

PURSUING PERFECTION

By Joe Vanden Acker

Nothing about Catherine Marinac '08 is typical. She's not your typical student, she's not your typical softball pitcher, and she's not your typical cross country runner.

What is typical, normal, characteristic — or whatever other adjective you want to use about Marinac — is her drive for excellence. As a student, she has a 3.9 grade point average with a natural science interdisciplinary major (biology and chemistry). As an athlete, she has earned All-Midwest Conference honors twice in softball, won three letters in soccer, and claimed another letter running cross country. She does it all with humility and a commitment to good old fashioned hard work. "I'm not smart or amazingly athletic. I just work really hard," Marinac says. "It's been a lot of the right things happening and the people here. I don't know if I could have done this at any other school."

GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

A native of St. Paul, Minn., Marinac's physical size isn't a harbinger of her skill or determination as an athlete. She stands just 5-foot-5 and her slight build is the opposite of what a hitter would expect to be staring them down from the mound. "Don't let her size fool you," Lawrence softball coach Kim Tatro warns. "What she lacks maybe in size, she makes up for with her heart and her intelligence. She gets the most out of her frame. She's competitive. She doesn't let her lack of size be a hindrance." After pitching only 34 innings as a freshman, she emerged as the team's top pitcher as a sophomore in 2006. She threw 145 innings, compiling a 13-10 record and a 2.51 earned run average. Marinac was named the MWC North Division Pitcher of the Year and followed that up by going 13-10 again in 2007. She threw 138.1 innings with a 2.63 ERA and was again named to the all-conference team. "She went from being someone we used very little to being the ace," Tatro says. "She just took off in that role."

If Marinac puts together another season like the last two, she will join Sara Schye '00 and Lauren Kost '05 as the most decorated pitchers in Lawrence softball history. "I don't know if it's too strong to say there's an inferiority complex. Because of my size, I feel like I have something to prove," Marinac says. "I don't look intimidating. I am the underdog. Because of my size, I've developed a different style of pitching. I'm not there to overpower. It's more about the mental aspect of the game."





IN THE ZONE

While power pitchers have nicknames like “The Express” (Nolan Ryan) or “Big Train” (Walter Johnson), Marinac’s nickname “Cat” (short for Catherine) suits her well. Marinac is crafty — more Greg Maddux than Randy Johnson. She works the strike zone up and down, in and out, picking off corners and leaving batters holding their bat rather than swinging it. Marinac strikes out more than one batter every two innings, with 162 strikeouts in 318 innings. Tatro calls Marinac a “cerebral pitcher” who “really enjoys the scouting reports.”

Marinac believes her pitching success relies on knowing the hitters and employing the correct tactics to attack the strike zone. But she is quick to heap praise on Tatro and her catchers for her achievements. “My sophomore year, a lot of that was Loni,” says Marinac, referring to all-conference catcher Loni Philbrick-Linzmeier ’05. “And (Tatro) is phenomenal about calling the game. I think she gives me too much credit. Coach has so much confidence in me and my abilities. I don’t know if I could have been as successful at another team or at another school. “It makes it a lot more fun and exciting for me – to be more about finesse than power.” ■

UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

Catherine Marinac ’08 has more options than a starving man at a buffet table. The senior from St. Paul, Minn., is a biology major with an interdisciplinary in chemistry, but she isn’t quite sure where her Lawrence University experience will lead. Marinac could end up doing research or working for a global health organization or teaching. While she’s just not sure where life will take her, she believes Lawrence has given her the necessary tools.

A three-time National Fastpitch Coaches Association Academic All-American, Marinac sports a 3.9 grade point average and started as a chemistry major. She took a biology class and changed her focus. Marinac, who will take the MCATs next August, is looking to earn her M.D. and her master’s degree in public health.

“I could use that degree in a global health program,” says Marinac, who is currently studying Spanish, just in case she needs it somewhere down the road.

“That’s why I’m taking a year or two off. There are so many things I could do with this degree I need to figure out what I want to do.”

A Rhodes Scholar candidate, Marinac took another look at her life path after being awarded a National Institute of Health undergraduate research fellowship at the Mayo Clinic Graduate School in summer 2007. She spent the summer investigating a fungus that causes pneumonia in immuno-compromised individuals, such as people with AIDS. Marinac will present her research to the American Thoracic Society’s International Conference in Toronto in late May.

“That really changed my career goal,” says Marinac, who is deeply interested in infectious disease research in a clinical setting. “That got me into biology and molecular biology.”

Marinac, who won the Midwest Conference’s Ruth Peterson Award for being the multi-sport junior with the highest grade point average in the league, also is working in an independent study project in neuroimmunology with associate professor of chemistry Dave Hall. She cites her work with professors and coaches as being one of the truly extraordinary things about Lawrence. From softball coach Kim Tatro to Hall to associate professor of biology and Raymond H. Herzog Professor of Science Beth De Stasio, and associate professor of biology Bart De Stasio, Marinac believes in the people of Lawrence. “I feel like my professors and the faculty care about me as a person and look out for what’s best for me,” she says.

Below: Lawrence's Sarah Ehlinger (17) splits a group of Knox College defenders during the match in Appleton on Oct. 28, 2007. Ehlinger scored three goals for her second hat trick of the season and picked up an assist in Lawrence's 9-0 victory.



FOOTBALL

The season ended on a down note, as Lawrence dropped its final two games to finish the campaign at 4-6. After starting 0-3, the Vikings ripped off three wins in their next four games. Lawrence won three straight, beating Knox College (51-20), Beloit College (44-19), and Carroll College (27-14). The victory over Carroll was Lawrence's third consecutive win in the Fall Festival game. Six Vikings, led by **Derek Micke '09** and **Matt Frelich '10**, were named to the All-Midwest Conference (MWC) team. Micke and Frelich, who blocked a school-record four kicks in 2007, were both chosen for the second team. **Sam Laes '10** was named to the D3football.com national team of the week for his performance in the victory over Knox. Laes recorded six tackles, including five solo, intercepted a pass, recovered a fumble, and recorded a pass breakup. He also scored his first collegiate touchdown on a fake punt.

MEN'S SOCCER

For the second consecutive season, the Vikings finished tied for fourth place in the Midwest Conference standings and missed out on a spot in the MWC Tournament after losing a tiebreaker with Beloit College. The Vikings finished 7-9-1 overall and 4-4-1 in league play. Defender **Ryan Pikna '08** was named to the all-conference first team for the first time in his career. **Joe Sluhoski '08**, **Nate Reynolds '08**, and **Nico Walker '10** were all chosen for the second team. Pikna earned the distinction of being chosen for the all-conference team three times at three different positions, forward, midfielder, and defender.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

An influx of new faces, led by forward **Sarah Ehlinger '11**, helped the Vikings improve in 2007. Playing a tough schedule, the Vikings finished 5-10-1 and 3-5-1 in Midwest Conference play. Ehlinger was Lawrence's lone selection to the all-conference

The Lawrence University Department of Athletics is accepting nominations for its Intercollegiate Athletic Hall of Fame. To nominate an athlete, please provide the athlete's year of graduation and the sports in which they participated.

Please send nominations to Sports Information Director Joe Vanden Acker at sportsinfo@lawrence.edu or to Lawrence University, Sports Information Office, P.O. Box 599, Appleton, WI, 54912-0599.

The 2008 Hall of Fame class will be announced in the fall edition of *Lawrence Today*.

team after scoring 12 goals and recording two assists for 26 points. She recorded hat tricks against Knox College and Ripon College, which hasn't beaten Lawrence in its last 10 tries.

CROSS COUNTRY

Joy Manweiler '08 earned All-Midwest Conference honors for the third time in her career by finishing 20th at the league championships. She covered the 5,000-meter course at Illinois College in 20:14.46. She led the Lawrence women to a sixth-place finish in the team standings. The Lawrence men were ninth in the team standings and were paced by **David Golub '11**, who finished 47th in 29:05.73 in the 8,000-meter race.

VOLLEYBALL

Kelly Mulcahy '08 was chosen for the All-Midwest Conference team for the fourth consecutive season. One of the most decorated players in school history, Mulcahy is only the second Viking to record 1,000 kills and 1,000 digs. She finished third on the career list with 1,355 kills and second at 3.39 kills per game. Mulcahy, who holds the school match record with 29 kills, also finished fifth with 1,081 career digs. The Vikings finished the season with a 7-20 record and went 2-7 in league play.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Emma Kent '09 turned in another fine season as she picked up a pair of second-place finishes at the Midwest Conference Championships. Kent, who had a team-best 13-7 record in singles, took second place at the league championships at No. 6 singles. She teamed with **Emily Dalton '09** to take second at No. 3 doubles. The other highlight for the Vikings was a consolation title for **Hannah McCarthy '09** at No. 1 singles. Lawrence had a 5-12 dual match record on the season and finished sixth in the team standings.

GOLF

The golf team played in three fall events and recorded its best finish of the season, fourth place, at the Lawrence Fall Classic at Eagle Creek Golf Club.

Adam Ferguson '10 had the top individual finish for the Vikings, taking second at the Lawrence Fall Classic. He also had a team-best 76.0 stroke average for the three fall events.