The Peru State College volleyball team, under the direction of head coach Laurie Felderman in her third season, did not meet all of their preseason goals. The Bobcats finished 11-25 overall and 7-11 in the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart). In each case, it was one less win than in 2018.

The 'Cats did make it to the Heart postseason conference tournament where they faced Central Methodist (Mo.). The Eagles swept the Bobcats and eventually was one of two conference representatives at the NAIA national tournament.

Peru State had trouble putting together wins in a row. Only twice during the season were they able to win back-to-back contests. They topped Graceland (Iowa) and Haskell Indian Nations (Kan.) before dropping a contest to William Penn (Iowa) – a contest they probably should have won. Then, the ‘Cats came back and topped Benedictine (Kan.) and Baker (Kan.) which helped their post-season chances.

The Bobcats said goodbye to three seniors. In addition to Cudney and Quinonez Holguin, opposite hitter Mallory Matthies (Omaha) concluded her volleyball career. It is anticipated that all three seniors will be named Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes at the end of the academic year.

Peru State will have 14 returning players – 13 of which saw playing time this past fall – for the 2020 season. The Bobcats will also be adding a junior varsity program next year.
The initial comment from the 2018 season wrap-up can be used for the 2019 campaign for the Peru State football team. The 2019 season did not go quite as expected for the Bobcats. The goal was to improve upon a disappointing 2018 season in which the ‘Cats finished 3-8.

However, the Bobcats finished with a 2-9 overall mark. One bright spot was finishing 2-3 in the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) North Division. Peru State did finish the season by winning two of its last three contests.

Peru State’s 11-game schedule was against foes in one of the best football conferences in the NAIA. Four of the conference schools were listed in the final regular season NAIA Football Coaches’ Top 25 Poll. Grand View (Iowa), the North Division champ, was fourth with Baker (Kan.), South Division winner, finishing 15th. Those two teams competed in the post-season playoffs. Baker was ousted in the first round with Grand View losing in the semi-finals. Also ranked were Benedictine (Kan.) at 18th and Evangel (Mo.) at 21st. In addition, MidAmerica Nazarene (Kan.) was receiving votes. The final poll will be released on December 27.

The Bobcats dropped their first eight contests in a row. They were in five of the eight contests, but could not capture a win. Peru State would capture their first win of the season on the road over William Penn in Oskaloosa, Iowa, 30-13. After dropping a road contest to Grand View, the ‘Cats would win their Senior Day game over Graceland (Iowa) 34-3.

The Bobcats appear to lose 16 off the 2019 squad who are either graduating or have used their eligibility. Those recognized on Senior Day were Michael Bullard (Bahamas), Noah Kasbohm (Nebraska City), Victor Hubbard (Corinth, Texas), Mardarius Adams (Lakeland, Fla.), Jordan Willis (Denver), Dwight Butler (Bahasmas), Justin Pool (Circleville, Kan.), Mitchel Orr (Smithville, Mo.), Luis Constantino (Varzea Grande, Brazil), Robert Tillman (Detroit), Robbie Sturdivant (North Platte), Tylor Watts (Ridgecrest, Calif.), Jake Hausmann (Papillion), Cameron Schiender (Kearney), Dominic Montero (Tamaqua, Pa.), and Austin Rosas (Bellingham, Wash.).

In addition, eight-year head coach Steve Schneider announced his retirement at the annual football booster club banquet in early December. A search for a new head coach is underway.

With several returners at key positions and a host of recruits soon to be joining the program, Peru State will look to improve and have a better outcome in the 2020 season.
Football
Peru State football student-athlete Noah Kasbohm (Nebraska City) has been named the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) male recipient of the A.O. Duer award.

Bobcat football quarterback Noah Kasbohm (Nebraska City) was a semifinalist for the 2019 William V. Campbell Trophy as announced by the National Football Foundation (NFF) and College Hall of Fame on Wednesday.

Kasbohm was one of 185 college football players from across the country from all levels of the NCAA and NAIA to earn the status as a semifinalist. Only seven from the NAIA, the division in which Peru State competes, were named as semifinalists. Kasbohm is the only representative from the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart).

Three Peru State Bobcat football players were named to the NAIA Academic All-District® 3 First Team. Senior Justin Pool (Circleville, Kan.) and juniors Travis Reed (Hickman) and Nicholas Novak (Dawson) were among those recognized in the district.

Baseball
The Omaha World-Herald (OWH) recently released its 2019 edition of the All-Midlands College teams. Five Peru State baseball players were named to the NAIA/D-III honorable mention list. OWH sports writer Gene Schinzel organizes the recognition.

Seniors Darren Hasch (Destin, Fla.), Alberto Rosario (Carolina, P.R.), Sterling Rupp (Omaha), and Eddy Tavarez Cabrera (San Cristobel, D.R.), along with junior Adam Cendejas (Chino Hills, Calif.), were recognized. Last year, Tavarez Cabrera was a first team selection.
Awards Continued...

**Volleyball**
The American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) announced that 1,126 teams have earned the AVCA Team Academic Award for the 2018-2019 season. This number breaks the previous year’s total of 977 to set an all-time high.

The Peru State Bobcat volleyball team, which had a cumulative grade point average over 3.62, was among the top NAIA teams noted in the honors list. This was the 11th time in program history that a Bobcat team has been recognized. This was seventh year in a row for Peru State.

Three Peru State volleyball players were recognized Tuesday for having earned Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) All-Conference honors. Those earning the recognition were senior Claire Cudney (Marysville, Kan.), senior Darlene Quinonez Holguin (Anthony, N.M.), and junior Tyra Mollhoff (Lincoln).

**Women’s Basketball**
Western Illinois University, Tiffin University, Shenandoah University, Indiana Institute of Technology and Snow College sit atop their respective divisions in the 2018-19 WBCA Academic Top 25 Team Honor Rolls announced today by the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA).

For the first time in many years, the Peru State women’s basketball team was among the Top 25 listed in the NAIA. Head Coach Joan Albury’s team finished 23rd in its division with a 3.490 team cumulative grade point average.

The Bobcats are just one of three Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) programs on the Top 25 list. Heart opponent Grand View (Iowa) finished eighth while Culver-Stockton (Mo.) finished 25th. Non-conference opponent Concordia (Seward) finished ahead of Peru State at 20th.

**Golf**
Peru State women’s golfers Emily Whipple (Lincoln) and Lindsay Harlow (Dawson) were named as 2018-19 Google Cloud Academic All-America® NAIA Women’s At-Large Second Team honorees.
Softball
Three Peru State softball players earned All-Midlands College Softball Honorable Mention in the Omaha World-Herald’s (OWH) annual All-Midlands College NAIA/D-III Softball Team honors. OWH sportswriter Gene Schinzel compiles the list which recognizes the best of the softball players in the NAIA and NCAA DIII across the state of Nebraska.

Tyler Farrell (Brandon, Fla.), received All-Midlands College Softball Team Honorable Mention for the third straight year. Joining Farrell earning the recognition this year are juniors Alyiah Franco (Syracuse, Utah) and Takia Walker (Enterprise, Ala.).

Men’s Basketball
Former Peru State men’s basketball player Lyle Hexom (Omaha) was named as a finalist for the Omaha World-Herald’s (OWH) Midlands College Men’s Athlete of the Year.

Peru State men’s basketball student-athlete Deonte McReynolds was named the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) recipient of the Emil S. Liston award for junior men’s basketball players.

All Sports
The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has announced the 1,883 teams that have earned the distinction for Scholar Teams for the 2018-19 academic year. That number is up from 1,862 scholar teams in 2017-18.

Once again, six Peru State athletic teams earned the honor for this past year – the most ever for the Bobcats for the second-straight year. All five competitive women’s teams were recognized along with the men’s basketball team were recognized.

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has revealed the organization’s Champions of Character Five-Star Award winners. Peru State was one of only 15 institutions nationally to hit the rankings top mark with a perfect score of 100.

The award is presented annually to institutions that advance character-driven athletics by promoting competitive athletics, academic excellence and character values.

This is the first time in ten years that Peru State has earned Gold Level status and to earn the perfect mark.

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Season Wrap-Up

Each year for the Peru State cross country season continues to be a work in progress during the course of the fall season. Sixth-year head coach Katy Billings was proud with how her runners improved throughout the course of the season.

For Billings, the team of 12 – which included two red-shirts, was the second-largest contingent to date for a Bobcat cross country squad.

The team competed in Maryville, Mo., in early September in the Bearcat Invite for their first meet. Senior Julia Zurek (Louisville) was the team's top finisher as she was 24th in a time of 23:20.7 which was over a minute faster than she ran in 2018. Senior Jacey Sutton (Wahoo) was the Bobcats' second-best finisher in a time of 25:43.3 which was just under a minute faster than she ran the previous year.

The team also competed in the Bronco Stampede in Hastings, Wayne State Invite, Mid-States Classic in Winfield, Kan. For the first-time ever, they competed in the Rim Rock Classic hosted by the University of Kansas.

The Heart Championships were held in Fayette, Mo., and were hosted by Central Methodist. The course was better than the one the Heart competed on in 2018 as all returners had better times. As she had done all season long, Zurek led the team with a 46th place finish in a time of 22:22.1. Hailee Lynn sophomore (Malcolm) and junior Marissa Wingert (Panama, Iowa) ran second and third respectively for Peru State in 24:08.6 and 24:20.6.


Coach Billings was very pleased with the team’s efforts throughout the season. Billings understands they may not have been the fastest group but appreciates the hard work that each of these girls put in all season long. Also, Coach Billings is very optimistic with quite a few girls returning to the program for next season. The future for the cross country team seems bright with all of the improvement the program saw from start to finish this year. In addition, Billings is recruiting for the 2020 season as she has to replace two seniors who have been two of the top three runners the past two seasons.

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Entering her third season in her second stint as the Bobcats’ women’s coach, head coach Joan Albury is looking forward to an improved season.

After struggling the first two seasons with small numbers, the 2018-19 season was improved in terms of squad size and the ability to regularly practice. While this did prove to be helpful, the final outcome of was not what was desired, but it was an improvement over the 2017-18 season.

Peru State finished 4-24 overall which was just a one-game win improvement. However, the bigger jump came in the team’s Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) record. The ‘Cats went 3-21 which was a three-game improvement over the previous year. This included a big win over Benedictine (Kan.) on the road in the second-to-last game of the year.

Recruiting/Junior Varsity Program
The Bobcats added 14 new players to their roster. Five newcomers are joining nine returners for the varsity roster while nine are part of an 11-person junior varsity roster.

The junior varsity program was added this past season which has provided an added level of competition in practice which should be beneficial for the entire program in the long run.

The following is a quick synopsis of each of the position groups for the Bobcat varsity program.

Synopsis
The 2019-20 squad has more size, speed, and athletic ability than Peru State has had for many years. The key to success for this season is to continue the progress made last year and capitalize on that progress while continuing to improve.

The top eight scorers return from 18-19. Overall 85% of the offensive output will be back on the court. Similarly, the three top rebounders return as does nearly 82% of the defensive efforts last year.

With the additional recruits and more competitive practices, Peru State looks to improve in all aspects during the upcoming year.

Update
The Bobcats are currently 4-7 overall and 2-5 in the Heart. Complete schedule with times available at https://pscbobcats.com/sports/womens-basketball/schedule

FOR THE FULL PRESS RELEASE VISIT WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM
Annual Golf Classic
It is time to start thinking about registering for the upcoming Peru State Bobcat Golf Classic, which will be held Friday, May 22, 2020. The annual tournament will be held at the Table Creek Golf Course just west of Nebraska City.

The schedule for the day includes registration beginning at 10:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at noon. Lunch will be provided and a dinner will follow at approximately 5 p.m.

The cost, which includes green fees, cart, and the meal are $400 per team of four or $100 per individual. If individuals want to come for the dinner only, the cost is $20.

This is a fun tournament where those interested in Bobcat athletics can come, socialize, and meet with coaches and current student-athletes. You can connect with your fellow alumni and friends and compete for hole and flight prizes.

For more information about the contest, please contact Brenda Lutz by email at blutz@peru.edu or contact the athletic office at 402-872-2350.

Alumni Association Annual Chili Feed
All alumni and friends are invited to the Al Wheeler Activity Center on February 8, 2020, to watch the Bobcats take on the Evangel Crusaders.

Women’s game starts at 2 p.m. and men’s starting approximately 4 p.m. Chili will be served starting at 2:30 p.m. Free will donation will be accepted.

The day will be full of activities in addition to the Chili Feed. The Fantastic Flyers of Gary’s Tumbling will perform during half time of each game.

In addition, between games the athletic department will recognize the fall student-athletes who received different honors.

Come out and support our Foundation and the Bobcats.

For the full press release visit www.pscbobcats.com
**Players of the Week**

**John Brady** - Heart Special Teams Player of the Week  
(11/4/19)  
Bobcat junior kicker John Brady (Hickman) was named the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) Special Teams Player of the Week. Brady, a Lincoln East graduate, who handles the place-kicking and kickoffs for Peru State, was recognized Monday by the Heart conference officials.

In Peru State’s first win of the season – a 30-13 victory over William Penn, Brady was important to the Bobcats’ special team effort.

Brady connected on a field goal of 26 yards and made three of four point after attempts.

In addition, Brady had six kickoffs for 337 yards which included one touchback.

(11/18/19)  
Brady made two field goals – one for 42 and one for 36. In addition, he made all of his point after attempts. Also, Brady had one kickoff which went for 55 yards.

**Tylor Watts** - Heart Offensive Player of the Week  
(11/18/19)  
Bobcat senior running back Tylor Watts (REdegcrest, Calif.) was named Heart of America Conference Offensive Player of the Week (POW).

He had a key role in Peru State’s win in the final game of the season over Graceland (Iowa) 34-3.

Playing in his final game in a Bobcat uniform, Watts had his career-best effort as he ran for 149 yards on 17 carries and scored the first two touchdowns for Peru State. Prior to the final game, he had only carried the ball four times for 11 yards.

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A Little of This & That...

SUMMER CAMPS

VOLLEYBALL
June 1: Passing Skills Clinics
June 2: Setting & Attacking Skills Clinics
June 3: All Skills Clinic

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL
June 8-11: Grades 6-12 Summer Camp
June 15-18: Grades 1-5 Summer Camp

MEN’S BASKETBALL
TBD

FOOTBALL
June 10: High School Skills Camp
June II: High School Offensive Line & Defensive Line Camp
June 11, 18, & 25: 7 on 7 Passing Camp
June 12: Youth Skills Camp
July 16-17: 11-Man Team Camp
July 20-21: 8-Man Team Camp

For full details visit WWW.PERUSTATECAMPS.COM

The Peru State Foundation, along with the current Bobcat women’s and men’s basketball teams, are hosting a reunion on Saturday, January 4, 2020.

All former Bobcat basketball players and coaches are invited to enjoy a day of food, fun, and hoops. The Foundation is inviting the players and coaches to join them in the hospitality suite for complimentary appetizers throughout the games.

The Bobcats will be hosting the Mount Mercy Mustangs in a women’s and men’s double header. The women’s game will begin at noon and the men will compete at approximately 2 p.m.

During the basketball reunion, the 1969-70 teams and all attendees will be honored on the court.

The hospitality suite will open at 11:30 a.m. To RSVP for yourself and your guests on or before January 3 by emailing Deborah Solie at dsolie@peru.edu or by calling 402-873-2304.

Alumni and coaches are encouraged to share the information with their former teammates in order to ensure a great crowd!
While considering how to start the 2019-20 Peru State men’s basketball team’s season outlook, it appears the start could almost be identically the same as what was written for 2018-19. Having watched practices and a recent scrimmage, the following paragraph is almost identical as to what was written 12 months ago.

After losing four starters off of a national tournament team and an All-American, you would expect the team to be in somewhat of a rebuilding mode. However, in head coach Bob Ludwig’s third season at the helm of the Peru State men’s basketball program, the expectations do not change.

It would appear that even after a 23-win season and another experience in the NAIA DI National Tournament, there are plenty of things they can build off of and improve heading into the new campaign. Although the team loses its top five scorers, there are more returners coming back from the 18-19 season than did so in the 17-18 campaign.

**Current Roster**

Presently, there are 17 players on the team which features seven returners – one of which who played two years ago and one who red-shirted last season.

The overall team size is much larger with the addition of a junior varsity program which has allowed for some very competitive preseason practices.

**Synopsis**

Like the opening paragraph, the synopsis for the 2019-20 season is eerily the same. This season the key to success will be winning the turnover battle and controlling the pace of the game on both ends. With so many new players, it will take the team some time to find the right combinations and lineups to make them the most successful. The team wants to play fast but also unselfish to get that balanced scoring output they will need. The Bobcats hope that with several new players, they find themselves back at the national tournament in March.

With the team being guard heavy, Coach Ludwig expects the team to play fast, while also improving as a defensive team. Coach Ludwig also knows that the team will need to play well on the glass while they have a smaller lineup. In addition, he expects that while the team will play fast to not turn the ball over and to have great shot selections.

**Update**

The Bobcats are currently 6-5 overall and 5-2 in the Heart. For the complete schedule, times, and results, please go to: https://pscbobcats.com/sports/mens-basketball/schedule

FOR THE FULL PRESS RELEASE VISIT WWW.PSCBOBCATS.COM
There was a new winner in this year’s edition of Peru State’s Nebraska’s Toughest Mile which was held on Saturday, Nov. 2, in Peru, Neb.

There was almost a repeat winner, but Triston Perry (Peru) pulled away from two-time winner Noah Temme (Fairmont) near the end of the race. Perry won the race in a time of 6:23. Temme finished second with a time of 6:34.

Nearly 70 runners took part in the annual event.

Ashlei McDonald (Tecumseh) won the women’s race in a time of 7:22. Runner-up for the females was Kristen Billings (Auburn) who had a time of 8:52.

The race, coordinated by the Peru State Bobcat women’s cross country team and Coach Katy Billings, saw the individuals navigate the three tough hills in the city of Peru. The run began at the north end of downtown Peru and finished on the College’s campus. The toughest part of the course is considered to be running up the infamous “Gutbuster Hill” which is just north of campus.

Coach Billings and her team provided awards to the following age group winners (Hometowns are provided where available):

**Ages 0-13**
- Female – Winner – Kristen Billings (Auburn) – 8:52
- Second – Izzy Scheele (Beatrice) – 10:42
- Male – Winner – Adam Brion (Auburn) – 8:27
- Second – Rylee Zimmerman (Lincoln) – 9:10

**Ages 13-18**
- Female – Winner – Ashlei McDonald (Tecumseh) – 7:22
- Second – Virginia Kouba (Auburn) – 10:41
- Male – Winner – Triston Perry (Peru) – 6:23
- Second – Zayne Zimmerman (Lincoln) – 6:37

**Ages 18-29**
- Female – Winner – Taylor Coonce (Falls City) – 12:45
- Second – Samantha Wilson (Holton, Kan.) – 7:16
- Male – Winner – Noah Temme (Fairmont) – 6:34
- Second – Seth Zimmerman (Auburn) – 7:16

**Ages 30-39**
- Female – Winner – Sarah Hopkins (Lincoln) – 9:04
- Second – Jessica Bryceson (Beatrice) – 10:33
- Male – Winner – James Cole (Lincoln) – 7:05

**Ages 40-49**
- Female – Winner – Kristy Wilson (Holton, Kan.) – 10:34
- Second – Connie Zimmerman (Lincoln) – 13:11
- Male – Winner – Ryan Roth (Nebraska City) – 7:32
- Second – Randy Kouba (Auburn) – 10:09

**Ages 50 and up**
- Female – Winner – Julie North (Auburn) – 12:28
- Second – Kristy Crissler (Kansas City, Kan.) – 12:30
- Male – Winner – Tim Borchers (Nebraska City) – 8:32
- Second – Steve Scoville (Elwood) – 10:16

In addition, Billings added that she wanted to extend thanks to the City of Peru, Peru City Hall, Peru State and its Campus Services, Brenda Lutz, athletic director Wayne Albury, and all of the participants and other contributors.

For more information on the race, plus the complete results, and future dates, please go to the following link: http://goo.gl/LnmHdT
The Peru State Bobcat softball team will look to better its record from the 2019 season under the direction of third-year head coach J.L. Thomason.

Last year, the ‘Cats went 8-38 overall while going 7-29 in the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart). The Bobcats finished seventh in the Heart North. Peru State finished with a 5-15 record at home and struggled on the road as they finished 2-19 while away.

Peru State lost just two senior starters off of the 2019 team – pitcher Morgan Ritchie and outfielder/pitcher Taylor Moya.

Last spring, the College noted the addition of four junior varsity programs – one of which was softball. With the addition of the junior varsity team, Whitley Albury joined the program as an assistant coach.

Thirteen returners, along with 15 recruits which are a blend of freshmen and transfers, worked hard during the fall session to improve on skills and strength. The 28 players will look to better their season and conference marks in 2020.

The 2020 varsity season will begin on Saturday, Feb. 15, when the Bobcats will be playing a double-header in Batesville, Ark. The ‘Cats will be facing Bethany (Kan.) at 10 a.m. and then face the home team – Lyon College at 2 p.m. Sunday, February 23, will be the first home double header for the Bobcats when they host Hastings at 1 p.m. at the Centennial Complex Field.

Peru State’s first conference action will take place on Wednesday, March 18, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where they will face Mount Mercy in a double header beginning at 3 p.m. The Bobcats’ first home conference double header will be on Saturday, March 28, at 2 p.m. when they host Culver-Stockton (Mo.).

The 50+-game regular season will end on Saturday, April 25, when the Bobcats hosts Baker. The following week, Peru State will be looking to participate in the Heart Conference Championships.
Peru State baseball coach Wayne Albury will enter his ninth season with a 237-156-1 record in his first eight seasons at the helm of the Peru State program.

Last year, the ‘Cats went 20-24 overall and were 16-11 in the Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) which was good enough for third in the North Division behind William Penn (Iowa) and Clarke (Iowa). The Bobcats did go two and out in the Heart Conference Championships at the conclusion of the season which was a disappointment.

The Bobcats lost 15 seniors to graduation last year, one of the largest numbers in years.

The 2020 edition of the Bobcats will feature just two returning all-conference performers. Heading the list will be seniors Adam Cendejas and Jesus Tavarez. Cendejas was named to the first team while Tavarez earned honorable mention recognition.

There will be a blend of returners and newcomers who will make up the 2020 varsity squad. In addition, Peru State added a junior varsity program so right now the total roster is around 55 players.

Peru State hopes to open its season January 31 when they travel to Wichita, Kansas, to face Friends University. They will play a nine-inning contest on Friday at 3 p.m. and then a double header on Saturday beginning at 1 p.m.

The Bobcats will be on the road for almost the entire month of February until they open up conference play on Saturday, February 29, against Missouri Valley in a double header beginning at 1 p.m.

The ‘Cats are scheduled to play over 50 varsity games which will culminate in the post-season conference championship which again will be played in Ozark, Mo. The junior varsity will play at least 14 contests against junior college and area four-year institutions.
After recruiting its largest freshman class in at least 30 years, Peru State College will add four varsity athletic programs and one junior varsity athletic program to begin competing in the fall of 2020. The new athletic programs are planned to continue the growth of on-campus opportunities.

The College will add men’s bowling, women’s bowling, men’s cross country, competitive dance, and junior varsity women’s volleyball. Hiring of coaches and recruitment will begin immediately.

The President of Peru State, Dr. Dan Hanson, said, “We know many students choose Peru State to become involved in teams, clubs and other organizations. They want to train and improve, compete, volunteer and engage in our communities. As we expand opportunities, Peru State has a tremendous foundation to build on – from the perfect score on our most recent Champions of Character designation to the personal and engaging education our students receive. I am excited to grow as a campus and to better share Peru State with the region.”

The Bobcat’s Athletic Director, Wayne Albury, noted careful research went into the plan to offer additional sports, “This decision was not made without a thorough review of the College’s resources and needs. We are confident the addition of these programs – and the opportunities they represent – will better serve the current and future needs of our student-athletes.”

The College credits much of its recruitment success this year to adding four junior varsity athletic programs and competitive cheer. More than 70 freshmen were added to junior varsity teams and the competitive cheer team. In addition, at least 15 students transferred to Peru State for one of these athletic opportunities.

By adding the four varsity sports, the College will now have a total of 13 programs competing for conference and national championships. Presently, Peru State offers football, women’s cross country, women’s golf, women’s volleyball, men’s and women’s basketball, baseball, softball, and competitive cheer. All of the programs compete in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

While three of the varsity sports are completely new, the men’s cross country program is actually being re-established. The program was discontinued in the early 1980s after many years of success including six top-ten national finishes and ten All-American citations.

With the addition of the junior varsity women’s program, that will bring the College’s junior varsity offering to five. Junior varsity programs new this fall were men’s and women’s basketball, baseball, and softball.

Current head volleyball coach Laurie Felderman is excited to begin recruiting for the junior varsity component for her volleyball program, “Watching the very competitive practices of the newly-added [junior varsity] programs proves to me that this will strengthen our entire volleyball program at Peru State.”

Heart Commissioner Lori Thomas was pleased to learn of Peru State’s decision to add programs, “Congratulations to Peru State as they expand their sports offerings and student-athlete experience.”

“With the addition of men’s and women’s bowling, the Heart will gain a national championship automatic berth; and competitive dance will bring the conference up to ten sponsoring institutions, the largest participation out of all NAIA conferences. It is great to see when an institution looks not only at what makes sense to their campus but also a great fit for the conference.”

Potential students interested in athletics at Peru State are encouraged to visit www.pscbobcats.com, speak with an admissions representative or coach. To express an interest, potential athletes can also complete the College’s inquiry form at http://my.peru.edu/athletics/inquiryform.
History will be made on January 31 as Peru State will attend its first competitive cheer competition. On that date, the team will be traveling to Olathe, Kansas, to compete in the MidAmerica Nazarene Invitational.

Last year the College made the decision to add cheer as a competitive team, along with four junior varsity programs. Head coach Brooke Earnest, along with student assistant Elly Lempka, increased their overall squad size to 28. Over the course of the fall, the coaches conducted practices and/or tryouts before determining the 18 who will form Peru State’s first competitive squad.

Those student-athletes who will be representing the ‘Cats on the first-ever competition team include: junior Hailey Babish (Ogallala), senior Sydney Bogard (McClouth, Kan.), junior Molly Brown (Falls City), freshman Brooke Bruland (Palmer), junior Kelsey Brundage (Juanita), junior Ashley Gebhard (Grand Island), sophomore Danni Harder (Beatrice), sophomore Bailey Johnson (Johnson), freshman Alyssa Jurgens (Sterling), junior Jillian Karl (Nebraska City), sophomore Shea Kinnison (Nebraska City), junior Destiny Maguire (Greenwood), senior Kortney Reitz (North Platte), junior Cassandra Seckel (Columbus), junior Bailey Stanley (Louisville), freshman Johna Tharp (Dunbar), junior Jordyn Todd (Omaha), and junior Sydney Yost (Papillion).

The Bobcats will compete in two additional invitational in consecutive days following their opening competition. They will participate in the Baker Invitational in Baldwin City, Kansas, on February 1 and then travel to Atchison, Kansas, to take part in the Benedictine Invite on February 2.

The Heart of America Athletic Conference Championship will be hosted by MidAmerica Nazarene in Olathe, Kansas, on February 15.

Coach Earnest is excited and nervous as well for the upcoming first year of competition. Earnest states, “Being a former cheerleader myself, I always wondered what it would be like to be on a competitive collegiate team. When the College officially declared us as a varsity team, I was thrilled and ready for the challenge.”

The team will be performing its competition routine Monday, January 27, at halftime of the men’s game against Baker (Kan.). The men’s game begins at approximately 7:30 p.m. so the performance will be somewhere around 8:15 p.m.

Earnest added, “Overall, we have an excellent cheerleading team who all have been working to do their best to represent the College and fire up the teams and fans.”