

ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE WILL FIELD MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BILLINGS – Building on the success of its nationally ranked women's soccer program, Rocky Mountain College will field a men's soccer team this year, RMC President Michael Mace announced today.

“This will be an excellent opportunity for the tremendous talent of high school soccer players in our area to play college soccer,” Mace said. “It also augments our athletic program at a time when we are growing the college in many positive ways.”

Recruiting will begin immediately, according to RMC Head Coach Richard Duffy. Duffy hopes to have sixteen new student athletes at RMC this fall to join the current students who have expressed interest in the program.

“I'm extremely excited for this opportunity,” Duffy said. “This is a great opportunity for athletes in Montana and surrounding states to play at the college level.”

Duffy, will become the director of soccer operations at Rocky, overseeing both programs, which will have concurrent seasons from August into November, according to Bobby Beers, RMC's newly hired athletic director. Each program will have an assistant coach.

“This is an exciting time to be at Rocky and this is one more reason I'm happy to be here,” Beers said. “It's great to see our athletic programs expand because it offers that many more opportunities to our student athletes.”

In only his seventh year at Rocky, Duffy coached an RMC's women team that qualified for nationals, compiled a 14-4 record, and earned other impressive individual and team honors along the way. For the fourth consecutive year, the team received the NSCAA (National Soccer Coaches Association of America) Team Academic Award, for maintaining a 3.0 or better GPA.

“Success in the classroom is extremely important to the college, to the players and to me,” Duffy said. “Any athlete who joins my program understands that they are here to get a quality education while participating in a high level of athletics.”

Like the women's program, the men's soccer team will compete in the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics). Its first year schedule will include matches with Westminster, Jamestown, Mary, and Montana State University - Billings, among others, Duffy said.

“Both the women and men will play quite a few doubleheaders, just like the men’s and women’s basketball teams,” he said.

Under Duffy’s tenure as coach, six women have been distinguished by being named NAIA All Americans. This year sophomores Allie Beckers, Billings, and Katrina Gounas, from Australia, were selected to the NAIA Honorable Mention team. Both were first team all-conference selections in 2007 and 2008. They joined previous All Americans, Jeannie McGonagle, Claire Crosbie, Anna Clark, and Vanessa Peters.

Duffy, who earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the University of Mary, was a third team All-America soccer player for the Marauders in 1999. He was a graduate assistant coach for his alma mater while he completed his master’s. In 2001, he was named assistant soccer coach at Rocky. In his first year as head coach, the team increased its win total by seven games. He coached the women to two appearances in the NAIA Region tournament. He holds an “A” license from the U.S. Soccer Federation and a Premier Diploma from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.