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# PAWPRINTS

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ATHLETICS WEBSITE



## VILLANOVA SWIMMER KATIE SOSNOWSKI BEAT THE ODDS

*AFTER A NEAR FATAL ACCIDENT, SOSNOWSKI SWIMS IN FINAL MEET OF SEASON*

Villanova University swimmer Katie Sosnowski (Blue Bell, Pa./ Methacton High School) was on top of the world in the spring of 1997. She had just wrapped up a sophomore season that saw her earn Big East Championship finals appearances in the 100 and 200 yard breaststroke events and qualify for the NCAA Championships in the 200 breaststroke. She even had hopes and dreams of competing in the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia. Then came April 27, 1997. Sosnowski was in a severe motor vehicle accident from which she sustained massive head injuries as well as brain damage. Doctors did not think she would live let alone swim again. But Sosnowski has beaten all the odds. She is back at Villanova, back in the swimming pool, and thanks to permission by the NCAA - able to compete in one final competitive meet as the Wildcats take on St. John's in the team's final home meet of the 2001-2002 season on Friday, February 1 at the Villanova Swim Center.

Sosnowski signed a letter of intent in the spring of 1995 to swim at Villanova University following an outstanding prep career at Methacton High School. She was a three-time All-American at Methacton, qualified for senior nationals and was the 1994 state champion in both the 200 yard individual medley and the 100 yard breaststroke.

As a freshman on the Main Line in 1995-96, Sosnowski showed her tremendous potential as she set a new Villanova pool record in the 100 yard breaststroke. One season later as a sophomore, she began making a name for herself in the Big East as well as on the national scene. Sosnowski made the 1997 Big East finals in both the 100 and 200 yard breaststroke events, finishing fourth in both events. She also helped lead the Wildcats' 400 yard medley relay team to a Big East Championship. Her top time in the 200 yard breaststroke was good enough to qualify her for the 1997 NCAA Championships.

Just one month after the NCAA Championships, on April 27, 1997, the life of Villanova's young superstar was nearly taken from her. Sosnowski was driving her car on a Worcester Township country road. A car in front of her automobile struck a telephone pole, causing it to break and fall onto her car, piercing the car's windshield and injuring Sosnowski.

Sosnowski sustained massive head injuries including a fracture of her skull and multiple fractures of her face, as well as extensive brain damage. She was medically evacuated to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania where she was in a coma and underwent emergency brain surgery. She was hospitalized for seven weeks at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, during which time she had a number of post-operative complications including a CSF leak that required a second brain surgery.

She was eventually transferred to Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital where she began her lengthy road to recovery - a road that brought with it hard work, heartache, and a number of reconstructive surgeries.

In the fall of 1997, Sosnowski took her first course at Villanova since the accident. She began taking two courses a semester (several having to do with criminal justice and sports) until the fall of 2000 when she returned as a full-time student. She will complete her coursework and graduate in May of 2002. Sosnowski also increased her physical training from private physical therapy and training to a training regimen that included work on a stationary bike,



*Wildcat swimmer swims in her first meet since a near fatal car accident almost ended her life in the spring of 1997.*

treadmill, weights and even swimming.

Looking to follow her dream of continuing her competitive swimming, she petitioned the NCAA for permission to train with the Villanova team and participate in meet competition. The NCAA granted her extended eligibility and she will compete in the Wildcats' final meet of the season on Friday, February 1 against St. John's at 6:00 p.m. at the Villanova Swim Center.

So, in what was a tremendous display of heart and courage, Villanova senior swimmer Katie Sosnowski swam competitively in the Wildcats' final home meet of the 2001-02 season versus St. John's at the Villanova Swim Center, marking her first competition since a near fatal car accident almost took her life on April 27, 1997. Sosnowski competed in three events on the night - the 200 yard medley relay, the 100 yard breaststroke and the 200 yard breaststroke. She helped her relay squad to a third place finish (1:57.55) in the 200 medley relay, and also placed seventh in the 100 yard breaststroke (1:17.03) and finished fifth out of six competitors in the 200 yard breaststroke (2:44.22).

Villanova won the meet on the women's side, defeating St. John's by the score of 165-84. The Wildcat men fell to the Red Storm by the score of 145-97.

In other meet action, Villanova junior Maddy Crippen set a new pool record in the 1,000 yard freestyle crossing the finish line in a time of 10:00.52. In addition to winning the 1,000 free, Crippen also took the 200 yard breaststroke in 2:19.68.

Other Wildcat winners in women's competition were Becky Koch in the 200 freestyle (1:52.76), 500 freestyle (5:00.15) and 100 fly (58.58), Tori Delollo in the 100 backstroke (59.15) and 200 backstroke (2:06.00), Brooke Corby in the 100 breaststroke (1:06.56), Nichole Werger in the 50 freestyle (24.67) and 100 freestyle (54.06), and Ashley Ellis in the 200 fly (2:08.60).

In men's competition, Adam Walchak won the 200 fly (1:56.66) and Jared Rummel finished first in the 200 individual medley (2:02.10).

*By Jonathan Gust,  
Athletics Media Relations*



# PAWPRINTS

## THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR ATHLETICS

HONORING INDIVIDUAL STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH A GPA OF 3.5 OR ABOVE FOR THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE FALL 2001 SEMESTER

### BASEBALL

Michael Duncan, Jr  
Greg Fater, Sr  
Chris Graziano, Jr  
Bobby Grzenda, Sr

### BASKETBALL

Rebecca Earl, Fr  
Tom Grace, So  
Jeanine Johnson, Jr  
Courtney Mix, So

### FIELD HOCKEY

Jennifer Banzhof, Sr  
Brooke Bergmann, Sr  
Claire Grabowski, Sr  
Colleen Helms, So  
Krissy Malchitsky, Sr

### FOOTBALL

Greg Dineen, Sr  
Heath Evans, Fr  
Brett Gordon, Sr  
Joe Heinmiller, Fr  
Adam James, Fr  
Joe Keating, Sr  
Matt Krebs, Fr  
Mark Laber, Sr  
Jared Maples, So  
Christian Matthews, Jr  
Brian Pordon, Sr  
Christian Ramirez, Jr  
Mike Roseman, So  
Jason Saks, Fr  
Dan Silva, So

### GOLF

Kevin Foster, Fr  
David Nettleton, Fr

### LACROSSE

Caitlin Cocks, Jr  
Sarah DePeters, Sr  
Elizabeth Firth, Jr  
Jane Stuart, Sr  
Cory Williams, Fr

### ROWING

Sarah Callahan, Fr  
Chrissy Cericola, Sr  
Suzanna Cole, Sr  
Danielle Cunningham, Fr  
Erica Delery, Jr  
Lyndsie Dickerson, Fr  
Callen Fishman, Fr  
Laura Klepper, Fr  
Michelle Lapp, Fr  
Stefanie Laughlin, Sr  
Dana Lilli, Fr  
Nora Lucchi, Fr  
Ann Mitchell, So  
Juliet Mazer-Schmidt, Fr

### TEAMS WITH A GPA OF 3.0 AND ABOVE FOR THE FALL 2001 SEMESTER

WOMEN'S TENNIS 3.345

ROWING 3.218

VOLLEYBALL 3.190

WOMEN'S T&F/CC 3.15

MEN'S TENNIS 3.146

WOMEN'S SOCCER 3.133

WOMEN'S LACROSSE 3.084

FIELD HOCKEY 3.034

WATER POLO 3.025

Annsley Miller, Fr  
Erin O'Brien, Sr  
Kelly Pickhaver, Jr  
Sara Pleasant, Fr  
Mary Pullum, Sr  
Paola Salinas, Fr  
Ashley Slepicka, Fr  
Kathleen Spencer, Fr

### SOCCER

Jennifer Carrigan, Jr  
Tom DeLuca, So  
Jill DiBerardino, Sr  
Laura Johnson, Fr  
Stephen Leaman, Jr  
Carolyn Morrell, Jr

Dyane Noonan, Sr

### SOFTBALL

Sara Carlson, Sr  
Kristen Haynes, Fr

### SWIMMING & DIVING

Brooke Corby, Sr  
Ryan Costella, So  
Charysse Johnston, Fr  
Pete Klimas  
Michael Phinney, Fr  
Bill Serencsits, Fr  
Liz Shields, Fr

### TENNIS

Ryan Devine, Jr  
Sara Fabrizio, Sr  
Liz Farrell, Sr  
Jessie Rybacki, So  
John Toppel, So  
Erica Walter, So  
Jen Zick, Jr

### TRACK & FIELD/CC

Andrew Blauch, Fr  
Mark Blattner, Sr  
Michael Botti, So  
Jocelyn Fontaine, Jr  
Antoine Johnson, Sr  
Carre Joyce, So  
Alison Kobel, Jr  
Mike Maggio, Jr  
Dan Marzluff, So  
Rebecca Mitchell, So  
Jonathan Scaccia, Sr  
Nick Shunda, Sr  
Kirsty Smith, Fr  
Colleen Taylor, Fr

### VOLLEYBALL

Yvonne Pierpont, Jr

### WATER POLO

Chesed Ceniserov, Fr  
Aimee, Corsiglia, Fr  
Jennifer Rosick, So



## MEN'S BASKETBALL SHOOTS HOOPS AT DON GUANELLA

TEAM VISITS AS PART OF ATHLETICS STUDENT SERVICES' COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM



On Thursday, January 10, 2002, the Villanova men's basketball team took their show on the road to Don Guanella, a school for mentally handicapped boys and young men in Springfield, Pennsylvania. Coach Jay Wright and his team interacted with the students by shooting around, contests, slam dunks and more. They brought out the best in everyone there by just being their charismatic selves.



Here's what some of the staff had to say about the visit to Don Guanella:



"I really enjoy going back there each year to interact with the kids and see how much they've grown." Johnny Holley, Graduate Assistant



"It was a very rewarding and uplifting experience, and it helped keep things in perspective." Billy Lange, Coordinator of Basketball Operations

"I really enjoyed meeting the kids. They had tremendous spirit and energy. . . . I know that it touched many of us there. I look forward to going back there again!" Brett Gunning, Assistant Coach



# PAWPRINTS

## **STUDENT SERVICES REWARDED FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

*VILLANOVA PRESENTED AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS  
OFF THE PLAYING FIELD*

The Villanova University Athletics Department has been selected as a recipient of an award for Community Service and Outreach because of our outstanding achievements during the past year.

This award will be presented during the National Consortium for Academics and Sports annual meeting from February 11th through the 13th at the Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida.

Mary Anne Dowling, Associate Athletics Director for Student Services, will be there to represent the Wildcats and graciously accept the award.

Teams have traveled to take part in a clean-up at Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, help out with a

Habitat for Humanity project, visit children's hospitals in the area, play basketball at Don Guanella, read to children at Audubon Elementary School, play bingo and trick-or-treat with retirees at Dunwoody Village and much more.

Student-athletes also participate in the Pen Pal Program, contribute to Catholic Social Services through adopting a family at Thanksgiving and Christmastime, and donate their time and energy to many other programs throughout the year.

Congratulations, student-athletes, on the great accomplishments that you have achieved!

**VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
ATHLETICS STUDENT SERVICES  
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