



University of Great Falls
ARGONAUTS

SPORTS INFORMATION * NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Staff, Sports Information Office, (406) 791-5208

Men's Soccer Adds More Accolades

Great Falls, Mont. – Long after the season has finished, the University of Great Falls men's soccer team is still receiving awards. This January, the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) named the NAIA's national coach of the year. Although, University of Great Falls men's soccer coach Paul Zazenski did not receive the award, he was one of eight finalists nominated. Zazenski earned the nomination by being tabbed the NSCAA Northwest Region Coach of the Year.

In addition to another award garnered by the Sweet 16 National Tournament finalist, four University of Great Falls men's soccer players were named to the Unaffiliated Conference First-Team this past season. It was the third consecutive season senior defender Jesus Mendez had received the award. Fellow junior teammates Zach Johnson (Casper, WY), David Jimenez (Long Beach, CA), and Ryan O'Neil (Arima, Trinidad) joined Mendez on the First-Team.

The Johnson/Mendez combination had been a mainstay for the Argo defense which shut out the second ranked side of Simon Fraser in the opening round of the NAIA National Championships. Mendez, a Bonners Ferry, ID native, captained the Argos the past two seasons.

"I couldn't be more proud of these two players for their individual achievements," stated Coach Paul Zazenski. "Jesus is a previous two-time all-conference honoree, making this selection his third straight. Zach played extremely well for us this year in net and deserves to receive his first all-conference selection."

The forward duo of Jimenez and O'Neil combined for 26 goals for the Argo offense, many coming as game-winners. This was O'Neil's second year being honored and Jimenez's first.

"Ryan and David were essential to the success of our program this year. They compiled a total of 26 goals and caused fits for defenses all around the country. We are excited to have them both back next season," explained Zazenski.

O'Neil and Jimenez were also both recognized by the NSCAA as All-Region players.

O'Neil was named Conference Player of the Year and Zazenski was titled Conference Coach of the Year.

"To have Ryan named as the conference player of the year is quite an accomplishment on his part, looking at all of the talent in our unaffiliated conference. He has worked hard to achieve success at the NAIA level and we are sure glad to have him on our side," said Zazenski.