

# W&M

## TRIBE SPORTS

### Goal Oriented

The Soccer World Has  
Its Eye on Claire Zimmeck '09  
and Dani Collins '09

~ BEN KENNEDY '05

When they were much younger, playing on the travel soccer circuit, a girl named Dani (allegedly) committed a foul against her opponent named Claire — Dani claims it was a “dive.” This small infraction was another incident in a youth full of tense meetings and fierce competition between the two on the soccer field.

Imagine their surprise when, as young women, the two found themselves playing on the same Tribe soccer team. Dani Collins '09 and Claire Zimmeck '09 both knew the ins and outs of playing against one another, but weren't quite ready to join forces at first.

“It was kind of an awkward meeting,” they say. Since then, though, the two have incorporated themselves into a Tribe soccer team that has achieved tremendous success and is still hungry for more.

The Tribe finished the regular season in a close CAA tournament game, losing to Virginia Commonwealth, 5-4, on penalty kicks after a 0-0 tie. Their strong play during the season still landed them a place in the NCAA national tournament, where they made it to the second round. While every player quests for a title, Collins can keep it in perspective: “Regardless of how it ends, it's about the journey, too.”

At the beginning of the 2007 season, both women were named to the Missouri Athletic Club's Hermann Trophy watch list, singling them out as two of the top players in women's college soccer. The season that followed was accordingly impressive.

Collins, at 5'11", is the tallest player on the team. When the ball is in the air, the team often counts on center midfielder Collins to leap up and use her head — literally — to keep the ball in play. Zimmeck describes her teammate much

Dani Collins '09

Claire Zimmeck '09

more readily than she would describe herself: “[Dani] is amazing. She’s probably the most crucial position on the team; I think she holds us together.”

As for the punishment inflicted on a midfielder who plays as physically as Collins, Zimmeck can only sympathize. “I feel like she takes so much. I feel so bad for her,” Zimmeck says. “She puts her heart into it all the time. I love playing with players like that.”

Zimmeck herself, on the other hand, is lurking in the front, always waiting to embarrass a defender with her speed and agility. One false step and you’re toast. “Claire is one of the hardest-working players I’ve ever seen,” says Collins. “She can just obliterate a defense and they never know what hit them.”

As the 2006 and 2007 CAA Player of the Year, Zimmeck is no stranger to recognition. She makes a point to find the right balance between being the Tribe’s leading scorer and staying team-focused, but knows she has to do her part when the pressure is on. “We want the ball with Claire when it’s down to the wire,” says Collins.

Soccer, of course, is a game of 1-0 wins and 0-0 ties. At a tournament in Richmond, Va., on Sept. 16, William and Mary squared off against the legendary University of North Carolina (UNC) team. Despite the Tribe’s years of success under coach John Daly, one thing they had never done was defeat UNC. Thanks to a down-to-the-wire Claire Zimmeck goal in the 22nd game between the two squads, they finally broke the streak.

“I can’t even comprehend it yet,” says Zimmeck, weeks after the match.

“You almost can’t grasp it,” adds Collins. “It was such a group

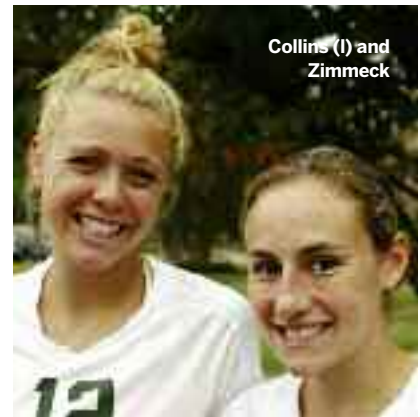
effort; you can’t ask for anything more than that.”

Later in the season, Zimmeck had a huge weekend, scoring five goals in two games and earning two national and conference player of the week awards. Collins tallied three goals of her own before briefly being sidelined by injury, playing her aggressive, defensive style of soccer. No injury, though, can dampen Collins’ enthusiasm for the game of soccer; enthusiasm that helped land her on the first-team all-CAA list for 2007.

“You’re not playing to get recognition, you’re not playing to make millions, you’re playing for the love of the game,” she says. “It’s something you’ve eaten and breathed and slept for the last 15 years.”

As Collins and Zimmeck can attest, a lot can change in 15 years. Playing first against each other and then as teammates, their initial rivalry has grown into a close friendship and a powerful tandem on the soccer field. Nothing but time can develop that sort of bond.

A bond that, thankfully for Tribe fans, will be back on the field next year.



Collins (l) and Zimmeck

## [SPORTSBRIEFS]



### Hill To Retire

After 30 seasons of leading William and Mary volleyball, head coach Debbie Hill

announced her retirement at the end of the 2007 season. Hill is the all-time 23rd-ranked coach in volleyball, winning seven consecutive conference titles from 1985-91. Hill was named the Colonial Athletic Association’s Coach of the Year five times on her way to more than 500 career victories.

### Tribe Program Charts 96 Percent in NCAA’s Graduation Success Rate

The College’s student-athletes showed a Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of 96 percent among those who entered school on athletics scholarships in the 2000-01 athletics year, according to data recently released by the NCAA.

The national average among all Division I schools was 77 percent. William and Mary’s average of 96 percent ranked seventh in the nation. The Tribe’s average was the top in both the Colonial Athletic Association and among all Division I Virginia schools.



### College Wins 8th Straight CAA Cross Country Title

The Tribe took home its eighth consecutive CAA cross country championship Oct. 26, earning a record-low total of 16 points, one point short of a perfect score.

Led by Christo Landry ’08 (pictured), the men finished with five runners in the top six in their strong performance in Farmingdale, N.Y. The two-time All-American ran the 8K course in 23:58.9, averaging 4:50 per mile to finish a staggering 32 seconds ahead of the next runner. Ten College runners received All-CAA honors by placing in the top 12. Among the 10

were three freshmen and two sophomores, a testament to both the depth and youth of the College.



### Payton to Play Professionally in Switzerland

Former William and Mary men’s basketball

standout Adam Payton ’07 signed a professional contract with BC Boncourt in the Swiss LNA league. Payton is the sixth former W&M player currently competing in a professional league overseas.

In his season debut with BC Boncourt, Payton scored 14 points, pulled down nine rebounds, dished out five assists and recorded six steals in an 80-67 victory over the Lugano Tigers. Payton led the Tribe to one of its best seasons in recent history during the 2006-07 campaign, after transferring from Vanderbilt.

## HEYFARL Remembers

As he puts it, Tom Mikula '47 (pictured below) "drifted" onto campus in 1943 and was admitted to William and Mary in a unique era.

Mikula emerged from the College in 1947 with the prestigious Carr Cup and a job in pro football. On the football field, Mikula earned enough money to pay for a mas-



ter's degree on his way to a successful career in education.

"None of that was possible without William and Mary and without football," says Mikula. When he returned to Williamsburg after retirement, he wanted to give back to the school and the sport that had given him everything — and wanted to inspire his former teammates to do so as well.

Mikula established the Hundred Each Year For A Rising Letterman endowment — or HEYFARL — in 1993 in order to provide opportunities for talented walk-on athletes. Whether by a yearly donation of \$100 or a single donation of \$2,500, HEYFARL is designed to allow donors to help support and enrich William and Mary football, no matter what their income.

Ultimately, though, the HEYFARL story is about remembering teammates and coaches and keeping the Tribe football tradition alive. The names on the HEYFARL list reflect wives remembering husbands, younger players remembering coaches, and older players remembering teammates who once played beside them. One player donated in the name of his heart surgeon, an ex-Tribe quarterback he credited with saving his life. In one way or another, HEYFARL donors pay tribute to the ways that Tribe football changes lives for the better.

— Ben Kennedy '05

# [GAMESTOWATCH]

William and Mary's place in the Colonial Athletic Association's basketball pantheon is not a cozy one, as the Tribe men's team will rub elbows with four of the top-25 mid-major programs in the country. The women, on the other hand, have one of the best teams in the conference. When it all shakes out, Kaplan Arena will bear witness to a lot of solid hoops action and a season of high expectations.

## MEN'S

## WOMEN'S

### OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

#### Jan. 26 (home)

The Tribe turned in strong performances in last year's games against the Monarchs, who lost some key players at the end of the 2006-07 season. William and Mary will battle ODU's low post players with forwards Alex Smith '09 and Laimis Kiselius '08, who saw lots of game time last year. Look for an intense crowd, as no CAA rival fills Kaplan like ODU does.



#### Jan. 20 (home)

The yearly battles with the Lady Monarchs have been difficult, and year after year, the Tribe women seem to come up on the losing side. Last year's game at Kaplan was a positive sign: William and Mary led ODU for the entire game ... until the final minute-and-a-half. Returning four of five starters from last year, the Tribe has a real chance at finally turning the corner against their biggest rival.

### VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

#### March 1 (home)

VCU was one of the biggest stories of last year's NCAA Tournament, upsetting iconic Duke University in the first round. Rams guard Eric Maynor and head coach Anthony Grant are going to be a lot for the Tribe to handle. Grant has recruited a dangerous class of freshmen, but watch for up-and-coming W&M guard David Schneider '10 to match up with Maynor at the top of the key.



#### March 6 (home)

Anyone taking on the Lady Rams has to contend with center Quanitra Hollingsworth, a 6'5" terror who played her way onto the first-team all-CAA list before the season started. Lucky for the Tribe, joining Hollingsworth on the first team — but playing against her on the court — is former CAA Player of the Year Kyra Kaylor '08. It should be a great matchup between two of the conference's best.

### DREXEL UNIVERSITY

#### Jan. 23 at Drexel, Feb. 20 (home)

Beating the Dragons at home was one of the signature victories of the 2006-07 season, and Drexel has lost some senior leadership since March. The Tribe will still have to contend with Frank Elegar, a conference first-teamer known as a threat in the paint. New rules about sideline behavior will hopefully keep infamously mobile Dragons coach "Bruiser" Flint from throwing any accidental screens on the wing.



#### Jan. 27 at Drexel, Feb. 21 (home)

When the Lady Dragons roll into town, they bring conference Rookie of the Year Gabriela Marginean, who scored 47 points in a five-overtime game against Northeastern last year. Last season's Tribe rookie sensation, Tiffany Benson '10, will have to work hard to contain Marginean, who averaged 16.6 points per game. Benson, though, is already W&M's most dangerous shot-blocker and will be no easy task for Marginean, either.