

Three Lancaster High School Soccer Players to continue playing in college

Three Lancaster High School soccer players will continue their playing career at the college level. Max Penebaker, Ryan Sabol, and Zack Smith will all play soccer while attending college next year.

Max Penebaker will continue his playing career at Rio Grande University. Penebaker played forward at Lancaster High School. Penebaker was a three year letterman for Lancaster. He was an integral part of the 2008 team that went 11-6-2 and won a Sectional Championship for only the third time in school history. Penebaker scored the winning goal in the Sectional Championship game, a 1-0 victory over Tri-Valley. For his Career Penebaker is 6th in goals scored in a single season with 13 in 2007. He is 4th in career goals with 24. Penebaker also earned 2nd Team All-OCC for the 2007 season. Penebaker was an honor roll student at LHS and participated in Singing Gales. Penebaker plays his club soccer for Pride of Canal Winchester.

Rio Grande University has been a traditional NAIA power under head coach Scott Morrissey. Rio has had a winning record every year since 1994. They were A.M.C. Conference Champions from 2000 to 2006. The Red Storm has been in the top 5 of NAIA rankings at the end of each season since 2001. Rio was crowned NAIA National Champions in 2003. Rio ended the 2008 season with a record of 19-4-1 and advanced to a second-ever NAIA National Championship game, losing to Bethel (TN) College, 2-1 in overtime.

Ryan Sabol will continue his playing career at Ohio Northern University. Sabol played central midfield for the Gales. Sabol scored 4 goals for the Gales in 2008. Two of the four goals Sabol scored were game winning goals; a 2-1 win over Hamilton Township and a 1-0 victory over Teays Valley. Sabol also recorded an assist on the game winning goal in the Sectional Championship game a 1-0 result over Tri-Valley. Sabol was 4 year letterman in soccer. He played three years at Lancaster Fisher Catholic High School and his senior year at Lancaster High School. Sabol was a team captain while at Fisher. He led Fisher to a Mid State League Cardinal Division Co-championship. This was the first league championship in school history. Sabol was First Team All-Mid State League. Sabol plays club soccer for Worthington Crew Jr's Gold. They are ranked 5th in Ohio South and 51st nationally.

Sabol received the National Latin Exam Magnae Cum Laude award. He was an honor roll student at Fisher Catholic and Lancaster High School. Sabol has participated in numerous community service projects. He was a member of St. Mary Parish - Alter Server and Eucharistic Minister. He is a member of Knights of Columbus. Sabol volunteers at Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Fairfield County - participates in the Elementary School Mentoring Program. Sabol also received "Match of the Month" award for his work with his "Little Brother". Sabol's team for mentoring is the longest running mentoring team, as they've been together now for two school years.

Ohio Northern has advanced to the NCAA Division III tournament two of the past three seasons. Ohio Northern won the OAC Tournament title and reached the Elite 8 of the NCAA III Tournament in 2008. Ohio Northern has been ranked nationally in 2000, 2002 and 2006, including a final ranking of 20th in 2006. The Polar Bears have reached the OAC Tournament seven times in the last 10 seasons.

Zack Smith will continue his playing career at Wittenberg University. Smith was a three year starter at the goalkeeper position for Lancaster. Smith led the Gales to 24 wins over the 3 years. Zack posted 2 straight shutouts to lead the Gales to a Sectional Title in 2008. The Sectional Title was only the third in school history. The Gales 2008 record of 11-6-2 is the second most wins in a season in school history. Smith ranks among the best goalkeepers in Lancaster soccer history. Smith is the record holder for Most Shutouts in a Season with 8 for the 2008 season. Smith allowed 26 goals during the 2008 season. This total ranks 4th in school history for Goals Allowed in a Season. He is 3rd in Goals Against Average with 1.37 for the 2008 season. In 2007 Smith was 3rd Team All-OCC. Smith plays club soccer for Team Ohio FC of Dublin.

Wittenberg has made four appearances in the NCAA Division III tournament since 1991. Wittenberg qualified for the NCAA Division III tournament in 2008. The 2008 Tigers put together the best season in program history, taking a final record of 16-4-1. The Tigers have put together a .500 record or better every year from 1987 through 2001. Wittenberg has had 18 Winning Season in the last 20 years. The Tigers have recorded 643 All-Time Victories.