2015 FALL SPORTS FEATURES

VANDAL NATION











FOOTBALL



File Photo by Nathan Romans | Argonaut

Idaho senior defensive end Quinton Bradley waits for the snap in the three-point stance. This season marks his fifth in the Idaho football program.

Force in the trenches

Idaho senior defensive end Quinton Bradley has grown physically, improved his game during his five-year stint at Idaho

Garrett Cabeza

Argonaut

It's understandable when someone who is from outside the Northwest doesn't know where the University of Idaho is located, or even that it exists.

Idaho senior defensive end Quinton Bradley, originally from San Antonio, didn't initially know who he was talking to when Idaho called him about five years ago.

"They called me and I thought this was like Vanderbilt," Bradley said. "I didn't know where (UI) was so I had to look it up."

Bradley slowly became a force for the team after he redshirted in 2011. Bradley had two sacks, made five tackles and added a fumble recovery to the stat sheet against Arkansas State Saturday.

"I think he's got great football one-on-one skills," Idaho defensive coordinator Mike Breske said. "He understands the game. (He's got) a powerful first step and can get you off balance. He's got those meat hooks and is very, very strong and if he gets a hold of you, you're going down."

Idaho defensive line coach Kenny Holmes said Bradley's leadership is what has impressed him the most.

"When things get tough he speaks up," Holmes said. "When we need a pep talk, he's there to give a pep talk. When we need a big play on the field, he usually makes a big play to get things turned back in the other direction."

After spending five years in the Vandal football program, including this season, Bradley said each year he and his teammates have improved.

He said he has improved his effort and production.

If a play weren't run to his side, he said wouldn't really try to track down the ball carrier earlier in his career. He said his production has increased, including sacks and tackles.

He's also gotten bigger. Bradley said he entered his first year at Idaho weighing 219 pounds and now he's 260.

A lot of people talk about how popular football is in Texas and Bradley said the hype is true.

"It's big," he said. "You know you look back and you're like dang, high school ball was fun. You were a popular kid. You had a little get back on Friday ... It's a great experience in Texas."

Growing up in San Antonio and then moving to Moscow can be a shock in many aspects, including the weather, Bradley said.

"It was the first time I ever saw snow," Bradley said. "I went to go play in it and I figured I don't like snow. It's not really that fun as people make it seem on T.V."

But he said he loves Moscow.



"It's crazy," Bradley said. "Being here and then going home for breaks sometimes it's like 'wow,' it's such a big difference. I love it. (Moscow) is my second home right now."

Bradley said he tries to focus on the season at hand and not worry about his possible football future after Idaho.

"I try not to think about that too much because I'm in season," Bradley said. "I want to help my teammates out now. When that comes, it'll come. I just got to take it day by day."

Holmes, who was a first-round NFL draft pick, said Bradley has a chance to play at the next level.

"He just has to continue to develop, continue to have the approach to the game the way that he has the approach to the game," Holmes said. "Every day he wants to get better at something and yesterday (Sept. 29) he was in early watching film and that's a big part of being a professional — being able to watch film on your down time."

If professional football doesn't work out, Bradley said he can fall back on his psychology major.

"If things didn't work out afterwards, I'd really pursue my master's in (psychology) because the human mind is crazy," he said.

> Garrett Cabeza can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu or on Twitter @CabezaGarrett

WOMEN'S GOLF

The whole package

Idaho freshman golfer Sophie Hausmann already impactful early on

Mihaela Karst Argonaut

Idaho freshman golfer Sophie Hausmann took the European Junior tour by storm last year, and she is one of the latest editions to the Idaho women's golf team.

Idaho coach Lisa Johnson found Hausmann on a recruiting website.

"I went to Europe last summer for recruiting and I watched several other golfers," Johnson said. "I compared her scores to other players I'd seen."

For more sports

content, visit thevandalnation.com

Johnson said she was impressed with Hausmann.

Hausmann graduated from Gymnasium

Nottuln in Germany last spring and she competed in many championships in Europe, including the German Ladies Championship, the Irish Juniors and the Scottish Juniors. She also won the state girls and state ladies championships in 2013.

Hausmann said she is adjusting to Moscow well.

"It's great," Hausmann said. "The people are very nice and friendly. The professors are, too. It's exciting and very fun."

The small town feel is what won her over, Hausmann said.

"I love that I can reach everything with a bike," she said.

Though she has gotten off to a good start at Idaho, the transition hasn't always been that easy.

"I really miss my friends and family back home," Hausmann

She said her parents approved of the move to the United States.

'They really like the city (Moscow)," Hausmann said. "It's

We are one team and we are very confident. I think we'll be strong.

Sophie Hausmann

difficult for them, me being so far away from home, but they support me."

Hausmann competed in the first two Idaho invites this fall.

"I was very nervous, but it was fun, and it was a very nice atmosphere," Hausmann said.

> But her nerves certainly didn't stop her from leading Idaho at the Ptarmigan Ram Classic in September.

> The Vandals traveled to the New

Mexico State-hosted Price's Give 'Em Five Intercollegiate Monday through Wednesday in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Idaho was looking for a third title at that invite under Johnson.

"I think we have a great team, and I am very confident," Hausmann said. "I think we will be very great."

Johnson said she thinks Hausmann will have a solid freshman season.

"I think she'll do very well," Johnson said. "She's a very strong player, and she'll get even better when she gets more comfortable with college-level golf."

"I'm very confident," Hausmann said. "We are a nice team and we really like each other and that's really important, and we all support each other. We are one team and we are very confident. I think we'll be strong."

Mihaela Karst can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu



Freshman Sophie Hausmann pulls out her scorecard on hole 4 at Palouse Ridge Golf Course in Pullman.

CROSS COUNTRY

No limits on the future

Idaho senior cross country runner Kinsey Gomez overcomes injury, cruises to two victories this season

Faith Evans

Argonaut

If Kinsey Gomez could run 200 miles a week without suffering an injury, she would do it.

At least that what Idaho assistant cross country coach Travis Floeck said.

Gomez, of Coeur d'Alene, transferred to Idaho from Oregon State in spring 2015.

"I was looking for a program where I loved the coaches, and Idaho is a phenomenal university," Gomez said. "I love coach Travis and (Tim) Cawley. They create an environment that is easy to excel in."

During her seven semesters at Oregon State, Gomez broke the school's 6k record in 2013 and the 10k outdoor record in 2014. She qualified to compete at the NCAA Cross Country West Regionals from 2011-2013 and competed at the NCAA Track and Field West Preliminary Championships in 2013 and 2014.

Along with those accomplishments during her time at Oregon State, Gomez also suffered a stress fracture in her hip. The injury occurred one year ago when she was redshirting at Oregon State.

"She was running a lot, 100 miles per week, and the injury was an accumulation of overtraining over time," Floeck said.

Gomez took a year off to get her health back.

"I took a lot of time off and it made me appreciate my health when I came back," she said. "I don't take anything for granted and I'm thankful to have my health and to be able to train at a level I haven't been able to before."

Gomez said Floeck knows how to train runners to prevent injuries.

"We are super fortunate to have Travis and he's knowledgeable about injury prevention," Gomez said. "It's his specialty to train people individually from getting injured. I have full faith in the training he provides for me."

Floeck said Gomez always shows incredible positivity and brings lots of energy to practices and meets.

"She's the most dedicated athlete I've ever worked with," Floeck said. "She'll do everything possible to be as good as she can be. She is one of the fastest runners in the Big Sky Conference and I believe she can make it to nationals and be an All-American ... She's been close but now she really wants to get there and achieve that All-American status, and those are achievable goals."

"People make fun of how positive I can be," Gomez said. "I'll say things like, 'It's a great day for a 5K.' I'm always thankful for the opportunity. For me, it's not



Irish Martos | Argonaut

Senior Kinsey Gomez (left) runs during practice, Tuesday at the Dan O'Brien track complex.

pushing through the pain ... Coming back from the injury made me realize racing is such an awesome thing and I'm so thankful to be here and give it all I've got. There's always more inside of you than what you think is possible."

Gomez already has two individual wins this season. She bagged a first place finish at the Washington State Invitational Sept. 1 in Colfax, Washington, with a time of 13:40.33.

At the Montana Invitational Saturday in Missoula, Gomez completed the women's 5k with a time of 17:11.62, taking first place with the second finisher 48 seconds behind.

"Kinsey ran incredibly strong and that was a dominant performance," Floeck said. "I was hoping she would be tested today, but that will come in two weeks in Santa Clara ... Kinsey is running at a very high level at the moment. Her races have been impressive."

Some athletes from the Idaho men's and women's cross country teams will race at the Inland Empire Championships Oct. 17 in Lewiston. Athletes from both teams will also compete at the Santa Clara Invitational the same day in Santa Clara, California.

Faith Evans can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu **CROSS COUNTRY**

Running with heart Idaho cross country runner Nathan Stark has grown into distance running

Faith Evans

Argonaut

Nathan Stark runs with his heart.

"Running with my heart is my motto," Idaho junior cross country runner Nathan Stark said.

Stark was very active in high school, competing in track and field, basketball and swimming at Capital High in Boise.

As a three-year varsity track athlete, Stark posted career bests in the 800 meter (1 minute, 58 seconds) and the 400 meter (50.13) and was also the swim team captain and a state qualifier in high school.

"It's funny," Stark said. "I had a background of jumping and was playing basketball in high school ... In the springtime, I found success in the 400, then the 800, and those successes got me to Idaho.

"My freshman year, I said no to cross country because I wasn't confident in my ability to run anything longer than 30 minutes but we worked on building my strength and endurance and by spring, he (Idaho assistant cross country coach Travis Floeck) tested me out with my techniques in the hurdles," Stark said.

Stark said he raced really well a few times in the steeplechase, which gave him confidence as a distance runner.

"Every year I've added on distance and increased the pace, breaking through my threshold," Stark said. "Distance running is more about being mentally tough over a longer period of time. I have a lot of mental toughness and I use that to my benefit."

In the season opener Sept. 1 in Colfax, Washington, Stark finished 24th with a time of 18:38.12. At the second meet, Sept. 19th in Spokane, Stark finished 24th again with a time of 25:25.07.

In the latest contest, Saturday in Missoula, Montana, Stark led the Vandals with a fifth-place finish with a time of 25:31.85.

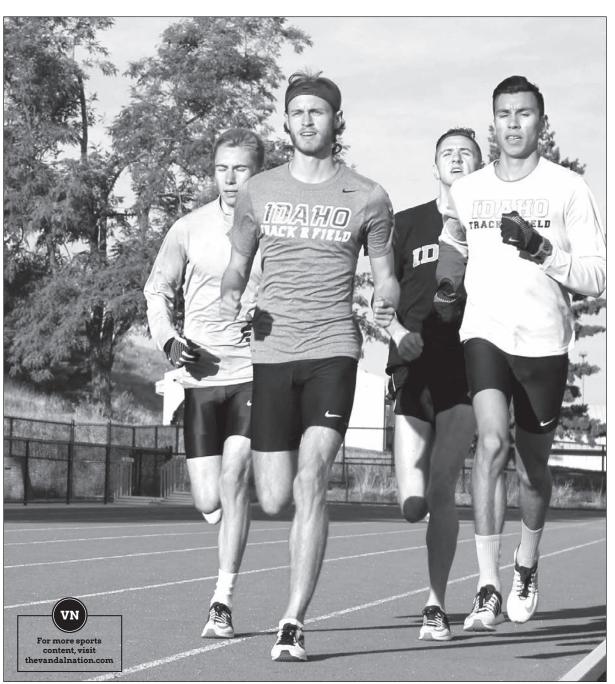
"Nathan ran so strong," Floeck said. "The confidence he is showing this season has as much to do with his success racing as his improvement in his fitness."

Stark said he's learned new things and has improved each race.

"Nathan is having a breakthrough cross country season for sure," Floeck said. "He is a hard worker and is very dedicated. He's also become more of a leader and he now accepts that role as himself, and he sees that in himself. When you find yourself in that role it's easier to go out there and run with confidence to set the tone for younger guys on our team."

Stark said he has seen a lot of change in the program in recent years.

"I'm from the Boise area and we have a lot of freshman from that area, so we have a connection there,"



Irish Martos | Argonaut

Junior Nathan Stark (center from left) runs during practice, Tuesday at Dan O'Brien track complex.

Stark said. "It's been interesting going through the ... changes in the program, and learning to adapt while leading the guys has been a big goal of mine."

"It's a lot of focusing on the little things and reminding the guys of what coach expects. We want to finish one or two spots ahead of where we are ranked and focusing on the little things and processes every day. If we do that, then anything is possible," Stark said.

> Faith Evans can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu



Coming to America

It hasn't been easy, but Daniel Sutton is excelling at Idaho

Korbin McDonald

Cold, wet and windy — not the most ideal conditions for playing golf, especially when trying to impress upward of 35 college golf coaches.

At the 2013 British Boys Amateur Championship, Daniel Sutton was trying to do just that. Except there was one problem — only one coach showed up to his early morning tee time at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Hoylake, England.

"I remember the first round," said Sutton, who is now a sophomore on the Idaho men's golf team. "It was really wet and really windy. My dad said to me before the round, 'You'll know which coaches are interested in you by which ones are on the first tee at 7 o'clock in the morning."

Idaho coach John Means was the lone coach watching Sutton tee off on that miserable morning, and he remembers it vividly.

"Yeah it was a shitty day," Means said with a laugh. "It was cold, probably 43, 44 degrees. Typical England kind of weather ... I watch him tee off and he stripes it right down the middle, then knocks it up on the green and putts in for a birdie."

The second hole, a dogleg right, didn't go as well for Sutton. Means said he knocked his drive into the rough, which was thick, 2-foot grass.

"It's buried in the bottom of this grass," Means said. "The ball landed about 10 feet from me, and I had to look for it for a couple of minutes before I could find it."

Sutton went on to take a huge hack at the ball, but it only went about two feet, Means said. He would go on to take a seven for the hole, but that didn't deter the Idaho coach, who had traveled to England to specifically watch Sutton

"He had a beautiful golf swing," Means said. "I saw it on video before, but seeing it in real life is a whole different deal ... I really liked the way he handled himself when he made that seven. He didn't get upset at all.

"I thought to myself, 'As good as he hits the ball, if I can get him to get the ball in the hole a little bit quicker, he'll be really good."

Growing up

Sutton hails from Birmingham, England, where he said he first picked up a golf club when he was about 3 years old.

As a 5-year-old, Sutton said he became a member at the Walsall Golf Club, located on the outskirts of Birmingham in the town of Walsall, where he is still a member to this day.

"It's changed a lot over time," Sutton said. "The trees are a lot bigger now than what they were. It's a nice, tight course now. It was a bit more open when I was younger, but I didn't hit the ball anywhere back then, so it didn't matter."

Sutton said he remembers walking around with his dad, Adrian Sutton, and watching him play. When he was old enough, it was his dad doing the watching.

"When I was younger, I remember my dad carrying my bag because I wasn't big enough to they spent three hours talking to the coach. carry it," Sutton said.

Due to the Walsall Golf Club's expensive fees, Sutton said his dad sacrificed his membership so he and his sister could keep their memberships.

"He's done a lot for me," Sutton said.

The journey to Idaho

It wasn't long after he first picked up a golf club that his dad Adrian started to see his son's

"I knew what Daniel's ability was in this country, but didn't really know how he compared with people around the world because he never really played anywhere else but the UK," Adrian said.

Sutton started playing in prestigious tournaments at the age of 12, which is where he first heard about the possibility of playing college golf in the United States.

"That's what I tried to work towards," Sutton said. "I heard about (playing college golf in the U.S.) at a young age, and that's been my dream, because that's all I've done my whole life —

In England, Sutton said sports and school are usually separate from one another. Therefore, it's becoming a popular trend for golfers from England to take their talents stateside.

Not knowing where to start, Sutton and his dad enlisted the help of Pro Dream USA, a recruiting agency that helps young golfers from



England get matched up with a college in the U.S.

"All the process of the recruiting, it was sort of all new to us anyway because we didn't totally understand what went on and everything," Adrian said.

With the help of the recruiting agency, Sutton was put in contact with Means.

"He responded to every email that Daniel sent," Adrain said of Means. "He was the first one that Daniel emailed, and he responded almost right away."

Means said he watched video of Sutton, which intrigued him enough to prompt him to take a trip to England to watch Sutton play in the 2013 British Boys Amateur Championship.

After the tournament ended, Sutton said he and his dad went to dinner with Means, where

Means said he was looking to recruit three players, and one of them he wanted to be an impact player.

"I remember Means looked at Daniel and said 'Do you know which one you are?" Adrian said. "And we both just looked at each other and said 'We don't know.' We just didn't know he was that good."

Means said he was sold after seeing Sutton play in person, and all that was left was for the player to visit Moscow to see if he'd fit in with the team.

"I was sold. I thought I could make this kid really good," Means said. "So he came up on his visit and the guys liked him ... They trust me to do my job and their job is to tell me whether or not he's going to be a good fit.

"After he left (Moscow), the very next day I called him up and offered him a scholarship," Means said.

The transition

"I'm pretty laid back and I was quite looking forward to moving out from home," Sutton said. "Even though it's the other side of the world, I looked at it as the same if I was moving to the other side of England — I'm not going to

Sutton was looking forward to the challenge, but his first semester on campus was harder than he expected.

"Kids from England, or the other side of the

pond, everything is so new to them," Means said. "They're trying to fit in, they're trying to understand the language, they're trying be able to communicate with people. There's so much going on, that golf kind of takes a back seat."

Idaho sophomore golfer Daniel Sutton holds

his country's flag — England — at the Uni-

versity of Idaho Golf Course. The flag usually

hangs in his room, occupying an entire wall.

Tess Fox | Argonaut

Despite both countries speaking the English language, there is still a large communication gap.

"There is a language barrier," Sutton said. "Before, people found it really hard to understand me. So now I learned to speak a lot slower from when I first came here."

With the language barrier and adjustment to the college lifestyle, Means said it took time for Sutton's golf game to come around last year. Means said golfers have to take time and put in extra practice ses-

sions to be able to compete at a high level.

"Dan didn't do that last fall," Means said. "He just came to practice ... There was no extra things, but in the spring time that changed and he got better quick. It took him three months, and then last spring he was dominant."

Sutton said he enjoys playing golf in America compared to the bump-and-run style they play in England due to the strong winds.

"People say 'You should be used to playing in the wind," Sutton said. "Yeah, I'm used to it, but I don't enjoy it any more than anyone else. The weather is a lot better over here. Like when we play in Arizona here, it's 90 degrees, no wind, blue skies — it's completely different here."

Sutton's golf game has transitioned well, and has led him to a lot of

success in a short amount of time, including winning the Big Sky Conference Freshman of the Year award last year.

The distance between the two countries hasn't stopped Sutton's dad from watching his son play — even if it is refreshing a computer screen.

"I find it quite nerve-racking," Adrian said. "I have to stay up really late sometimes ... I don't like going to bed not knowing how well he's doing — or how bad. You want him to do well ... but I get a bit anxious sometimes, not knowing what's going on ... but I think it's the right

> Korbin McDonald can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu

VOLLEYBALL

Piece of the energy puzzle



Irish Martos | Argonaut

Idaho junior defense specialist Terra Varney serves the ball during practice, Sept. 28.

Idaho volleyball star Terra Varney has overcome injuries with toughness

Luis Torres Argonaut

Passionate, aggressive and a go-getter is how junior defensive specialist Terra Varney describes herself.

Varney, who is in her third season playing for the Idaho volleyball team, said she fufills a leadership role by being energentic on the court to raide the confidence of her teammates.

"Creating a lot of energy and just going after every ball that I can and showing that every ball matters," Varney said. "Just being real loud on the court and celebrating for my hitters ... I just need to maintain the same level of energy throughout every game, don't give up any balls and not let my team down."

The Murrieta, California, native said she had high hopes going into the season and looks forward to finishing the season on a high note.

"There's been times where things aren't clicking but you can tell this is a really special team," Varney said. "We just go back into what we have done in the past and build off from that ... working to keep blending together and just clicking together as a team because when we're on, we're unstoppable."

Varney's career at Idaho has been up and down, with her share of injuries being one of the downs. Varney said the injuries have been a challenge this season.

"I've always had some aches and pains everywhere that have limited me," Varney said. "I came in with a torn hamstring freshman year and I played through that season with that injury. Last year, I had another injury but just every year I've just gotten mentally stronger knowing that I can get

through anything."

Time management has been crucial for Varney when she described how her life has changed since playing volleyball at the collegiate level.

"That's one of the main things that you learn playing volleyball and just hard work in and out of the classroom," Varney said.

Outside of volleyball, Varney said she's majoring in elementary education because she loves working with kids. Her inspiration came from her teachers she has had over the years.

"Growing up throughout my school, I just always had a personal relationship with all my teachers and a lot of them have inspired me to pursue that career," Varney said.

As the youngest of four sisters, Varney said she has learned a lot from them as each of them played volleyball and fought through adversity.

"(My sisters) used to set me up when I was little and hit the ball as hard as they could at me," Varney said. "I definitely learned to just go after everything and just play through pain. (One of my) sisters was the same way with injuries and she had an aggressive mentality that she wanted to win and I got my competitive mentality from her."

Varney said growing up and watching her three older sisters progress from softball into volley-ball has allowed her to be a passionate player.

"I've always grown up playing sports," Varney said. "Softball wasn't really my sport ... You always find something you're gonna be passionate about and for me it was volleyball."

Varney has started in 12 out of the 16 matches so far this season and has 160 digs, including a season-high 15 digs on three different occasions.

Luis Torres can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Idaho impresses Batiri

Idaho women's tennis adds talented VCU transfer to roster

For more sports

content. visit

thevandalnation.com

Josh Grissom

Argonaut

The Idaho women's tennis team turned a lot of heads this summer with the recruitment of sophomore Ana Batiri, a transfer student from Virginia Commonwealth.

Batiri played a key role in the success of VCU last spring, compiling an 8-8 record as the program won the Atlantic 10 title and earned a trip to the NCAA tournament. She also went 5-4 in dual play, helping guide her team to a first-round berth in the NCAA tourna-

ment against a Virginia opponent that was ranked in the top 10.

While many were surprised at her decision to leave a successful program, Batiri revealed that the choice was an easy one for her.

"We didn't have the team unity that I was looking for," Batiri said. "I wanted to play college tennis because of the team environment. The (VCU) coach couldn't bring that type of atmosphere to that team."

Among other things, Batiri said she sought a supporting environment around her, an aspect that her previous university lacked.

"Tennis is a very lonely sport ... it is great when the team is always together helping and supporting each other," Batiri said.

The Romanian native first heard of the University of Idaho during a state-by-state search for another college, and was impressed to see the recent success of the program. She then reached out to Mariana Cobra, former Big Sky Coach of the Year and head of the women's tennis program, who began a passionate recruitment of the sophomore star.

"She really inspired me to come," Batiri said. "I could tell that she wanted me here on the team."

Batiri said she was also im-

pressed with the coach's demeanor and philosophy in her recruitment.

"She had so much energy and positivity," Batiri said with a chuckle. "And she talked about how the team was like a family. She said that this team was not like any other."

Batiri hopes to make an immediate impact for the Vandals, who are seeking back-to-back Big Sky championships this season.

"I really want to help the team," Batiri said. "This is why we are all here and working so hard. We want

to win the Big Sky again and become ranked."

Batiri declined to talk about personal goals for the season and instead pointed out the team goals that have been instilled into the Idaho program

since her first day on campus.

"We want to get ranked as high as possible and stay ranked," she said. "It is easy to slip in and out of the rankings. Consistency would be great for our team."

During her first month on campus, Batiri has blossomed, saying that she finally feels at home with her new university.

"I love the campus. It's so beautiful," she said gesturing toward the surrounding buildings. "And we all spend so much time together as a team because college brings us closer to each other. It's hard for the freshmen because they're young and miss their home. But (Cobra) does a nice job of bringing us all together. It feels like a family." Batiri said she was excited to represent the Vandals in her first match at the Washington State Invite Oct. 2 in Pullman.

"This is our first tournament," Batiri said. "And we want to show a good fight and to show our coach that we never give up during the match."

Josh Grissom can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu



Alex Brizee | Argonaut

Ana Batiri, sophomore at UI, practicing tennis Sept. 30 on the Tennis courts.

SOCCER



Yishan Chen | Argonaut

The Idaho soccer team gathers during its game against Portland State Oct. 2 at the Guys Wicks field. The Vandals beat the Viking 1-0.

New year, new results

After tough 2014, Idaho soccer has improved tremendously

Ben Evensen

Argonaut

2014 was a year to forget for the Idaho soccer team.

Under first-year head coach Derek Pittman, the Vandals started out the season 0-9 in nonconference, scoring just two goals during that stretch and being shut out seven times. Things improved a little bit in Big Sky Conference play, but Idaho still finished the season at a disappointing 4-14-2.

Now in year two of the Pittman era, the progress being made is going light years ahead of what many would expect.

Idaho's record speaks for itself. Idaho stands at 7-4-1 with three huge wins in conference play and no conference losses. At this time in 2014, the Vandals were 2-9-1.

With seven games remaining, Idaho has many opportunities to add to the already three-win improvement.

The stats are eye-opening as well, starting with goals. Idaho has 21 goals so far this season while last year's squad had a measly eight at this time. The Vandals already have 27 assists this season while the 2014 team had only 16 all year and six to this date.

The improvement Idaho is making is showing up nationally too. The Vandals are ninth in the nation in assists, while sophomore forward Olivia Baggerly and junior midfielder Clara Gomez have seven assists each — good to tie both at seventh nationally.

The assist totals also put Idaho at 11th in the nation

for assists per game, while Baggerly and Gomez are tied for 11th in assists per game in the nation as well.

Idaho is first in the Big Sky in shots, shots per game, assists, assists per game and shutouts. It is second in points, points per game and goals in the conference as well. For a team with just four wins a season ago, leading the conference and being second in so many other categories is jaw-dropping.

Even with all the stats, wins and im-



provement from last year, the team is still focused on its original goal.

"Our team set a goal at the very beginning of the season," Pittman said. "To make the conference tournament. The top

six of the 11 schools go to the conference tournament. We want to be in that top six. If we are in that tournament, then we can talk about a conference championship."

Idaho finished tied for seventh place with Southern Utah in the conference last season.

"At this point in time we're just taking it one game at a time," Pittman said.

Ben Evensen can be reached at arg-sports@uidaho.edu