

Alfred University men's soccer team announces postseason awards

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ALFRED The Alfred University men's soccer has announced its team award-winners from the recently-completed 2001 season. The Saxons finished the year with a 12-1-2 record (5-0-1 Empire 8) and, along with RIT, were named co-champions of the Empire 8 athletic conference. Head coach Ken Hassler was named Empire 8 Coach of the Year as AU established new team single-season records for most goals scored (52) and least goals allowed (7). AU was unbeaten and unscored upon in conference play and shut out opponents 12 times in 2001. The team's .44 goals against average was ranked third in the nation for Division III teams and its 80 percent shutout rate (12 in 15 games) was tops in the country. The Saxons' 3.47 goals scored per game and .867 winning percentage each ranked 19th in the nation. The 2001 Player of the Year Award was shared by three players: junior goalie Kevin Ball (Wheeling, WV/Linsly School), senior midfielder Jon Bridges (Topeka, KS/Topeka) and senior defender Scott Wallace (Wayne, NJ/Wayne Hills). Ball, a second-team all-conference selection, logged nine shutouts this season and his .36 goal against average was second in the nation in Division III. Bridges, a three-time first team all-conference choice (1999-2001) broke the school career assist mark this season and finished his career first in assists (29) and second in points with 71 (21G, 29A). His seven assists in 2001 tied him with teammate and junior forward Karl Gnann (Holley/Holley) for the conference lead and his 21 points (7G/7A) were second behind Gnann's 23. Wallace is a two-time all-conference selection (2000 second team, 2001 first team) and wrapped up a stellar career that saw him score 26 points (10G, 6A) while leading a suffocating team defense. Wallace and junior defender Pat Mancini (Endwell/Maine-Endwell) shared team Defensive MVP honors. Mancini, who won the award last year, is also an exceptional student. The engineering major was a NSCAA/adidas Scholar Athlete All-America nominee this season. The Offensive MVP was shared by Gnann and junior midfielder Shane Donahoe (Syracuse/West Genesee). The pair finished tied for the conference lead in goals scored (8). Donahoe, an all-conference second team selection, wrapped up the year with 17 points (8G, 1A), while Gnann, a first team all-Empire 8 pick, had eight goals and seven assists for 23 points. Other team award-winners were:

- o Most Improved Player Award: freshman forward Stephen Robin (Foster, RI/Ponaganset). Robin improved steadily during the season and finished with two goals.
- o Rookie of the Year Award: freshman midfielder Ethan Weikleenget (Amherst/Amherst). He started all 15 games and finished the season with four points (1G, 2A).
- o 12th Man Award, given in recognition of a player's contributions while coming off the bench: freshman forward Neil Walsh (Grand Island/Canisius). Walsh played in all 15 games and finished the year with six goals.
- o Blood, Guts, Heart and Hustle Award, which honors the player who gives the most for his team: Wallace, for the fourth straight year.
- o Coach's Award, given only on rare occasions, to a player who demonstrates not only skill, but intangibles such as desire, unselfishness and a commitment and passion for the game: senior forward Guy-Robert Desir (Queens Village/Springfield Gardens). Desir, a two-time second team all-conference pick (2001, 2001), wrapped up a solid career in which he scored 43 points (13G, 17A). He tallied 13 points (4G, 5A) this season, fourth-best on the team.