

# Soccer In Alabama

## Alabama Soccer

University of Alabama goalkeeper **Justine Bernier** was one of four goalkeepers called into training camp with the Canadian Women's National Team in preparation for two games against the USA. She was one of seven current or former Vancouver Whitecaps selected by new Canadian WNT coach **John Herdman**. **Merritt Mathis** grew up in Birmingham with the goal of playing collegiate soccer for the UNC Tar Heels. She did that for two years, playing in 39 matches, mostly in a reserve role. Wanting to play more, she transferred to Texas A&M, where she is now a senior. Early this fall at the Duke Nike Classic the Aggies, down 3-1, rallied for three straight goals to beat the Tar Heels 4-3. Mathis assisted on two of those goals. It was only the second time in UNC history that the Tar Heels gave up three consecutive goals. With a hat trick in a 6-1 win over Huntingdon College, Birmingham Southern senior forward **Alicia Plotky**



Merritt Mathis

(Lawrenceville, GA) became the program's all-time points leader with 100, as well as the only program in program history to reach 100 career points. Samford opened its Southern Conference season amidst wet and rainy conditions at Rudd Field with a 1-1 draw against Elon. Samford's goal came from senior **Sarah Wilkinson** (Eules, TX) in the first half. University of South Alabama junior forward **Lauren Marsh** (Fairhope, Ala.) picked up two goals, including the game-winner to give the Jaguars a 3-0 victory over Sun Belt Conference foe Louisiana at Lafayette. South Alabama has opened its season 8-1-1. Troy claimed its first Sun Belt Conference victory over the University of Louisiana Monroe with a 4-0 victory at home. Troy (6-3-1) got goals from **Ruth Sutcliffe** and **Chelsey Williams**. Birmingham Southern men defeated Huntingdon College 1-0 to win its third straight Kyle Rote Jr. Invitational title. **Garner Shivers** (Oxford, MS) scored the winning goal in the second half of the game. The University of Alabama Birmingham topped Ole Miss, 4-2, in the final non-conference game of the year. The Blazers improved to 3-5, while the Rebels dropped to 4-3-1. Junior **Emma Smith** had two goals in the game.

## Organizers Hoping For A Sellout The College Cup Clock Ticks In Hoover

By **Adam Minichino**  
Tick, tick, tick.  
**Mike Getman** knows it is less than three months before the city of Hoover, the state of Alabama, the Alabama Sports Foundation, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham will take center stage in playing host to the Men's College Cup.

The veteran coach knows a lot of time and effort already has been invested and that a lot more needs to be done to ensure the event Dec. 9 and 11 at Regions Park in Hoover, Ala., will be a success.

The progress to date suggests Getman and organizers are on track.

According to **Brenton Howard**, event manager for the Alabama Sports Foundation, roughly 40 percent of the tickets for the Men's College Cup have been sold.

"I fully expect the venue to be sold out prior to the event," Howard said. "We are encouraged by those numbers and have yet to fully implement our marketing plan."

"Our goal is to sell out the stadium. This means we should expect between 12,000 and 13,000."

Numbers like that would be a welcome reward for Getman and everyone involved. Last year, a crowd of 9,672 at Harder Stadium in Santa Barbara, Calif., watched the University of Akron beat Louisville 1-0 to win the national title.

The crowd was the largest to watch the championship game since 2004.

when a crowd of 13,601 watched Indiana beat UC Santa Barbara in penalty kicks in Carson, Calif. But you have to go back to 1999 and 2000 to find another year when the Men's College Cup attracted a crowd of more than 10,000.

Getman realizes that and the difficulty of organizing an event that often is affected by the weather. Still, he said there have been few "challenges" in building support and momentum at his school, in his state, and in the region for this unique event.

"A lot of things go into making for a great national championship, and having a the stadium full is one of the



UAB's Mike Getman

key elements to that, so we are well on our way to having that accomplished," Getman said. "If we have 13,000 quiet people it is not as exciting. We want it to be a full stadium and people to be enthusiastic about the sports and the teams there."

Getman hopes he and his players can do their part. Through Sept. 16, UAB is 4-0-2 after its most recent match, a 2-1 victory against then-#20 Virginia Commonwealth. He would love to have his team represent Conference USA and the South in the sport's marquee event, but he knows Men's College Cup organizers won't be able to bank on the fact that they will have a hometown team to boost attendance figures.

Regardless of whether his team is there, Getman is confident UAB, the city of Hoover, the state of Alabama, and soccer fans throughout the region and the nation will come together to make the event a hit.

At the school, Getman will look to the UAB Hooligans and the Magic City Firm, two student-based groups that support the UAB

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## Frierson Sets New Auburn Record For Career Assists

**Katy Frierson** had three assists, **Tatiana Coleman** had two and **Julie King** scored the game-winning goal for the fourth time in her career as the #22 Auburn Tigers opened SEC play with a 4-1 win over Kentucky.

The win extended Auburn's unbeaten streak to eight games (7-1-1), while the Wildcats dropped to 7-2-0 overall.

Frierson became Auburn's all-time career assists leader with her assist on **Jessica Rightmer's** goal in the 22nd minute, and then continued to pile on the points.

The senior midfielder finished the game with 37 career assists and 85 career points.

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## Former Mobile Coach Selected To NAIA Hall Of Fame

It took awhile, but **Peter Fuller** is finally back home in New England. Last spring he resigned as men's soccer coach at the University of Mobile, after 16 seasons, to accept a position with the New England Revolution.

Fuller, a native of Sudbury, Mass., is training the Revs' reserve team and assisting with first-team training and scouting. The move to the Revolution has reunited him with his former Mobile assistant coach and player, **Remi Roy**, who is the Revs' goalkeeper coach.

Fuller, 51, was recently se-

lected for induction into the NAIA Men's Soccer Hall of Fame. Fuller posted a 219-97-11 record at Mobile, taking 12 teams to the national tournament and winning the 2002 national championship. His overall college record was 311-115-21, including leading Belhaven University (Mississippi) to the 1991 national title.

After a stellar prep career, Fuller played collegiate soccer at Houghton College (NY) where he earned NAIA All-America recognition. Later, he was the first player picked in the American Soccer League draft by the New York Eagles. He also played professionally with the Rochester Flash, Memphis Americans, Sports Life and Jackson Rockets.



Peter Fuller

"I'm very excited to return home to New England and coach where my playing career began," Fuller said at the time he accepted the New England offer, "and I'm grateful for the Revolution allowing me to finish the academic year at Mobile before coming here."

Fuller drew high praise from the NAIA Hall of Fame selection committee, which said that "Fuller is a tremendous ambassador for the University of Mobile and the NAIA, and has served on many (NAIA) committees as well as been very involved with the Olympic Development Program.

"Competitive success, community involvement, alumni relationships and the consistent and constant promotion of the sport runs throughout Fuller's career."

The Hall of Fame induction is scheduled for Nov. 27 in Orange Beach, Ala., during the 2011 NAIA National Championships.

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