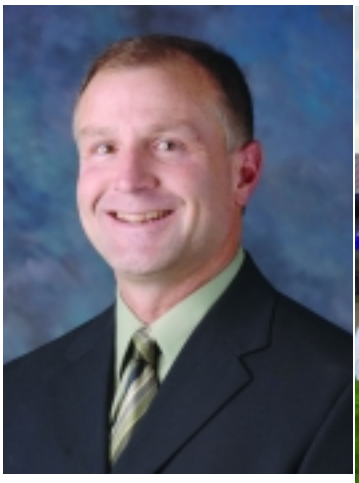
The Winning Ways of

Olivet Nazarene University

Editorial by Coach Ritchie Richardson;
Photo courtesy of Olivet Nazarene University Sports Information



Coach Ritchie Richardson

"Winning Championships – Developing Champions" is what it's all about in the Department of Athletics at Olivet Nazarene University and few programs in the country can boast of winning championships like the ONU softball program. Over the past 16 seasons the Tigers have averaged 46 wins a year and won countless championships including eight CCAC Regular Season Championships, ten CCAC Tournament Championships, five NAIA Region Championships and five NCCAA National Championships. The squad has made seven appearances at the NAIA National Championship Tournament and has been ranked in the final NAIA National Rating Top 20 an incredible 10 times. The 2011 softball season was more of the same as the Tigers rolled to a 50-12 record and added even more championships to their collection.

Some of the TEAM highlights were:

• 13-1 record at the Tucson Invitational games in Tucson, AZ. The team outscored their opponents by a whopping 127 – 27 margin.

• Winning the championship of the #1 ONU Invitational Tournament in late March.

• Winning the championship of the #2 ONU Invitational Tournament in early April.

• Winning the program's 8th regular season CCAC Championship

• Winning the program's 10th CCAC Tournament championship

• Advancing to the NAIA National Championship Tournament for the 7th time

• Finishing the season with a NAIA National Ranking of #17

The 2011 season brought a lot of individual recognition to Tiger players, as well.

• 3B Molly Anderson, 2B Hannah Gardner, P Katie Hannagan, and SS Jordan Reynolds were all named to the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic All-Conference squad

Tigers swept the CCAC's 'Player of the Year' awards:

• Hannah Gardner was named the CCAC's 'Freshman of the Year'. Gardner put together a .389 avg., 13 HR, 72 RBI campaign in her first season.

• Katie Hannagan was named the CCAC's 'Pitcher of the Year'. Hannagan posted a 27-8 record and a 1.81 ERA.

• Jordan Reynolds was named the CCAC's 'Player of the Year' for a second time. Reynolds did it all with a .429 avg., 14 HR, 58 RBI, 55 SB season.

• P Katie Hannagan was named the MVP of the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference Tournament winning all three games for the Tigers on the mound.

Tiger players were well represented on All-American squads after the season:

• SS Jordan Reynolds was named to the NAIA All-American (2nd) team. It was the second time she has appeared on that squad.

• Reynolds and P Katie Hannagan were named to the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) All-American (1st) team while 2B Hannah Gardner was named a 2nd teamer.

• Jordan Reynolds was named to the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) All-American (2nd) team; Jordan Reynolds also took home the prestigious NFCA NAIA Golden Shoe Award. The award is presented to the nation's top base stealer in each division. Reynolds won the award on the strength of her perfect 55-55 stolen base performance.

The Tigers excelled in the classroom as well in 2011. The squad posted a cumulative 3.406 GPA for the year. Many Tigers received All-America Scholar-Athlete recognition:

• Nora Duffy, Katie Hannagan, Bethany Holaway, and Jordan Reynolds were named 2011 Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes

• Molly Anderson, Kelly Blucker, Nora Duffy, Katie Hannagan, Bethany Holaway, and Jordan Reynolds were named NCCAA Scholar-Athletes.

• 8 Tigers were honored as NFCA Scholar-Athletes. Nora Duffy, Jordan Reynolds, Kelly Blucker, Katie Hannagan, Lindsey Jarrett, Amanda Ashley, Bethany Holaway and Cheryl Sendzik.

• Jordan Reynolds was named to the prestigious ESPN co/SIDA Academic All-America Team. The squad is chosen from all institutions in NCAA Divisions II and III and the NAIA.