goal."

After a scoreless first 16 minutes, the floodgates opened up in the 17th minute when senior Melissa Stine notched her first goal of the season on the first of two assists from freshman Esther Soenksen. Less than 12 minutes later, the Bulldogs bulged their lead to 4-0 thanks to Soenksen's first career goal (26') and two more goals from freshman Jessica Skerston (23' and 29').

Skerston has scored at least one goal in each of the first three games of her career. Her four goals lead a Concordia squad that has outscored its opponents by a combined total of 10-4 this season.

"She got two more goals tonight so we're proud to see that," Henson said of Skerston. "The big story for me was that we scored six goals and it came from five different

players. We're going to be looking as the games get tougher for players who can score goals for us and she's doing that right now."

Henson's club poured it on with a 57th minute goal from freshman Jeannelle Condamine (first career) and a 66th minute score from senior Rachel Mussell. The final tally came off of Meredith Hein's corner kick, which Mussell headed into the back of the net. The goal was the 26th career score for the native of Buffalo, Minn.

With the game well in hand by halftime, Henson used 27 different players in the dominant victory. They combined to put up 26 shots compared to Grace's one. Goalkeepers Elyse Muhle and Taylor Wolf split the 90 minutes evenly as Concordia recorded its second shutout of the season.

In addition, Madison Hawkins, Meredith Hein and Ashlie Sklenicka all added one assist apiece on the evening.

The Bulldogs will play their third game in four days when they hit the road on Saturday to take on Bethel College in Newton, Kan. Kickoff is slated for 4 p.m. Bethel is 2-0 with wins over St. Gregory's University (Okla.) and York College.

"We played Bethel last year to open the season (4-1 win) and they do a good job and will be a bigger challenge than we faced tonight," Henson said.



Skerston adds two more goals in second-straight road win

Sept. 6, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, Bethel College 0

GOALS

59' - (C) Jessica Skerston (5)

77' - (C) Jessica Skerston (6)



NEWTON, Kan. — It didn't take long for the Concordia University women's soccer team to trump its road winning total from the 2013 season. Fresh off a 6-0 thumping over Grace University on Friday, the Bulldogs were at it again, thanks to execution in nearly every aspect of the game as they topped Bethel College, 2-0 in Newton, Kan.

"We dominated the game in every facet except for scoring

goals," head coach Greg Henson said. "It was good to end our stretch of three games in four days with back-to-back wins. It was a good effort for 90 minutes for us."

The Bulldogs were on the attack the whole game, getting off 26 shots to Bethel's three. Despite their offensive flurry of shots, however, they were unable to find the net until late into the second half when senior Melissa Stine's shot was knocked away by the Bethel keeper, providing an opportunity for breakout freshman Jessica Skerston to score her fifth goal in just four games in the 60th minute.

"Their keeper did a good job of keeping us off the scoreboard until we finally got a goal in the 60th minute," Henson said. "I wish it had been a little easier and a little less exciting, but it was good to get the result. Melissa Stine did a good job on the attack. She set up the first goal with a great attack. Jessica Skerston was able to put the rebound in the back of the net."

But 16 minutes later, Skerston wasn't done yet.

In the 76th minute, Skerston followed suite with yet another goal to put the Bulldogs ahead 2-0, extending her hot streak to six goals in the first four games of her young Bulldog career.

"Skerston had two more goals when we really needed them," Henson said.

Not to be overlooked, sophomore goal keeper Chrissy Lind was solid on the defense, though her day's work did not consist of anything too demanding.

"Our back line as a whole did very well," Henson said. "Chrissy was pretty uninvolved, which is a good thing. We made her job boring."

Henson was pleased with his team's performance, a second-straight victory that came in a three game stretch over the course of just four days.

"We really dominated," Henson said. "We kept possession of the ball and really moved it. It was one of those games where they rarely threatened us. Overall it was a good effort from us."

Concordia is now 2-1 on the road after going 1-5-2 last season in true road contests.

Concordia records fourth shutout in road win over Sterling

Sept. 12, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 1, Sterling College 0

GOALS

79' - (C) Jessica Skerston (7)

STERLING, Kan. — Returning to action for the first time since last weekend, the Concordia University women's soccer team avenged a 2013 loss with a 1-0 victory at Sterling College (1-3) on Friday afternoon. Freshman Jessica Skerston continued her goal-scoring run and the Bulldogs recorded their fourth shutout already this season.

Second-year head coach Greg Henson's squad moved to 3-1 on the road and 4-1 overall.

"We really wanted to come down here and play the way we're capable of and get the result," Henson said. "We didn't play our best the first 30 minutes but I thought we regrouped at halftime and really took it to them in the second half. We got the goal late to seal the victory."

The game remained scoreless until Skerston took advantage of a misplaced pass in the Sterling backfield in the 79th minute. Skerston made a nice move to elude a pair of defenders and then booted the ball past a diving Michaela Moore for her team-leading seventh goal of the season. The native of St. Charles, Mo., has scored at least one goal in all five games to begin her collegiate career. She also has three game-winning scores.

"Jess intercepted a pass deep in the attacking end and beat a couple players on the breakaway," Henson said. "Their outside back made an errant pass and Jess took possession and split both of their center backs. It was a very nice goal."

In last year's 2-0 home loss to Sterling, Concordia was out-shot 11-6. The Bulldogs reversed that statistic on Friday with 18 shots (eight on goal) compared to nine (four on goal) for the Warriors. Skerston was most active on the attack with five shots, including three on frame. Fellow freshman Esther Soenksen fired off four shots.

Bulldog sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind made four saves while posting her third shutout of the season and

sixth of her career. A strong team defensive effort made for a fairly routine day in goal for Lind. Concordia now owns shutout victories over AIB (1-0), Grace University (6-0), Bethel College (2-0) and Sterling.

"It's been a collective group effort," Henson said of the team's early-season defensive prowess. "We're doing the little things well, being organized and getting in good position. We worked hard to limit Chrissy's action. The key is we've been able to insert different players in the back after some injuries and no matter the make up, we're getting good results."

"Marcie Sindt did a great job protecting the back four with her play in the midfield. It really comes down to all 11 players. It's been a team defensive effort."

Haley Smith led the Warriors with four shots – two on goal. Sterling had little in the way of an offensive threat following the first 30 minutes of play. The Warriors, a member of the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference, went 8-8-1 in 2013.



Bulldogs stay hot, secure fourth-straight road win

Sept. 13, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 4, Friends University 1

GOALS

10' - (C) Esther Soenksen (2)

33' - (C) Marcie Sindt (2)

46' - (C) Jessica Skerston (8)

60' - (C) Melissa Stine (2)

89' - (F) Maddie Behny

WICHITA, Kan. — On the road for their fifth-straight game, the women's soccer squad notched its fourth-consecutive victory of the young season. With numerous Bulldogs getting in on the action, there was no shortage of goals as Concordia left the field with a 4-1 victory and the Falcons thunderstruck.

"We had four different players get on the board with goals," head coach Greg Henson said. "It's good to have multiple options. Jess (Skerston) is always a threat game-in and game-out but we're finding out that we have a lot of other weapons as well."

The weapons were on full display today.

It was freshman Esther Soenksen who got things started with a goal in the 10th minute to give the Bulldogs a 1-0 lead. Then in the 33rd minute, freshman Jeannelle Condamine found senior Marcie Sindt for the second goal of the game to blow it wide open.

In the second half, the Bulldogs kept their feet on the gas, attacking the Falcons with relentless pressure.

Of course the freshman Skerston, who lately can't seem to contain a knack for finding the back of the net, continued her hot streak, netting her eighth goal of the season, in the 46th minute. Then in the 60th minute, sophomore Madison Hawkins assisted senior Melissa Stine to score the fourth goal of the night and seal the deal on a Bulldog victory.

"Melissa Stine was dangerous up and down the flank all day," Henson said. "She had numerous occasions where she got in position to score. It was good to see her get that last goal to finish off a really good weekend."



Henson had every reason to feel good about his team's performance, and noted what he felt made Concordia so dangerous on the offensive end.

"We wanted to dictate the tempo and dictate play," Henson said. "We were able to consistently move the ball into the attack and create a lot of opportunities. We finished our chances a lot better today than we did on Friday. That made the game a lot more comfortable and manageable for us."

With their recent string of success and flurry of road wins, Henson is maintaining a modest approach and keeping an even keel.

"We've got cautious optimism right now," Henson said. "This year we wanted to focus on being better on the road and we're 4-1, playing on a variety of surfaces and places. We really want to be ready to go for the GPAC grind and hopefully we are."

Soenksen golden goal boosts women's soccer to 6-1 start

Sept. 20, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, Mount Marty 1 (2 OT)

GOALS

22' - (C) Jessica Skerston (9)

86' - (M) Carly Manahan

106' - (C) Esther Soenksen (3)

YANKTON, S.D. — The Concordia University women's soccer squad kicked off the GPAC schedule in dramatic fashion by defeating Mount Marty College, 2-1, in double overtime. The victory was their fifth straight — all of which coming on the road. The win also ties a school record for the best seven-game start in program history.

Freshman Jessica Skerston got things rolling for the Bulldogs in the 22nd minute when she scored off an assist from senior teammate Ashlie Sklenicka.

"Ashlie Sklenicka and (senior) Melissa (Stine) tore up Mount Marty on the wings," head coach Greg Henson said. "They were a great 1-2 punch. Ashlie really did a lot of great things creating chances for us."

With just over four minutes left to play in regulation, however, Mount Marty's Carly Manahan found the back of the net to tie the game up at 1-1 and force overtime.

In the 106th minute freshman Esther Soenksen scored on another assist from Sklenicka to lift the Bulldogs to victory. The final goal came after a long possession in which Mount Marty never cleared the ball after the opening kickoff of the second overtime.

"The first overtime was just like the first 90 minutes," Henson said. "We went at them but couldn't find the back of the net. Their goalkeeper played outstanding. It was nice to finally get that goal."

The goal was Skerston's ninth of the season, a statistic that leads the GPAC conference. Skerston has scored at least one goal in every game to begin the season.

Although the scoreboard did not reflect it, the Bulldogs were on the offensive attack all day, advancing the ball down the field, and getting off shot after shot. By the end



of the day, the Bulldogs tallied 29 shots to Mount Marty's nine, 15 shots on goal to the Lancers' 9 and seven corner kicks to Mount Marty's none.

"They're an organized team defensively and they sit players behind the ball," Henson said. "We were able to create chances. We just weren't able to finish. We dominated possession and Mount Marty's only chances came on set pieces. Mount Marty is one of those teams that doesn't go away."

Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind had a long yet successful day of work, playing all 105:44, making five saves and allowing just one goal.

The tough road win was another positive step for the Bulldogs, who take on College of Saint Mary in Seward on Wednesday (Sept. 24) in their next match.

"For us these were three points (in the standings) we had to get," Henson said. "Going on the road in the conference is always difficult. One of the reasons we've had such a long road trip was to prepare for these types of games in the conference."

Skerston extends goal-scoring streak in nonconference loss

Sept. 24, 2014

FINAL: College of Saint Mary 4, Concordia 2

GOALS

47' - (C) Jessica Skerston (10)
51' - (C) Jeannelle Condamine (2)
53' - (S) Abby Zach
63' - (S) Abby Zach
69' - (S) Sarah McGuire
78' - (S) Jordan Copple

SEWARD, Neb. — Playing its first home game in 25 days, the Concordia University women's soccer team saw a two-goal lead slip away in the second half of a 4-2 nonconference loss to College of Saint Mary on Wednesday night, under the lights at Bulldog Stadium. The visiting Flames scored the game's final four goals to completely turn the game upside down.

The loss snapped the Bulldogs' five-game winning streak. Second-year head coach Greg Henson's squad is now 6-2 overall and 1-1 at home.

"For about 60 minutes we were the better team, but it takes 90 minutes," Henson said. "This was a similar result as our other loss (at Bellevue). We have to be able to close out leads. They got the PK and then we have to be able to regroup quickly. We're in a position where if we play to our ability, we can beat anyone on our schedule."

The momentum-building penalty kick referenced by Henson occurred in the 53rd minute when Abby Zach delivered a well-placed ball into the back of the net. Suddenly down just 2-1, College of Saint Mary (4-2) had life. Over the next 24 minutes, the Flames got a game-tying score from Zach (63') and then goals from Sarah McGuire (69') and Jordan Copple (78') to doom the Bulldogs.

The scoring binge by the visitors put a damper on what had been a well-played first half and then some for a Bulldog squad that had tied the school record for the best seven-game start to a season.

"We started off well," Henson said. "We had a good first half and moved the ball the way we wanted. We started

the second half by doing what we wanted and got the two goals. We ended up getting caught on a counter then and the PK changed the momentum. We weren't able to regroup and recover after that."

Freshman Jessica Skerston put Concordia on top with her 10th goal of the season, coming in the 47th minute. In a crowded box, Skerston whiffed on her first try and then calmly drove the ball into the back of the net to extend her goal-scoring streak to eight-straight games to begin her college career.

The Bulldogs appeared headed for their sixth-consecutive win when freshman Jeannelle Condamine launched a missile from well-beyond the box on a free kick that beat CSM goalkeeper Courtney Smith. Seemingly in control, Concordia led 2-0 in the 51st minute.

Indicative of superior first-half play, the Bulldogs outshot the Flames 6-0 in the first half. Concordia held a 13-6 advantage in shots and a 7-3 corner kick edge for the game.



McCoy supplies offense in 1-0 GPAC home-opening victory

Sept. 27, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 1, Morningside 0

GOALS

75' - (C) Jordan McCoy (1)

SEWARD, Neb. — After stumbling in the second half three days earlier, the Concordia University women's soccer team hoped for the return of its typically stingy defensive play in Saturday's GPAC home opener. Second-year head coach Greg Henson got exactly that from his Bulldog team, which earned its fifth shutout of the season in a 1-0 blanking of visiting Morningside.

Concordia, 2-1 at home, has now won six of its last seven games and is 7-2 overall and 2-0 in conference play.

"Those are good lessons to get in nonconference games," Henson said of the loss to College of Saint Mary. "We were able to rebound today. Morningside's a good team. We knew it was going to be a tough battle. We were really pleased with the effort today."



No player was more active on the attacking end than sophomore Jordan McCoy. Her aggressiveness paid off in the 75th minute when she delivered a line drive into the back of the net. McCoy's four shots on goal were a game high. Said humbly by McCoy of the goal, "I think it was a lucky shot."

The goal McCoy cashed in looked similar to her run at the goal early in the second half as she dribbled down the left flank. A well-struck shot was corralled by goalkeeper Britney Kleinhesselink, who was kept busy by McCoy alone.

"She's been dealing with an injury that's slowed her a little bit," Henson said. "What she brings to the table is an incredible work ethic and pace down the wing. She was finally able to get that explosiveness back and able to get behind Morningside's defense on a number of occasions."

The Bulldogs finished with 16 shots compared to 15 for the Mustangs, but serious threats from Morningside were few in number. Concordia goalkeeper Chrissy Lind earned the shutout by making five saves.

Not only did Henson get McCoy back in his starting lineup, Saturday also saw the return from injury of senior captain Katrina Muther. She played all 90 minutes as a wing back, contributing to Concordia's staunch defensive effort.

"She's a great asset in the back," McCoy said. "We really needed her back there with her runs. She's basically an offensive player as well as a defensive player so she's really helping us a lot."

Not long prior to McCoy's goal, two nifty through balls from Emmalyn Rodriguez to Melissa Stine were denied by Kleinhesselink. In both instances Stine slipped behind the defense as the Mustangs kept Concordia off the scoreboard for the time being.

While the likes of McCoy, Stine and Ashlie Sklenicka combined for 13 of the Bulldogs' 16 shots, the Mustangs did a nice job marking Concordia leading goal scorer Jessica Skerston, who was held without a goal for the first time in her career. Skerston did not take a single shot on Saturday.

One of Morningside's most promising chances came roughly 20 minutes in when an errant pass eluded a sprinting wing attacker. Amy Grause led the Mustangs with five shots, including three on goal.

Sixth shutout allows Bulldogs to break record for best 10-game start

Oct. 1, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, York College 0

GOALS

56' - (C) Jessica Skerston (11)

74' - (C) Esther Soenksen (4)

SEWARD, Neb. — Despite a struggle to convert on a bevy of chances, the Concordia University women's soccer team won for the seventh time in its last eight games, earning a 2-0 win over York College on Wednesday night to move to 8-2, 2-0 GPAC. The victory earned Concordia its best 10-game start in school history.

Bulldog sophomore goa keeper Chrissy Lind and junior goalkeeper Taylor Wolf had a relatively tranquil night, as they hardly had to touch the ball. With York packing in tight on the defensive end, Concordia was on the attack all night. The team's sixth shutout of the season topped the previous program record of five shutouts in a single season, formerly held by the 1997 Concordia squad.

York's strategy seemed to work in the first half, as the score remained scoreless despite Concordia getting off 20 first half shots.

"At halftime, we just talked about maintaining that composure, not getting panicked because the goal didn't come and just doing what we were doing early as far as keeping possession and trying to get in behind them," head coach Greg Henson said. "I thought we did a nice job of that."

Finally, in the 55th minute, freshman Jessica Skerston knocked in her 11th goal of the season thanks to an assist from senior Katrina Muther to give the Bulldogs a 1-0 advantage. Then in the 73rd minute, freshman Esther Soenksen scored her fourth goal of the season to seal the deal. By the end of the day, the Bulldogs had drilled off a total of 44 shots.

"It took us a little while to get that goal, but one of the things we wanted to focus on was keeping the ball, keeping possession and playing smart and playing simple and I thought we did a good job of that," Greg Henson said. "We created a bunch of chances in the first half and their goalkeeper did a nice job to keep the score level at zero.

"Overall, tonight was just a good, collective team effort," Henson said. "York did things that they thought were going to help them be successful. They played good defensively as a team and got in back behind the ball and got numbers behind the ball and made things difficult for us."



Having scored at least once in nine of 10 games, Skerston remains second on the conference leaderboard in goals. Just a freshman, Skerston made the transition to the collegiate level sound simple.

"I just kind of go out and play," Skerston said. "I didn't really feel an adjustment. I just play hard and go for it."

Despite the strong start and record setting performances, Henson is maintaining an even keel, and remaining focused on the work yet to be done.

"It's nice to get those records, but we have some goals that we set for ourselves this season and in the offseason last year that we're looking to obtain," Henson said. "The non-conference schedule is set up to make us successful as we get into the heart of the GPAC schedule now. I think we're in a good place right now, but we still have some learning to do and some areas to improve upon."

The Bulldogs will be on the road to take on Dordt at 1 p.m. on Saturday in Sioux Center, Iowa.

"We've got a tough match with Dordt on the road on Saturday," Henson said. "That's all the farther we're looking ahead right now to make sure that we come out of this weekend, we're looking to go up there and get three points and to put us in a better position for the conference standings."

Bulldogs remain unbeaten in GPAC play with double overtime draw

Oct. 4, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 0, Dordt 0 (2 OT)

"They're much improved," Henson said. "They worked really hard today and created a couple chances. They deserved a tie."

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — Up against a Dordt team that it dominated a year earlier, the Concordia University women's soccer team sought a 3-0 start to the GPAC season. However, the Bulldogs were greeted by an improved Defender squad that played Concordia to a 0-0 double-overtime draw in Sioux Center, Iowa, on Saturday.

With the tie, head coach Greg Henson's squad now has seven points in the league standings and sits at 8-2-1 overall while remaining unbeaten in GPAC play at 2-0-1.

"We did a much better job in the second half of creating chances," Henson said. "We were able to get in behind their defense and a hit the crossbar a couple times. The story of the game was missed opportunities.

"In the first overtime we were pushing it forward to try to win the game. In the second overtime you're just making sure you don't lose it. On the road you want to come out with points. We felt like we should have won, but we didn't capitalize."

The Bulldogs finished with a 14-11 advantage in shots. Their best chance to score came late in the first half when freshman Jessica Skerston's point-blank shot off a corner kick was cleared off the line. Not surprisingly, Skerston, who has a team-leading 11 goals, was the most active on the attack. She fired off six shots, including two on goal.

By holding Dordt scoreless for 110 minutes, Concordia recorded its third-straight shutout and extended its school record shutout total to seven on the season. The Bulldogs have held their opponents without a goal over their last 302 minutes and 59 seconds of game action.

Henson noted the play of senior midfielder Ashlie Sklenicka, senior center back Rachel Mussell and sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind as key factors in Concordia's latest blanking. Lind made seven saves for her fifth shutout in 2014.

Dordt is now 5-3-1 overall after going 0-17-1 last season.



Bulldogs run away from Doane with second half flurry

Oct. 8, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 5, Doane 1

GOALS

3' - (C) Jordan McCoy (2)

5' - (C) Melissa Stine (3)

8' - (D) Krystal Lozier

47' - (C) Melissa Stine (4)

73' - (C) Meredith Hein (1)

89' - (C) Jessica Skerston (12)

SEWARD, Neb. — The Concordia University women's soccer team broke out of a bit of an offensive lull on Wednesday night in rolling up a 5-1 win over rival Doane. The Bulldogs moved to 9-2-1, 3-0-1 GPAC and knocked off the Tigers for the first time since 2010.

The Bulldogs were in the nets early, setting the tone in just the third minute when freshman Jessica Skerston found sophomore Jordan McCoy, who struck one in to take a 1-0 lead. Just two minutes later, senior Melissa Stine got her big night started with a goal assisted by fellow senior Ashlie Sklenicka.

The first half goal-scoring frenzy wasn't all in favor of the Bulldogs, however, as Doane quickly responded in the eighth minute to get on the board and narrow the lead to just 2-1. The score would hold heading into the half.

With a potentially potent Doane team down by just a goal at the half, head coach Greg Henson commented on a couple Bulldog miscues what allowed the Tigers to get back in the game.

"We jumped out to a 2-0 lead in early in the first half and then we had a little bit of a mental lapse and allowed them to get in behind us," Henson said. "Doane is always able to capitalize on your mistakes. That's kind of what we talked about before the game and again at halftime is limiting the opportunities we helped to create for them. I think we did a nice job of that coming out and getting that goal in the first few minutes of the second half was huge."

The halftime talk must have worked, because the Bulldogs were on the board almost immediately, thanks to Stine's second goal of the game and her fourth of the season.

"We kind of asked her to do something different than maybe she feels comfortable or natural in doing, but she's a great attacking player and I think she really shined tonight," Henson said of the 5-foot-4 forward. "Getting two goals for us tonight was huge for her."

In the 73rd minute, it was senior Meredith Hein getting in on the action with her first goal of the season thanks to an assist from freshman Esther Soenksen. Sealing the deal in the 89th minute was Skerston, who netted her 12th goal of the season.

It was the most goals the Bulldogs have put past a GPAC opponent since their 7-0 thumping of Briar Cliff University back in 2010. The flood of goals was a positive sight for Henson, who commented on the team's recent struggles to find the back of the net.

"We've had a little bit of a five game slump in goal scoring production," Henson said. "It was something we wanted to focus on in this game. We made a couple of changes in how we were playing system wise and I think the players responded really well to that tonight. It created more opportunities for us to get numbers forward and open up chances to get in there behind their defensive line."

Despite their dominating performance, Henson says there remain areas that can be improved upon.

"We've got room for improvement," Henson said. "Even tonight we played well and we finished our chances tonight which makes the game a lot easier, but there's still some areas that we need to improve upon as we go down the home stretch here in conference play."

Looking ahead, the Bulldogs will get a week to recover as they prepare for a road trip to Lincoln, Neb. to take on Nebraska Wesleyan on Wednesday, Oct. 15.

With their season rounding towards the home stretch and their record sitting near the top of the GPAC standings, the Bulldogs are taking things in stride and remaining poised.

"This was big for us," senior Marcie Sindt said. "We've been struggling to finish opportunities. We just got it done tonight."

Rodriguez provides lone Bulldog goal in 1-1 draw at Nebraska Wesleyan

Oct. 15, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 1, Nebraska Wesleyan 1 (2 OT)

GOALS

47' - (C) Emmalynn Rodriguez (1)

52' - (N) Lyndsey Harpenau

LINCOLN, Neb. — One week after an offensive showcase that saw the Bulldogs put up the most goals against a GPAC opponent since 2010, Concordia found themselves in a double overtime slugfest. Concordia and host Nebraska Wesleyan settled for a 1-1 tie after 110 minutes of playing time.

The Bulldogs (9-2-2, 3-0-2 GPAC) remained unbeaten in conference play and maintained their position at second in the conference with 11 points.

Neither team was able to gain much of an upper hand in the first half, as they headed into the locker rooms at the intermission with a 0-0 tie. The Bulldogs struggled to find momentum on the offensive end, getting off three shots in the first 45 minutes as well as just one corner kick.

It did not help that the Bulldogs were forced to play the majority of the first half after freshman Jessica Skerston rolled her ankle roughly five minutes into the game. Later, fellow sophomore striker Jordan McCoy made her way to the sidelines after getting banged up as well.

It did not take long for the Bulldogs to find the back of the net in the second half, however, as senior Emmalynn Rodriguez gave Concordia a 1-0 lead in the 47th minute with a goal that found the top left corner of the net from 10 yards out off an assist from senior Meredith Hein. The Bulldogs would not be able to muster up much more on the offensive end, however, railing off just two shots on goal and coming up empty-handed on corner kicks.

Head coach Greg Henson commented on Rodriguez and Hein, who came off the bench and answered a big call to fill in for the injured Skerston and McCoy.

"Meredith Hein and Emmalynn Rodriguez stepped up huge," Henson said. "They played the majority of minutes up front and combined to give us the lead."

Nebraska Wesleyan responded quickly however, as they responded with a header into the goal in the 51st minute.

"Nebraska Wesleyan is very dangerous on set pieces," Henson said. "They connected on a corner kick shortly after our goal."

In a tight game that required just as much defensive composure as offensive possession, Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind stayed busy tending the nets, saving eight goals on long night.

"Chrissy played outstanding," Henson said. "She made about four game-winning saves."

Even with circumstances stacked against them, Henson and company avoided a road defeat.

"Nebraska Wesleyan is a good team," Henson said. "They finished third in our conference last year and look like a top-four team again this year. We feel like we kind of stole one because they had us on our heels for a while."

"It's difficult when you're without two of your starting front runners," Henson said. "It was a tough match on the road and sometimes you have to gut one out. We're happy to get a point on the road, but I still wouldn't say we're satisfied. This was a little bit of a wakeup call in that we're playing some pretty tough games now."



Bulldogs record eighth shutout of season in draw with Northwestern

Oct. 18, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 0, Northwestern 0 (2 OT)

SEWARD, Neb. — For the second-straight time out, the Concordia University women's soccer team played in a double overtime draw. Saturday evening's affair with visiting Northwestern (5-8-2, 3-2-2 GPAC) ended in a scoreless tie after 110 minutes of action on senior night at Bulldog Stadium.

Still unbeaten in conference play, head coach Greg Henson's squad concluded the night with records of 9-2-3 overall and 3-0-3 in the GPAC (tied with Midland for second place).

"Northwestern's a good team," Henson said. "They did some really nice things on their own. It was one of those games where there was some frustration on both sides. It was two very good defensive teams battling it out tonight.

"Late in the match we tried to make a couple changes going for the win. I think in the latter part of the second half we got a few good opportunities and then in the first overtime really took it to them."

Led on the attack by senior Melissa Stine (game-high five shots), Concordia put forth its most serious threats during the first overtime period. The Bulldogs got up five of their 15 shots during that 10-minute stretch. Both Stine and freshman Jessica Skerston took chances that just missed off frame.

Seven of Concordia's eight seniors, who were honored during a pregame ceremony, were part of Henson's starting lineup on Saturday. Emmalyn Rodriguez, a senior from Kansas City, Mo., made her first career start three days after notching her first goal of the season at Nebraska Wesleyan.

"I feel very blessed to be on this team," Rodriguez said. "The girls are amazing. We have such a good family bond on the team. It was a huge blessing to be able to play today."

For the first time this season, Skerston (team leader with 12 goals) did not start. She played sparingly in Wednesday's tie and did not appear on Saturday until the final 10



minutes of regulation.

The shutout was Concordia's eighth this season, extending its program-record total. Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind had to make just one save to get credit for her sixth shutout of the campaign – another school record. She was kept clean on Saturday by the usual steady play in the back from seniors Rachel Mussell and Marcie Sindt.

Mussell, Sindt and the rest of the Bulldog defensive effort held down Northwestern star Tyler Farr, who entered play with 12 goals of her own. She got off just a single shot in the draw.

"Over the last two years since I've been here, they've done a great job providing us with leadership," Henson said of the seniors. "They have an impact on the field game-in and game-out and in training and every aspect of the program. Hats off to them on a great career. The work's not quite done yet."

The Bulldogs take the field again on Wednesday when they play at Midland (11-3, 4-2 GPAC) at 7 p.m. Last season Concordia topped the Warriors, 1-0, inside Bulldog Stadium. On Saturday Midland toppled Mount Marty, 4-0. Concordia and Midland are neck and neck near the top of the GPAC – with several teams close behind.

Skerston powers come-from-behind double overtime win at Midland

Oct. 22, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, Midland 1 (2 OT)

GOALS

37' - (M) Cassie Cattabiani

54' - (C) Jessica Skerston (13)

108' - (C) Jessica Skerston (14)

FREMONT, Neb. — A relentless driving rain made conditions miserable for all 107-plus minutes of play during the Concordia University women's soccer team's Wednesday night contest at Midland. The misery quickly faded for the Bulldogs when freshman Jessica Skerston found the back of the net for the golden goal in the second overtime, boosting Concordia to a 2-1 win in Fremont.

The victory on the soaked turf at Heedum Field pushed head coach Greg Henson's squad into sole possession of second place in the GPAC standings at 10-2-3 overall and 4-0-3 (15 points) in league action. Concordia and No. 17 Hastings (7-0) are the only two teams without a loss in conference play.

"The conditions were atrocious. It was unfortunate that a game this important had to be played in that," Henson said. "It was great to see us persevere and deal with it and come away with the road win. It was the first time we had given up the first goal in a game. Down 1-0, we came back and that's big."

The Bulldogs appeared headed for a third-straight GPAC draw until Skerston surfaced with her second goal of the game and team-leading 14th of the season. In the 108th minute, Skerston played a nice feed from senior Meredith Hein for her fifth game-winning goal on the year.

It was the third multi-goal game of the season for the St. Charles, Mo., native, who ranks second among all GPAC players with her 14 goals. She returned to the starting lineup after sitting out much of the double overtime draw with Northwestern four days ago. As Henson said, "Obviously having Jess back helps."

The pouring rain played a role in the limited number of offensive threats posed by either team. Concordia finished with a 12-9 advantage in shots on a wet and slippery night.

"Even before warm ups the rain was coming hard and fast," Henson said. "It never let up until overtime. We expected it to be tough going and sloppy. It was rough sledding so we didn't expect a whole lot of goals."

After getting down 1-0, the Bulldogs equalized in the 54th minute when Skerston got behind the defense and nailed a shot from the center of the box. That ended a Concordia scoring drought that spanned more than 200 minutes going back to Emmalynn Rodriguez's 47th-minute goal in last week's 1-1 draw at Nebraska Wesleyan.

The Warriors (11-4, 4-3 GPAC) got on the board first in the 37th minute when Cassie Cattabiani chased down a free kick that hit the cross bar. Cattabiani punched in the goal from right in front of the net for her fifth score of the season.

The Warriors had one last opportunity late in regulation with a corner kick that goalkeeper Chrissy Lind corralled. Lind finished with three saves.

With 10 wins on the season, the Bulldogs have reached double figures for the first time since the 2006 team went 10-7-1 overall. No Concordia team had even been unbeaten in conference play after seven league games until this season.

Wednesday's triumph also bumped the Bulldogs to 6-1-2 on the road, giving them the most away victories of any GPAC team.

The Bulldogs hit the road again on Saturday when they play Briar Cliff (10-2-2, 4-1-2 GPAC) in Sioux City, Iowa, at 1 p.m. in a battle of teams separated by a single point in the standings. Concordia had positive results versus the Chargers last season as they earned a 3-1 home victory in their meeting on Oct. 26, 2013. The Bulldogs then got past Briar Cliff in the GPAC quarterfinals by winning a penalty kick shootout.

"It was a big win in chasing that top-four finish in the conference," Henson said after Wednesday's victory. "We beat a team that we had been tied with or just behind all season. We have another big one on Saturday."

Bulldogs post ninth shutout in scoreless draw at Briar Cliff

Oct. 25, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 0, Briar Cliff (2 OT)

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — A fourth-consecutive double overtime contest for the Concordia University women's soccer team resulted in a scoreless draw with host Briar Cliff in a game played in Sioux City, Iowa, on Saturday. The Bulldogs extended their school record shutout total to nine on an afternoon that featured precious few dramatic moments around the goal.

Second-year head coach Greg Henson's squad picked up a point in the league standings and now sits at 10-2-4 overall and 4-0-4 in conference play. The draw kept Concordia in second place (16 points) and Briar Cliff in third (15 points).

"It was a dead heat between two teams near the top of the conference," Henson said. "It was two sound defensive teams going at it. Both struggled to create chances offensively. Neither team really challenged each other's keepers."

The Chargers finished with a slight edge in shots, 6-5. The 20 minutes of overtime saw just one combined shot as both teams aimed to secure at least a single point towards the GPAC standings.

Henson commended the work of his backline that includes the likes of senior center backs Rachel Mussell and Marcie Sindt as well as outside back Katrina Muther. They helped keep goalkeeper Chrissy Lind (six saves) clean. Lind pushed her own school record shutout total to seven on the year.

"I'm very happy with the effort of our team," Henson said. "Defensively we really played strong. That aspect is a real positive for us right now. We have to figure out ways to score to win these close battles. We're in a tough stretch of conference games."

Concordia leading goal scorer Jessica Skerston (14 goals this season) was limited to two shots (one on goal) by a Charger defense that entered the weekend leading the GPAC in fewest goals allowed per game (0.5). Meanwhile, the Bulldogs did not even allow top Briar Cliff goal scorer Brooke Romer to get off a shot.

Concordia has now played a total of 12 overtime periods

over six overtime games. It owns a record of 2-0-4 in those contests. On Wednesday the Bulldogs defeated Midland, 2-1, in double overtime.

In 10 games away from Bulldog Stadium, Concordia has lost only once and sports a 6-1-3 road record. The Bulldogs are unbeaten over their last eight games (4-0-4).

Henson's squad will battle a ranked opponent for the first time this season when it hosts No. 17 Hastings (12-2-1, 7-0 GPAC pending Saturday night's game) at 5 p.m. on Wednesday. The Broncos have won 12-straight games and are unbeaten since dropping their first two contests of the season. Hastings won both meetings with Concordia in 2013.



Bulldogs upset No. 16 Hastings, tie program record for wins

Oct. 29, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, (16) Hastings 1

GOALS

21' - (C) Meredith Hein (2)

62' - (C) Marcie Sindt (3)

89' - (H) Megan Kruse

SEWARD, Neb. — For the second time in six seasons, the Concordia University women's soccer team shocked a ranked Hastings squad on the turf inside Bulldog Stadium. The Bulldogs used their typically stifling defensive effort to knock off the 16th-ranked Broncos, 2-1, on Wednesday night. The win pulls head coach Greg Henson's squad even with the 2004 Bulldogs for the most victories (11) in program history.

In taking out a Hastings (13-3-1, 8-1 GPAC) team that had outscored its GPAC opponents by a combined score of 26-2 entering play, Concordia (11-2-4, 5-0-4 GPAC) put itself in prime position to claim second place, where it currently sits with 19 league points.



A joyous Bulldog squad roared when Henson told his team after the game, "we're the only undefeated team in the GPAC."

It's difficult to understate a win over an opponent that has dominated the league and had won 20-straight games against conference opponents.

"It was a big win for us as a team and as a program," Henson said.

"They're a good team. Hats off to Hastings on what they've done this season and over the course of the last few years.

"We just wanted to come out and put in a good collective team effort tonight like we talked about in the locker room before the game. I told the girls that if we do the little things that we need to do we'd be there at the end of the game."

While seniors Meredith Hein and Marcie Sindt came through in the goal-scoring department, Concordia's defensive effort gets a gold star for containing a powerful Bronco attack that entered the night leading the GPAC with an average of nearly three goals per game. Hastings did not get on the board until the 89th minute of Wednesday's contest.

"Again, it was just a collective team effort," Henson said. "From the back forward, we wanted to work as a group of 11 in our defensive shape and posture. We wanted to also try and get forward as much as possible to put a little pressure on them."

Already leading 1-0, the Bulldogs pushed across a second goal when Sindt attacked in a scramble situation following a free kick. On the play, Hastings goalkeeper Mallory Taylor deflected Jeannelle Condame's roughly 30-yard free kick off the crossbar. Sindt then tucked the ball inside the left post in the 62nd minute for her third goal of the season.

Earlier on a strange play that saw Taylor leave the goal unprotected, senior Meredith Hein punched the ball off the head of a Hastings defender and into the back of the net for a 1-0 Bulldog lead in the 21st minute. Hein's second goal of the season marked just the second time all season that the Broncos trailed in a conference game.

Concordia went on to hand Hastings its first conference loss.

"Obviously it feels really good," Hein said. "We worked really hard for this and we've been waiting for this game. We went out there knowing that we have to compete the best we can and play our game and not just to hang with them."

Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind ensured that Concordia took the lead to the half by making a diving save to her right on a shot from Michaela Vadeboncoeur late in the first half. Lind made six saves and fell just short of recording her eighth shutout of the season. The Broncos have been blanked only once in 2014.

Mussell and company complete unbeaten GPAC run, break program wins record

Nov. 1, 2014

FINAL: Concordia 2, Dakota Wesleyan 0

GOALS

32' - (C) Jeannelle Condamine (3)

59' - (C) Melissa Stine (5)



SEWARD, Neb. — It was a fitting win to finish a stellar regular season for the Concordia University women's soccer squad as it shut out a visiting Dakota Wesleyan, 2-0. The win marked several more milestones for the Bulldog squad, earning them a program best 12-win season that tops the former record set 10 years ago when Concordia went 11-8.

With the victory, Concordia moved to 12-2-4, 6-0-4 GPAC and clinched the No. 2 spot in the conference tournament — the highest GPAC or NIAC finish in program history. At 6-0-4, the Bulldogs are the first in school history to go unbeaten in conference play since the program began in 1996.

Not only did the Bulldogs go on a record-setting tear this season, but they redefined the expectations of the Concordia women's soccer program.

"It was a goal of ours all along to be in the top four," head coach Greg Henson said. "Once you get there, you want to do as well as you can. To finish the regular season undefeated and in second place is a great accomplishment. This team has really set the new standard for the women's soccer program."

Concordia was on the attack all game, drilling off 14 shots in the first half, while yielding just one. It was freshman Jeannelle Condamine who got the Bulldogs rolling with her third goal of the season with a free kick in the 32nd minute, pushing the Bulldogs to a 1-0 advantage.

The second half was more of the same for the Bulldogs, who rattled off 18 more shots, but were able to find the net just once when freshman Jessica Skerston found senior Melissa Stine in the 59th minute to give the Bulldogs a 2-0 lead.

Although there were not many shots coming her way, sophomore goal keeper Chrissy Lind recorded two saves and helped Concordia extend its school record shutout total to 10, twice as many as the previous record of five.

With so many missed opportunities to put the ball in the net, Henson noted that putting an exclamation point on possessions is something the Bulldogs can improve.

A year ago, it would have been current senior Rachel Mussell looking to cap off runs with a goal. However, after leading the team in scoring the past two seasons, the Buffalo, Minn., native moved to center back this year.

"I think that defense has definitely been our focus this season and making sure that we're all behind the ball," Mussell said. "That definitely showed today, we limited their opportunities and that's our ultimate goal in order to get the win."

Though there is much to celebrate, there will be little time to do so. With the regular season now finished, Concordia finds itself in new territory, with rival Doane coming to town on Tuesday to begin GPAC quarterfinal play.

"Tomorrow we get ready for postseason play and the second season," Henson said. "Everything we've done thus far is erased and goes back to zero to zero. We'll celebrate it tonight and enjoy the moment, and tomorrow we'll get ready for postseason play."

FEATURE: 2014 Bulldogs set standard for women's soccer program

By Jake Knabel

Published Nov. 2, 2014

After senior Melissa Stine emerged from a scramble with her fifth goal of the season to increase the Concordia lead over Dakota Wesleyan on Saturday, Imagine Dragons hit "On Top of the World" blared from the Bulldog Stadium speaker system. Concordia women's soccer may not have actually been on top of the world, but it sure felt like it.

The Bulldogs were in the midst of winding down their program record-breaking 12th win of the season during a week that could be described as the high point, at least to date, in the 19-year history of Concordia women's soccer.

It's not hyperbole. Second-year head coach Greg Henson's Bulldogs have taken to rewriting the program record books like their next meal depends upon it.

"To finish the regular season undefeated and in second place is a great accomplishment," Henson said following Saturday's win. "This team has really set the new standard for the women's soccer program."

In terms of team records, the 2014 squad got greedy. Most overall wins in a season? Check. Most shutouts in a season? Check. Highest conference finish in school history? Check. First undefeated conference regular season ever? Check. Fewest goals allowed in a single season. On track!

Those records are cool and all, but the accomplishment that legitimized the regular season occurred last week when Concordia upset a 16th-ranked Hastings team that it had beaten only once in 24 prior meetings. The Broncos had won 20-straight contests versus GPAC foes and had outscored conference opponents this season by a combined score of 26-2 entering the Oct. 29 battle.

Perhaps there are bigger wins to come this year, but there likely have not been any more satisfying victories in the first 19 seasons of the program than the one that came on that late October night.

"Obviously it feels really good," senior Meredith Hein said after the Hastings win. "We worked really hard for this and we've been waiting for this game. We went out there knowing that we have to compete the best we can and play our game and not just to hang with them."

The way Henson and his team approached the upset victory says a lot about why these Bulldogs were able to run through the 10-game conference schedule without a single loss. They have not been quick to simply rest on their laurels.

"Celebrate it. Enjoy it," Henson told his team after the game. "But when you show up at practice tomorrow, it's done."

The Bulldogs got the message. Three days later they took care of business in a 2-0 win over Dakota Wesleyan that wasn't as close as the score. It was the perfect capper on the best regular season any Concordia women's soccer team has ever pulled off.

There were signs out of the gate that this Concordia team was different. It began the campaign with a 1-0 win over an AIB squad that is now receiving votes in the national poll. Then the Bulldogs nearly went on the road and knocked off Bellevue University (now ranked 23rd) but let a late one-goal lead slip away.

Led by a nice mix of a senior class teeming with leadership on down to a freshman group that has provided critical goal-scoring punch, Concordia rebounded with five-straight wins – all on the road – to put that Bellevue loss behind it.

Other than two non-conference losses that saw their opponents put up four goals apiece, the Bulldogs' collective defensive effort has been airtight in support of sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind. Before the season began, Henson made a calculated gamble by moving leading goal scorer Rachel Mussell to center back. With freshman Jessica Skerston surfacing as one of the GPAC's top strikers and Mussell leading a stellar back line, it's safe to say the switch has paid off.

Mussell sacrificed the goal scoring glory in a move that was truly all about the team. Look where it's taken it.

"(Breaking the wins record) is something that the senior class, since we were freshmen, has talked about," Mussell said after the regular-season finale. "We knew we had a big class coming in and it was full of athleticism and full of leadership."

"We definitely didn't have any idea (it would turn out like this), but it was a goal we always wanted to achieve."

As Henson is likely to tell his team, none of those achievements will matter when the ball is kicked off inside Bulldog Stadium at Tuesday's GPAC tournament quarterfinal game. But the fact that Concordia earned a conference playoff tournament home contest should not be taken lightly. As the Imagine Dragons wrote, we've "been waiting on this for a while now."

Henson may retort with, "We have more work to do" just as did after last week's upset win.



Bulldogs advance to GPAC semifinals for second-straight year

Nov. 4, 2014

GPAC Quarterfinals: Concordia 2, Doane 1

GOALS

45' - (C) Emmalynn Rodriguez (2)

76' - (C) Jessica Skerston (15)

90' - (D) Meghan Voigt

SEWARD, Neb. — A thrilling season for the Concordia University women's soccer team motors into the GPAC tournament semifinals for the second-straight year. The second-seeded Bulldogs earned their way there by topping rival and seventh-seeded Doane, 2-1, in a quarterfinal match played inside Bulldog Stadium on Tuesday night.

By extending its program record win total to 13, head coach Greg Henson's squad will play host to sixth-seeded Dakota Wesleyan (9-9-1) at 5 p.m. on Saturday. Dakota Wesleyan upset third-seeded Midland, 2-1, in overtime on Tuesday in another quarterfinal tilt.

For the Bulldogs (13-2-4), the opportunity to host in the semifinals (first time ever) represents another bullet point in the growing list of achievements accumulated by the 2014 team.

"We wanted to finish in the top four. That was our No. 1 goal for the season," Henson said. "Once we got there we wanted to get as high of a seed as possible to give us the opportunity to host in more than one round. It's great to be here (in this position)."

A week after nearly shutting out the GPAC's most prolific offensive team in a 2-1 upset of No. 16 Hastings, the Bulldogs held Doane (6-10-1) scoreless until a well-placed free kick by Kasey Hoppes found Meghan Voigt for the 90th-minute header, cutting their deficit to a single goal. It simply came a little too late for a Tiger squad that entered the night ranked third in the conference with an average of 2.13 goals per game.

It was another solid effort from a Concordia backline made up of three seniors and one freshman. Senior right back Katrina Muther and the Bulldogs are unbeaten over their last 11 games, and they've had a blast in the process.

"It's really awesome, especially for us seniors," Muther said. "We've come so far. A lot of us never pictured us in this place, but I think our team has a really good head on its shoulders. We know we have to take one game at a time. We like to celebrate what we've done and also remember that each day comes with new trials and new opportunities."

Concordia took the lead in the final seconds of the first half when it took advantage of a drawn out goalkeeper. Sophomore Jordan McCoy pushed the ball behind the defense to senior Emmalynn Rodriguez, who tapped the ball from right at the edge of the 18 past hard-charging keeper Kayla Wegman. It was the second goal of the season for the native of Kansas City, Mo.

The score remained 1-0 for more than 25 minutes until the Bulldogs struck again. Held scoreless over the previous three games, freshman Jessica Skerston capitalized on a misplay in the back and knocked in her team-leading 15th goal in the 76th minute.

Doane settled into the game a bit more quickly and produced the first two shots of the night. Reigning GPAC defensive player of the week Chrissy Lind began the game impressively by making a leaping save of a well-taken shot by Krystal Lozier in the second minute.

"We knew coming in that it would be a tough match," Henson said. "It's playoff time and every game's going to be tough. It's a survive and advance mentality right now. Doane's a very good team and I don't think deserving of seven seed. I think they're a better team than that."

Concordia ended Tuesday's game with a 19-12 advantage in the shot count. Both teams generated more chances during the second half. Skerston narrowly missed on a couple of her six total shots and Doane leading goal scoring Sara Cushing headed a ball late that sailed just over the crossbar.

No matter the late scares, it added up to another Bulldog victory. On to the semifinals.

"That's really exciting," Muther said. "We've never done it. And we had an awesome fan base today so thank you to everyone who came out. It's a big advantage for us playing on turf and playing at home. We're really excited and looking forward to that game."

Lind and company shut out DWU to earn trip to GPAC title game

Nov. 8, 2014

GPAC Semifinals: Concordia 2, Dakota Wesleyan 0

GOALS

34' - (C) Jessica Skerston (16)

59' - (C) Melissa Stine (6)

SEWARD, Neb. — For the first time in program history, the Concordia University women's soccer team has earned a trip to the GPAC tournament championship game. On Saturday evening the Bulldogs protected their home turf in a 2-0 conference semifinal win over visiting Dakota Wesleyan.

In improving to 8-1-1 at Bulldog Stadium and 14-2-4 overall, head coach Greg Henson's squad advanced to play at league champion and 21st-ranked Hastings (16-3-1) at 7 p.m. on Thursday (Nov. 13).

"We're real excited about the opportunity that we have coming up on Thursday and to play in the GPAC championship game," Henson said. "I think the biggest thing for us

is that it's not enough just to get there. We have our sights set on going and competing and looking to win the championship game."

Saturday's game looked much like the one played just a week earlier between Concordia and Dakota Wesleyan (9-10-1). The Bulldogs again dominated possession and outshot the Tigers, 28-3, in the process of posting their 11th shutout of the season.

Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind has seen just 15 shots hit the back of the net in more than 1,800 minutes of play this season. Lind and a backline led by a trio of seniors in Rachel Mussell, Katrina Muther and Marcie Sindt have made life difficult on opposing attacks.

"It helps to have three senior captains back there," Lind said. "We all trust each other and listen to each other. We know what to do with the ball because of the way we communicate. That has a lot to do with it. I trust them in front of me."

Concordia struck first after a foul called in the box set up a penalty kick opportunity. Freshman Jessica Skerston then lined a shot that hit the hand of diving goalkeeper Cici Schneider and leapt into the goal in the 34th minute, extending the St. Charles, Mo., native's team-leading goal count to 16.

Fellow freshman Jeannelle Condamine set up several more chances with her excellent ball placement on corner kicks. She found senior Melissa Stine off a corner for a 59th-minute header to open up the 2-0 advantage. Condamine nearly made it back-to-back goals off corner kicks when Marcie Sindt's well-taken header was saved by Schneider just moments later.

On the other end of the field, Dakota Wesleyan threats were few and far between as another solid collective defensive effort elevated Concordia to the GPAC title game.

"I think we're all really excited," Lind said. "Our program's never gotten this far before. We didn't want to look past (Saturday's) game. We knew we had beaten them before, but we knew we had to come out strong and finish it off."

Added Henson after the win, "We'll look to enjoy this moment tonight and then take the next three-to-four days to get ready for the championship game."



Improbable journey continues with GPAC tournament title

Nov. 13, 2014

GPAC Championship: Concordia 1, (20) Hastings 0

GOALS

80' - (C) Jessica Skerston (17)

HASTINGS, Neb. — A jubilant Concordia University women's soccer team continued its on-field celebration following the biggest win in the 19-year history of the program. The moment was much too fresh for head coach Greg Henson to even comprehend what had occurred. "Is this real? Did that really just happen?" Henson asked as bone-chilled Bulldog fans continued to file onto Lloyd Wilson Field in Hastings, Neb.

The brisk November night wasn't getting any warmer, but no one associated with Concordia women's soccer bothered to care. In their first-ever appearance in the GPAC title game, the Bulldogs upset regular-season champion and 20th-ranked Hastings, 1-0, on Thursday night. And in another first for the program, Henson's squad has earned an automatic berth to the national tournament.

"We set it as one of our goals to get to nationals, but I'd be lying if I didn't say I thought it was a little bit off the radar," Henson said. "All season long we've been competing. This team has just gotten better and better as the season's gone on. It started to seem like this was within our grasp.

"I can't be any happier or more proud of the players on this roster."

For virtually the entire contest, Concordia (15-2-4) played on the defensive against an aggressive Hastings attack. But Bulldog sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind and the backline were up for the challenge once again. Lind made nine saves and the Bulldogs somehow dodged every Hastings bullet.

Then in the 81st minute, Concordia took advantage after Hastings misplayed its own goalkick. Senior Emmalynn Rodriguez, who had just subbed into the game, played a cross to Jessica Skerston to the middle of the field. Skerston calmly drilled the ball inside the right post for her 17th



goal of the season and the game's only score.

It was all senior center back Marcie Sindt and company would need to knock off the Broncos (16-4-1) for the second time this season. Hastings peppered Concordia with 25 shots, some near misses, but Sindt, Rachel Mussell and the rest of the defensive effort kept serious threats to a minimum.

Now they're GPAC champions, but excuse them if that fact hasn't quite settled in.

"It's definitely surreal," Sindt said. "This was always the goal. Good things happen when you have really good leadership. I'm proud of the girls. I'm proud of the fight. It's pretty crazy."

Lind made one of her most impressive saves in the 64th-minute with the game still tied. She preserved her 10th shutout (team's 12th) by punching a shot inside the box from Emily Arrigo over the crossbar. The Broncos got one final opportunity on a free kick with 13 seconds remaining, but Megan Kruse's shot sailed well over the goal. The celebration was on.

This season's thrill ride has now taken the Bulldogs on a streak of 13-straight games (9-0-4) without a loss. Every single GPAC team failed to defeat Concordia in 2014, even the league's perennially dominant Hastings bunch.

In two contests this season with the Broncos, the Bulldogs limited the conference's top offensive attack to just a single goal.

"That's been the strength of our team all season long – our back four and Chrissy in goal," Henson said. "They've done a great job of putting us in positions to win games. That's what we talked about before the game today – defend as a unit and defend as 11."

"The back four is what gave us an opportunity this year."

The Bulldogs did not register their first shot of the night until freshman Jeannelle Condame's well-placed free kick resulted in a Melissa Stine header that went over the goal at the 35-minute mark. At that point, Hastings had already fired off 14 shots (four on goal).

But the shot discrepancy did not stop this standard-setting group of Bulldogs. They're moving on to the national tour-

namment. Concordia will learn of its opponent as part of the 31-team NAIA National Championships field when pairings are released on Monday (Nov. 17).

Currently unranked, Concordia knows it will hit the road to take on a highly-rated opponent when the national tournament opening round gets underway on Saturday, Nov. 22, but right now the Bulldogs are basking in an accomplishment very few would have expected even late in the regular season.

"We were the only ones who believed in us in the beginning," Sindt said. "Here we are. It's carried us a long way. We're just so thankful."

NAIA Women's Soccer National Championships Info
The NAIA National Championship will include a field of 31 teams. Thirty (30) teams compete in 15 National Championship Opening Round matchups played on campus sites nationwide. Winners advance to the final site (Orange Beach, Ala.) where the remainder of the single-elimination tournament will be played.

The 15 opening-round pairings will be played on Saturday, Nov. 22 at NAIA campuses nationwide.



No. 24 Bulldogs headed to No. 9 Benedictine for national tournament

SEWARD, Neb. — The first-ever national tournament game in the 19-year history of the Concordia University women's soccer program will take place at the BC Soccer Complex in Atchison, Kan. The 24th-ranked GPAC tournament champion Bulldogs (15-2-4) will square off with No. 9 Benedictine (18-1) on Saturday in the opening round of the 2014 NAIA Women's Soccer National Championships, as announced by the NAIA on Monday afternoon. Game time has not been determined.

Winners of the 15 opening round games will then advance to play at the final site in Orange Beach, Ala., where the national championships will resume on Monday, Dec. 1. Concordia is one of 31 teams that have qualified for the event.

Coming off the first-ever GPAC title that clinched its first-ever national tournament bid and boosted it to its first-ever national ranking, second-year head coach Greg Henson's squad enters Saturday's game with a 13-game (9-0-4) unbeaten streak. The Bulldogs know they will have to maintain their high level of play to keep the thrill ride going on the national stage.

"Benedictine's been a good program for a number of years," Henson said. "We played them last fall and fell to them, 2-0. They have a great facility and we're looking forward to playing at the national tournament. We expect a tough game."

Concordia will have to quickly familiarize itself with the Ravens, who qualified for the national championships by winning the Heart of America Athletic Conference championship. Prior to 2014, the Bulldogs played Benedictine seven-straight years. The Ravens won each of those matchups.

Benedictine has won 10-consecutive games since its only loss of the season — a 3-2 decision versus Hastings, who Concordia has defeated twice in 2014. The latest Bulldog victory over the Broncos gave Henson's squad an automatic bid to the national tournament. The most meaningful win in program history has Concordia in unfamiliar territory.

"There's a general sense of excitement about this new opportunity," Henson said. "They're all looking forward to it."



It gives our seniors at least one more chance to play with their teammates and friends, and it's a big, positive step for our program."

Benedictine, led by 19 goals from Bethany Smith, checks in near the top of the NAIA in a number of key statistical categories. On the national leaderboard, the Ravens rank third in shutouts (13), ninth in shots on goal per game (11.2) and 10th in goals per game (3.47). Head coach Lincoln Roblee's program is making its third national tournament appearance. The Ravens are 0-2 on the national stage.

Saturday's winner in Atchison will advance to play either No. 8 Spring Arbor (Mich.) (18-1-1) or AIB (Iowa) (12-6-2) in Orange Beach.

NOTES

- A 'standard-setting' season for Concordia women's soccer continued last week with the most significant win in the 19-year history of the program. The Bulldogs defeated regular-season conference champion and 20th-ranked Hastings, 1-0, in the GPAC tournament title game on Nov. 13. The victory gave head coach Greg Henson's squad its first-ever GPAC title and clinched the program's first-ever national tournament berth. Three days later, Concordia was rewarded with its first-ever national ranking. The 24th-rated Bulldogs will enter Saturday's NAIA national tournament opening round game with an overall record of 15-2-4.
- Concordia began the 2014 season with a record of 1-22-1 all-time versus Hastings. Until the Bulldogs upset the then No. 16 Broncos, 2-1, on Oct. 29, their lone victory over Hastings had come in 2009. The Broncos still managed to get the final at-large bid to this year's national tournament and will make their fifth appearance on the grand stage. The Bulldogs are 3-1 against national qualifying teams with wins over Hastings (twice) and AIB (Iowa). The loss came at the hands of Bellevue University, 4-3, now the 17th-ranked team in the NAIA.
- Henson's squad won the GPAC title game despite being out-shot, 25-4. Sophomore goalkeeper Chrissy Lind came through with one of the best performances of her young career, making nine saves to extend her school record shut-out total to 10 (12 total team shutouts). She also got solid play in front of her from Concordia's back line of freshman Jeannelle Condamine (left back) and seniors Rachel Mussell (left center back), Marcie Sindt (right center back) and Katrina Muther (right back). Their work allowed the Bulldogs to overcome their season low shot total.
- Freshman Jessica Skerston provided the only goal in the win. The native of St. Charles, Mo., played a cross from senior Emmalynn Rodriguez and tucked the ball inside the right post for her 17th goal of the season in the 80th minute. Skerston, ranked 20th nationally in total goals, leads all NAIA women's soccer players with eight game-winning goals – a total that breaks the former school record of five by three different Bulldogs.

• Skerston and company have won gone 13-consecutive games (9-0-4) without a loss. That streak stretches back to a 4-2 loss to College of Saint Mary on Sept. 24 (only home defeat). Since then, the Bulldogs have recorded eight shutouts and have allowed a total of just five goals (never more than one in a single game). The 13-game run has seen Concordia put 20 goals (seven from Skerston) on the board.

• Lind, who now has 83 saves on the season, moved up to No. 23 among all NAIA goalkeepers in terms of goals against average (.710) with her 13th career shutout last week. With two full seasons of eligibility remaining, Lind has already surpassed the previous program record for career shutouts. Ariel Harris is the former record holder with 12 shutouts from 2008-11.

• Concordia is one of seven teams making their first-ever national tournament appearance in 2014. The other six are AIB (Iowa), Menlo (Calif.), Northwestern Ohio, Oklahoma Baptist, Rio Grande (Ohio) and William Woods (Mo.). Westmont (Calif.) tops the qualifying field with 17 national tournament appearances.



PREVIEW: Concordia makes push for trip to Alabama



SEWARD, Neb. — The standards for Concordia women's soccer keep on rocketing skyward as second-year head coach Greg Henson leads the program into its first-ever national tournament appearance. A layoff of eight days following their GPAC tournament title victory will end in Atchison, Kan., on Saturday when the 24th-ranked Bulldogs take on No. 9 Benedictine College. Kickoff is slated for 2 p.m. from the BC Soccer Complex.

GAME INFO

No. 24 Concordia (15-2-4) at No. 9 Benedictine (18-1)

Saturday, Nov. 22, 2 p.m.

Site: Atchison, Kan.

Facility: BC Soccer Complex (on campus)

General admission: \$8 (visiting college students or 18 and under: \$5)

The extensive list of accomplishments, including a school record for wins (15) and shutouts (12) in a season, is beginning to sink in for a Bulldog program that had never even been to a conference title game in its previous 18 years of existence. Senior defender Marcie Sindt used the word "surreal" to describe the 1-0 national-tournament clinching win at No. 20 Hastings on Nov. 13.

Now anything seems possible. Concordia is riding high on a 13-game unbeaten streak (9-0-4) that includes eight shutouts.

"Making it to the national tournament has always been the goal," Sindt said. "But I don't think it was until probably

"We have raised the bar and we are looking at continuing to raise it."

--Senior Rachel Mussell

two or three weeks ago that we started looking at each other and thinking, 'wow, we could actually do this.' Cool things happen when you have a coach who believes in you. That's when you start to believe in yourself."

It's safe to say that no Concordia women's soccer team has ever had more belief in itself than the 2014 edition. Confidence is easy to come by when every team in your conference fails to defeat you. There's also a comfort in knowing there are eight seniors, including six who started at Hastings last week, who have designs on extending their careers beyond Saturday.

"We have talked a lot about how we have achieved all of the goals we set out to at the beginning of the year, but it doesn't stop there," senior Rachel Mussell said. "We have raised the bar now, and we are looking at continuing to raise it."

Raising the bar even higher will come with another set of hurdles as the Bulldogs try to get past the champion from the Heart of America Athletic Conference. The powerful Ravens have knocked off Concordia seven-straight years and are making their third national tournament appearance. They've been here before and they will be playing on their home turf – where they have won 10 of 11 games this season.

Will the Bulldogs know how to emotionally handle the unfamiliar national stage?

"I think our emotions will be high," senior Melissa Stine said. "We've never played a game with stakes so high. Regardless of our outcome though, we should all be proud at what we have accomplished this year and the standards we have set for future years. Our team has always taken every game at a time, never getting ahead of ourselves. I hope that we go into this game the very same, and just see it as another team and another game. If we play at the level we are capable of playing and leave it all on the field, we have nothing to fear."



Interestingly, Benedictine's only loss this season came at the hands of then No. 23 Hastings, 3-2, on Sept. 23. Since then the Ravens have won 10 games in a row, outscoring their opponents by a combined score of 29-2.

Henson knows it will take the type of effort it took to beat Hastings twice this season. He likes how his team has responded mentally in the days since the momentous GPAC title win.

"Our players are extremely excited," Henson said at Tuesday's Bulldog Booster Club gathering. "They're not getting ahead of their selves, but they're talking about taking it another step. The program and the mindset of the team are in the right spot."

The Bulldogs plan to arrive on the Benedictine campus at 12:30 p.m. on Friday in preparation for a 1 p.m. workout. An opening-round celebration banquet will be hosted at 6:30 p.m. at the Ferrell Academic Center for players, coaches and athletic personnel. Concordia will then spend Friday night in Atchison before kicking off the national tournament on Saturday.

The winner will advance to play either No. 8 Spring Arbor (Mich.) (18-1-1) or AIB (Iowa) (12-6-2) in the second round of the national tournament. All rounds following the opening round will be played at the Orange Beach Sportsplex in Orange Beach, Ala.

What the Bulldogs are saying

Rachel Mussell

I don't think I have ever felt as excited about something in my sports career as I was about winning the GPAC championship game. It's hard to describe the feeling other than complete exhilaration. I think it has begun to sink in, especially as we have continued to practice and have begun to talk about the plans for the weekend.

I think it has been a very special experience to accomplish all of this as a team as a senior. We have been through a lot together as a class, and the journey is something that I think has prepared us to continue to fight to achieve our goals. There is something to be said when you have eight girls leading a team and playing to keep their soccer careers alive, and I think that is where we are all at. We don't want this season to end yet, and we are playing like that.

Benedictine will be another tough opponent in a season that has been filled with tough opponents. It definitely gives us some confidence knowing that we have beaten Hastings twice this season, and I think we can also bring confidence in from the fact that we are very battle tested and don't know what it means to quit. It is always nice seeing how a team has done against other teams, but at the



end of the day what matters is that we do all of the things that have brought us to this point. When we do that, we will be successful.

Marcie Sindt

It's hard to describe what the feeling (of winning the GPAC title) was like. When we got to the 90th minute I was experiencing the moment with all my best friends. That's what makes it so special.

It has been an incredible journey. Throughout the entire season we had to work for every match, we never had an easy result handed to us. It was hard work, but that's what makes the accomplishment that much sweeter.

Emotions will be high but we are going to treat it like any other game. We're going to focus on the things we've been doing all year to make us successful, and the rest will work itself out.

Melissa Stine

Through the excitement, the mindset has been just focused on the game we have coming, and preparing to play. We've kept our schedules open all week for all our different practice plans due to the turf being covered in snow. Everyone has been so cooperative. It hasn't been difficult to focus at all. Winning the GPAC and being able to go to nationals is more than we could've ever imagined doing, and we want to play our best and looking to advance.

As for making it (to the national tournament) my senior year, I could not ask for a better way to end my college career. I'm so proud of this team and what we have accomplished this year. I'm not sure any words can describe the feeling I've had knowing we're going to nationals. I'm just so blessed to be able to be given this opportunity I get to experience with my best friends.

Thrilling season ends at national tournament

Nov. 22, 2014

National Tournament: (9) Benedictine 4, Concordia 0

GOALS

7' - (B) Jordan Francescon

28' - (B) Bridget Brotherton

35' - (B) Jordan Francescon

86' - (B) Maggie Hair

ATCHISON, Kan. — The most successful season in the 19-year history of Concordia women's soccer came to a conclusion on Saturday afternoon in the opening round of the NAIA Women's Soccer National Championships. No. 9 Benedictine College dealt the 24th-ranked Bulldogs a 4-0 defeat inside the BC Soccer Complex in Atchison, Kan., in Concordia's first-ever appearance at the national tournament.

Second-year head coach Greg Henson's squad ends its season with a record of 15-3-4. The 15 wins shattered the former program record of 11 victories for a Bulldog squad that lost for the first time since Sept. 24.

"One game does not define our season," Henson said. "This loss definitely does not define who we are. The fact that we got here made this a special season. There were tears after the game because of the run we had and what we accomplished. Those should be tears of joy. I don't think anyone expected us to get to this point. We have nothing to hang our heads about."

On an unfamiliar stage, the Bulldogs found themselves in a quick hole when Jordan Francescon scored in the seventh minute. For a defensive-minded team like Concordia, the early deficit spelled trouble. Only one other time this season had the Bulldogs surrendered the game's first goal.

"They settled in quicker," Henson said. "There were a little bit of jitters in that environment but I don't think it was a matter of being inexperienced on that stage. Giving up the goal early was a much bigger factor because it changes your tactics."

"Even though we got down 3-0 in the first half, I thought we played with a lot of fight in the second half."

The powerful Ravens (19-1) struck twice more in the



opening 45 minutes, netting goals from Bridget Brotherton and then a second from Francescon. The game's final tally came in the 86th minute when Maggie Hair found the back of the net off the assist from Bethany Smith to make it a commanding 4-0 Benedictine lead.

The Ravens, whose only loss this season was a 3-2 decision versus GPAC regular-season champion Hastings, dominated possession and outshot the Bulldogs by a count of 29-5. Concordia managed only a single shot on goal.

The complexion of the contest looked like it may swing the other way at roughly the 30-minute mark when senior Ashlie Sklenicka slotted the ball past Raven goalkeeper Ashley Holland. However, offsides was called, negating Concordia's best scoring opportunity.

"We expected a tough game from a highly-ranked opponent and we got it," Henson said. "We ran into a really good team that played really well. We needed the ball to bounce our way a few times and that didn't happen. Benedictine is a good team and I wish them the best in the next round."



ALL-CONFERENCE

1ST TEAM

Rachel Mussell
Melissa Stine
Jessica Skerston

2ND TEAM

Marcie Sindt

HONORABLE MENTION

Madison Hawkins
Chrissy Lind
Katrina Muther
Ashlie Sklenicka

SCHOLAR-ATHLETES

Annalisa Condamine
Madison Hawkins
Meredith Hein
Elyse Muhle
Rachel Mussell
Emmalynn Rodriguez
Marcie Sindt
Jaimi Stelk
Melissa Stine



"I could not ask for a better way to end my college career. I'm so proud of this team and what we have accomplished this year."
-Melissa Stine



