

## ACCAC Men's Soccer Preview

As submitted by one of our readers

- Yavapai: The Rough Riders come into this season looking to win their 19<sup>th</sup> straight ACCAC championship and 6<sup>th</sup> National Championship. Yavapai will once again rely on a slew of recruits from region 4. Returning to lead the attack will be Irving Garcia. Making his return after a year off will be the left footed Rudy Duarte. Look for The Rough Riders to dominate once again in the ACCAC.
- Pima: Once again, Dave Cosgrove will have all of southern Arizona to pick his team from. They will look again to be Yavapai's arch nemesis, being the only team to beat Yavapai in the regional tournament and go to Nationals in the last 20 years. The loss of recruit Luis Lanz to Hawaii Hilo will hurt the Aztecs attack. Look for them to be solid as usual.
- AZ Western: Has Kenny Dale finally put his stamp on this program? In his 3<sup>rd</sup> year he has brought in an international recruiting class to go along with the normal cast of Yuma players. With 5 Brazilians, a Russian and a 6'3 keeper from Trinidad, could this 90's Yavapai look-a-like team rise to the top? Look for them to compete, but it is always a question mark bringing in unknown players.
- Phoenix: Phoenix will be returning their sophomore leaders, GK Everett Bond and Fullback Daniel Rodriguez. Look out for a freshman out of Yuma, Hazael Perez. He is a big kid and a playmaker in the middle of the field. If he and Alphonso Rodriguez can combine together, watch out. If they can match the success from last year and build off of that, we could see a PC team resembling the Brett Davis coached teams of the mid 90's competing with Yavapai.
- Chandler/  
Gilbert: Once again, The Coyotes will be one of the hardest working teams in the conference. This hard work keeps them in every game. This will also be John Berzins' first full year as the head coach. Can he change last year's fortunes when the team struggled down the stretch? Freshman forward Javier Quieroz will lead the attack with help from sophomore MF Jesse Baker. Arturo Zuniga will look to play make in the midfield while the back will be a solid group of rotating players. Lack of dynamic players will hurt The Coyotes chances of competing for a championship.
- Mesa: Everybody knows what the dangerous attack of Mesa can do, and it will be better then last year. Back is the leagues top goal scorer Nick Auditore. Can he repeat the 31 goal performance from last year? Helping him in the attack will be Reid Schmitt and James Cooper. Schmitt is a clutch player who gets better in the bigger games. Cooper is back after taking a couple years off from soccer. The question will come in the back. Can they keep the other team out of the net less times then they find the net? Outscoring teams usually does not bring championships.

Glendale: Kevin Grub takes the helm this year and will try to bring back Glendale to the days when Coach Willie Watson patrolled the sidelines. Glendale is the only school on the west side, so they should be successful every season. Coach Grub will team up with his old friend Jesse Zambrano. Jesse has been one of the top recruiters on the club scene for years, but can he bring that into the college scene. If Jesse can get some players, they will be successful.

Paradise Valley: Tim Marchisotto will begin a new era at PVCC. He is taking over for Barry Van Patten, who had a great run as head coach of the Pumas. Marchisotto wasted no time hitting the recruiting trail bringing in 21 freshman. While this group is talented and includes a number of players from club soccer power house Sereno, it is always hard to win with youth. Marchisotto will be persistent, and if they are not successful this season, they will be soon.

South Mountain: Is this the season when South Mountain gets back to the winning ways of former head coaches Chris Farabee and Arizona legend Jack Smythe? They have been a perennial losing side for a number of years, but Head Coach Mark Wilson has worked very hard in the off season to put together an experienced side that can play. The main barrier facing The Cougars is the losing mentality. It is always a tough task to shake the mentality when a program has struggled for so long.

Scottsdale: Very similar to South, SCC will look to shed the losing image they have had over the years. With transfer Akhil Jackson leading the attack, anything is possible. Head Coach Adam Berry has recruited a very strong freshman class led by former Gilbert HS forward Phil Machelei. With a little more flair in the attack, The Chokes will look to turn around all of those 1 goal loses from a year ago into victories in their favor.

#### Pre-Season Ranking:

1. Yavapai: Is there a better coach in college soccer?
2. Az Western: I like Brazilians
3. Mesa: They will be fun to watch
4. Pima: Missing out on big time player to get them to the top
5. Phoenix: Can they build on last season?
6. Scottsdale: This is a big year, and they are a big team!
7. South Mountain: Look for a much improved team
8. Chandler/ Gilbert: Put this on your bulletin board
9. Paradise Valley: I see a blow up.
10. Glendale: This is not the Cisco Soccer Club

## ACCAC Women's Soccer Preview

- Mesa: This should be the year when Mesa finally gets knocked off the top. The question will be, who will step up to do it? New coach Karine Inoue will struggle with the loss of talent. Mesa will return 2 starters and 4 players from last year's championship team. With the loss of some key players over the off-season, look for the mighty T-Birds to stumble.
- Paradise Valley: Another big time team will not be as good as last year. With the losses of Jo Radcliff and Ashlee Henderson, look for PVCC to struggle. They will have momentum from last season, just don't look for them to be dominating. They can do well, but can Freshman Simone Marshall be a shot in the arm they need? Shelby Snyder and Sam Smith will help them compete for a championship.
- Phoenix: No Jessica McDonald....No championship hopes. Can PC find its old spirit to compete, or will the loss of the USA U-19 international be too much to handle? New coach Chris Sagar knows the game and the program, but the lack of talent will hurt them. Look out for Aislynn Finfrock; she will be the dangerous player for The Bears.
- Pima: Again, Kendra Veliz will have all of Tucson to work with. They will be returning a solid group of sophomores, but do not have any big name freshman coming in. Will this knock The Aztecs down a bit? Coach Veliz will also have to focus on making her team the best they can be and stop worrying about what the other teams are doing, as her team loses focus when she does.
- Cochise: This program has steadily declined since the departure of former head coach Kenny Dale. Chris Birmingham has brought in players from all over, but not as talented. They will continue their rugged style of physical play (along with the shoulder charge pre-game warm-up) and hope to batter their opponents into shying away.
- Scottsdale: When Karine Inoue left to Mesa, she left the cupboard bare. New coach Rand Whetskill has done a nice job getting numbers out (20 players), but they are lacking talent. If they can get a positive attitude, they can be a competitive team. Don't forget, this team was one of the top teams in the nation when Tim Barmettler was at the helm.
- Chandler/  
Gilbert: The Coyotes will be the most talented team in the ACCAC hands down. The only question will be, can they score goals. Anchored in the back by Freshman Kayla Poe, the defense will be the strength. There will not be a better central midfield combination in the conference with sophomore transfer Megan Davis holding and Sophomore Amy Blishak attacking. Same as on the boy's side, will The Coyotes be able to hold it together down the stretch? Coach Berzins will have a tough task.

Glendale: New coach, but will it be the same results for The Gauchos? Former Scottsdale CC player Michelle Dimeola takes over a program that has been stale for years. They have all of the west side to work with, which was seen in the late 90's with some very competitive teams. Can they turn back the clock and put the west side back on the map?

#### South

Mountain: New head coach Chris Carr was unable to field a team this season which could lead SMCC to its first undefeated season in school history.

#### Pre-Season Rankings:

1. Chandler/ Gilbert: Talented, but forget about the Family (really spelled Family) and just win.
2. Paradise Valley: Still have enough talent for this struggling conference
3. Mesa: Players dropping like flies
4. Pima: By default
5. Phoenix: They will be organized
6. Cochise: But will they shake hands after the game?
7. Scottsdale: Heading in the right direction
8. Glendale: Will struggle
9. South Mountain: I should have put them ahead of a few teams...