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Detroit Mercy Adds Men's and Women's Lacrosse

September 5, 2007 -- University of Detroit Mercy will field three new varsity teams - men's and women's lacrosse and men's tennis - beginning in 2008-09, Titans athletic director Keri Gaither announced today. The sports expansion will increase Detroit's intercollegiate program to 19 teams next year.

UDM will hire head coaches for the three new teams in the near future, allowing time for the coaches to recruit student-athletes to fill out their rosters while also planning the other elements involved in launching their programs. These will be the first new teams at UDM since women's golf debuted in the fall of 2004.

"These three particular sports are clearly the best fit for UDM and will benefit both our Athletic program and the University," Gaither said. "Lacrosse is a great spectator sport, and it's truly an emerging sport at the high school level. There has been a great and enthusiastic response from the Metro Detroit lacrosse community as reports got out we were considering adding the teams. Coupled with the new multi-purpose turf field that will soon be completed on campus, lacrosse seems like a sport where we can flourish. There has also been a greater demand from students regarding tennis for men. We are hoping to break ground on campus in the near future for a new tennis complex that will benefit both our men's and women's varsity programs.

"We are grateful that the University administration is giving us the resources and support to add three teams and provide the opportunity for dozens of new student-athletes to compete at the Division I level at UDM," Gaither added. "Today will be a memorable date in the history of Titan Athletics, taking the number of sports we sponsor to an all-time high."

UDM will be the only Division I university in Michigan to field varsity lacrosse teams. The new Titan men are investigating membership in Lacrosse America (formerly known as the Great Western Lacrosse League). Current members of that conference are Air Force, Bellarmine, Denver, Notre Dame, Ohio State and Quinnipiac. The new Titan women hope to play league games against Johns Hopkins, Northwestern, Ohio State, Penn State and Vanderbilt as UDM is currently seeking membership in the American Lacrosse Conference. South Carolina (2009) and Florida (2010) are already confirmed as future members of the latter conference. Each of those leagues receives an automatic bid to the NCAA lacrosse championships.

Detroit has not fielded a men's tennis team since the sport was eliminated in 1995. The new team, like its women's counterparts and 13 other Titan squads, will compete in the Horizon League.

UDM currently fields teams in men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's fencing, men's and women's golf, softball, women's tennis, and men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field.

2007-09-05

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