



2020-2021 Tri-City United Fall Sports Preview

TCU Girls' Tennis

'We are more athletic than we have been in the past'

Coach and assistants

Head coach: Phil Murry 13th year

Assistant coach: Sarah Adams 15th year

Key athletes to keep an eye on

• **Josie Plut, senior:** Josie is a three-time letter winner and a second-year captain. She is very athletic, moves well on the court. She played #2 Singles last year and is looking to challenge for the top spot this year.

• **Gabby Prochaska, senior:** Gabby transferred in from New Prague a year ago and could only play JV. She's a very smart player and an extremely hard worker. She will do all the little things necessary to have a successful season and should be at one of the top doubles' spots.

• **Montserrat Ruiz, junior:** Montserrat is a two-year letter winner who played #3 Singles a year ago and should move up to #2, and may challenge for the top spot.

• **Rachel Rynda, senior:** This is only her second year out for tennis, but she is easily the strongest girl on the team. Rachel has really progressed in a year's time and will probably be in one of the top doubles' spots.

• **Savannah Squires, junior:** Savannah only came out last year for the first time. She is very athletic and has really improved.

• **Morgan Mueller, junior:**

Morgan is a two-year letter winner. She played doubles the past two years and is looking to move to singles this year.

Number of athletes compared to last year

The team has 28 athletes this year, which is up a couple from last year. Some volleyball players, who had their season pushed to spring, have joined.

Moved on

Erica Jackson, Geena Ehlers, Jenna Weiers, Jordan Squires, Emily Borchard, and Lexi Schatz

Last season

We were moved to the 1AA section last year. We are there again, but any post season is going to look very different. The section contains at least 3 of the best tennis schools in the state. We battled well last season, but just didn't have the athletes to compete with a lot of schools from top to bottom.

Season outlook

We have good numbers and should have good competition for all spots, which I think will only make us better. Our conference is traditionally pretty strong, especially at the top with LSH. We did lose Jordan this year. I feel that we can be very competitive, but we are going to have to have different girls



Senior Josie Plut, a three-time letter winner, is expected to challenge for TCU Girls' Tennis' top spot.

step up on certain days. With the COVID situation, we had to cut our schedule from 16 matches down to 11. We will play 6 conference games and 5 non-conference against 5 of these same teams.

LSH is the team to beat again this year. They lost a few girls, but will be bringing back their #1 who is one of the best players in Southern MN.

I'd like to think that on any given day, we could beat the other teams in the conference. It will take wins up and

down the lineup though.

Strengths

We are more athletic than we have been in the past. I also think that we should be able to put some different lineups on the court to match up better with our opponents.

We have good kids that really work hard. That's a great combination to have.

Things to work on

We need to maximize the time we spend on the court. A lot of my players are multi-

sport athletes who don't play a ton of tennis in the off-season.

COVID and Tennis

The girls have done very well adjusting to the changes in tennis. They are really excited to be out playing again.

We talked the other day about how tennis is the one sport that really had minimal changes.

Comments

I am excited for the season. I'm so happy for the

kids. They need to be able to return to some type of normalcy, and right now, this is as close as it gets.

I've coached now for 33 years in various sports. The kids are why I've stayed. That hasn't changed. I'm so impressed with the girls we have out for tennis. It's a privilege to get to coach them.

By the numbers

- 6 seniors
- 11 matches allowed (down from 16)
- 2 matches per week

Roster

Seniors
Paige Johnson, Gabby Prochaska, Josie Plut, Allie Schley, Rachel Rynda, Brooke Blaschko, Savannah Overn

Juniors

Montserrat Ruiz, Morgan Mueller, Emma Traenor, Kacie Traxler, Lauren Houn, MacKenzie Holmbo, Cynthia Balcasar, Molly Closser, Maddie Dooley, Kendra Blaschko, Savannah Squires

Sophomores

Alexis Hoefs, Sami Tiede

Freshman

Lexi Factor, Ali Weydert

Eighth Grader

Emma Skluzacek

Seventh Graders

Lucy Fleek, Dakota Meadows, Clara Leonard, Kenzington Wilmes, Emily Schley.

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2020-2021 Tri-City United Fall Sports Preview

TCU Girls' Soccer Team

'Very young, but very athletic... a great building block'

Coaches and assistants

Head coach: Carey Langer, 19th year overall

Assistant coaches: Erik Wipf 2nd year, Dave Dominguez 1st year

Key athletes

• Michelle Ramirez, junior: Expect some exciting things from returning captain Michelle. She's a tenacious and physical defender that always brings everything she's got. She can shut a player down, get possession of the ball and move it up the field quickly.

• Liz Beth Mendez, junior: Liz Beth, a returning captain, will be a midfield player to keep an eye on. She is quietly prideful on the soccer field with great stamina and team support and is also an outstanding student. She personifies all the qualities of a top-notch student athlete.

• Ava Dresow, freshman: Ava, a defender, is a great addition to the TCU Girls'

Varsity Soccer Program. She brings experience, powerful and physical play, and confidence to TCU's defense. She will take our defense to a new level and help solidify the defensive third of the field.

• Chloe Triden, senior: Captain Chloe is an outstanding student athlete that offers confidence and smart defensive choices. She is the glue in a physical and stout defensive line up for TCU Girls' Soccer.

Young players to watch

• Forward Nora Titus - Great speed, solid shooting skills, and a go-to player. As her confidence builds she will become a highlight reel player.

• Forward Kylie Schmitz - Great moves, the ability to provide well-placed shots on goal, and a quiet tenacity that will continue to emerge as she gains confidence.

• Wing defender Guadalupe



Messenger file photo

Chloe Triden (left) and Michelle Ramirez (center) return to the Titans' Soccer Team for the 2020 season.

Lopez - A young, but incredibly aggressive defender with outstanding foot skills and speed. Has emerged as a force on defense and brings great confidence to a solid

TCU defensive line-up.

Moved on

Giselle Sanchez and Jennifer Sanchez were both outstanding student athletes

who helped TCU build a soccer program. They own that memory forever and will be greatly missed this year!

2019 Recap

TCU's conference only has 3 schools that offer soccer and neither of them are part of section 2A with TCU. Last year's record is hard to record as we had a schedule that was a varsity and junior varsity hybrid designed to get TCU's soccer program off the ground.

2020 Season Outlook

The 2020 TCU Girls' Varsity team is a very, very young team. We are benefiting from having athletic volleyball players join us as their season has been moved to the spring. We are young and lack experience, but we are more athletic and competitive than a year ago. This group of girls are meshing quickly, and I believe we will be a quick and physical team that will exceed expectations.

TCU Boys' Soccer Team

'Loaded with young talent'

Coach and assistants

Head coach: Carey Langer, 19th year overall

Assistant coaches: Erik Wipf 2nd year, Dave Dominguez 1st year

Key athletes to keep an eye on

• Kris Ruiz, junior: Expect some exciting things from returning junior captain Kris Ruiz. He has outstanding ball control, explosive moves, and has a shot that any goalkeeper doesn't want to see! He will be on every opponent's radar.

• Frankie Sanchez, sophomore: Frankie is the best hidden secret in Southern Minnesota. He is a stoic, yet prideful player with outstanding ball control, tactical understanding beyond his ex-

perience, and the most natural strike on the ball I have seen. He is special because he can shut down an opponent and be down the field to launch a shot on goal that is well-placed with a scream-face on it!

• Dominick Miland, senior: Dominick will be fun to watch. A TCU standout in basketball, this first-year starting goalkeeper has outstanding height, size, athletic ability, and a natural feel for how to position himself. His sheer size and dominant presence in the goal will be a great asset to this year's team.

• Alex Balcazar, senior: Alex is the wildcard of the TCU Titans this year. He has outstanding vision of the field, stamina, and the ability to



Messenger file photo

This year's TCU Boys' Soccer Team is loaded with young talent.

be a force as a defender and as an offensive threat. Every team wants a player like this because they fill so many intangibles on the field.

• The entire flat-four defensive lineup: With returning starters Ashton Matejcek, a junior, Marcos Mendez, a sophomore, and freshmen newcomers Luke and Conner Skluzacek, the Titans will be stout in the defensive third this season.

Moved on

Hugo and Jesus Ruiz, Isaac Gonzalez, Fernando Mora, Jesus "Chi-Chi" Hernandez, Carlos Estevez, Jose Herrera, and Pedro Ruiz all helped TCU build a soccer program. They own that memory forever and will be greatly missed this year!

2019 Recap

TCU's conference only

has 3 schools that offer soccer and neither of them are part of section 2A with TCU. Last year's record is hard to record as we had a schedule that was a varsity and junior varsity hybrid designed to get TCU's soccer program off the ground.

2020 Season Outlook

The 2020 TCU Varsity team is a very young team that follows a senior-heavy

2019 TCU team. We will miss those who have moved on, but we identify that we have the chance to further build a team and a program at TCU that future opponents know will bring their "A" game and play at a high level.

Comments

"I am sold on building a complete program at TCU. That means you commit yourself to player development and understand that the complete soccer player has their mind and body in balance. The expectations that exist on the competitive soccer pitch also exist in the classroom. We strive to be the best at what we do, we work to find balance between our sport and our studies, and that we always remember we represent Tri-City United Schools and community in a respectful and responsible manner."

Soccer Coach
Carey Langer

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2020-2021 Tri-City United Fall Sports Preview

TCU Cross Country

Young athletes are working hard, stepping up to lead

Coaches and assistants

Head coach: Brian Fogal 13th year

Assistant coaches: Chad Polson 11th year, Craig Nordling 3rd year

Key athletes to keep an eye on

• Yasmin Ruiz, 8th grader: Yasmin was All Conference last year and earned Team MVP. She is only an 8th grader and has been running all summer.

• Conner Antony, a junior, and Dante Juberian, a sophomore: Both young men should lead the team this year.

• Sophia Smith, freshman:

Sophia is coming out for the first time this year. She looked very fast during the first week of practice.

• Michael Pichotta, freshman: Michael earned a place on last year's section roster as an eighth grader. He logged a lot of miles this summer.

Moved on

Girls: Our number 2 runner Ari Krautkramer was a steady leader and a hard worker in practice.

Boys: Two-time State Individual and 2nd fastest All-Time Hugo Ruiz graduated. School record holder and All-State Individual Austin Antony and #4 All-Time and

State Individual Participant Hunter Rutt also graduated.

2019 Recap

Girls: The team finished in the middle of the Conference and Section and was made up of many girls that have since graduated.

Boys: The team was the most decorated and talented team I have coached. We just missed going to State and winning the Conference. We had three individuals qualify for the State meet in their careers. Most of the runners on that team had 4 or 5 years of varsity experience.

2020 Season Outlook



Messenger file photos

All-Conference eighth grader Yasmin Ruiz will led the young girls' cross country team this year.



Connor Antony returns to the TCU Cross Country Team for the 2020 season.

Girls: The team will be very young. We do not have a single senior runner due to season-ending injuries this summer. The team will be lead by All-Conference 8th Grader Yasmin Ruiz. Junior Trinity Turek has battled injuries the past couple of years, but if she can stay healthy she should provide some experience and leadership.

Boys: The team will also be very inexperienced. Only Conner and Dante have a complete year of varsity ex-

perience, although many of the runners did get to rotate into the varsity over the past couple of years.

Comments

This year, so far, has been going really well. Every member of the team has been working really hard. We were unable to do our usual running camp this year, which was disappointing for both athletes and coaches. Despite that our attitude remains positive and everyone has really gotten after it in

each and every practice. I believe both the boys' and girls' teams are going to see great improvement this year from the beginning to the end of the season.

By the numbers

- 10 Girls
- 0 Senior Girls
- 5 Returning letter winners
- 21 Boys
- 3 Senior Boys
- 2 Individuals with a full-season of varsity experience
- 6 Individuals with some varsity experience

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2020-2021 Tri-City United Fall Sports Preview

TCU Swim and Dive Team

'Together we swim, six feet apart'

Coach and assistants

Head coach: Kristen Munden 4th year

Assistant coaches: Dave DeMars 3rd year

Team captains: Kylee Barrington, Mackenzie Askland, Brooklyn Kahle

Key athletes to keep an eye on

• Ellie Sladek, sophomore: Having an outstanding finish to her freshman season in the 50 and 100 freestyle, I see Ellie in the top 16 at this year's sectional meet.

• Natalie Lundahl, freshman: The amount of time Natalie dropped last season in her breast stroke was short of amazing. She was hundreds of seconds away from placing at Sectionals. I have no doubts that she will achieve greatness this season.

• Ella Schmiesing, seventh: As an incoming seventh grader, Ella has been in the water since she was at least six years old. She has worked very hard, and I am so excited to see where she goes with our team this season.

Keep Your Eye On

• Kaylee Berger, freshman: Kaylee has been swimming for the past two years. Last year she took on diving, which she continues this season with swimming. She is an athlete on the board and in the water. I can't wait to see her success.

• Mallorie Plut, freshman: Mallorie had a splendid finish to her season in 2019. Swimming her personal best at the sectional meet when she had lost her goggles off the start was a sign of all her

hard work and dedication to do her best.

• Elizabeth Odenthal, sophomore: Not many enjoy the butterfly, but this young lady has taken it by the horns by embracing the race and making it hers.

She had some significant improvements in a short time. This season will be a tribute to her hard work.

Number of athletes compared to last year

21 athletes last year 22 this year. We had two seniors graduate.

Season outlook

We have no seniors on the team this year.

Areas where the team is strong

We are hoping to have the



Ellie Sladek is swimming again for the Titans this year after an outstanding freshman season last year.



Photos courtesy of Rob Luckow

Elizabeth Odenthal returns to the pool for the TCU Swim and Dive Team.

opportunity to place in the top 16 if a sectional swim meet is allowed to take place. A few swimmers have goals to make it to state.

Themes for the season

"Together we swim, six feet apart." and "When your body gets tired. Swim with your heart."

Our diving program led by coach Dave DeMars has many girls jumping off the board with excitement. We are looking forward to growing this part of our program.

Areas the team needs to focus

Our diving program is having a strong and steady growth.

Overall record last season: 2-9

Comments

This season is off to an interesting start. We are not letting the restrictions and limitations get in our way of working hard. We are looking forward to virtual meets and a few home meets. It is going to be hard not having fans watch, but the team is looking forward to allowing a digital experience to friends and families of the athletes to watch from home.

Roster

Juniors
Mackenzie Askland
Kalee Barrington
Brooklyn Kahle

Sophomores

Kaia Krocak
Elizabeth Odenthal
Brianna Schroeder
Ellie Sladek

Freshmen

Kaylee Berger
Natalie Lundahl
Mallorie Plut
Amanda Prigge

Eighth Graders

Katie Bell
Tahlia Buckingham
Julia Odenthal
Juliette Ramirez
Kendelyn Saute
Makenna Streed
Kylee Tolzman

Seventh Graders

Bre Erickson
Ella Schmiesing
Lily Traxler
Kendra Westphal

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