The start of the 2010-11 academic year has been filled with success on the playing field, in the classroom and in the community.

Southern Connecticut's fall squads combined to defeat more than 60-percent of its opponents. The men's soccer team was as ranked as high as No. 18 nationally and reached the NCAA Tournament for the 32nd time in program history, while the football squad posted its 10th straight winning campaign.

The women's soccer team finished with eight wins and was in contention for a NCAA Tournament berth into the final week of the year. The volleyball team posted its third straight winning season and the field hockey squad qualified for the Northeast-10 Conference tournament for the third year in a row. The men's and women's cross country squads both placed third at the NCAA Regionals and just missed out on team berths at the NCAA Championships.

The winter season is officially underway with the men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's basketball and men's and women's indoor track and field teams in full swing.

Junior captain Paul Templeton was named the 2010 Northeast-10 Conference Defensive Player of the Year.

Dear Owl Club Members:

The 2010-11 academic year is off to a fine start. It's hard to believe that our fall season is already in the books and the winter season is underway. Success was a constant across the board on the playing fields during the fall campaign.

Included among the highlights was our football program's nationally televised victory over American International in a game at Jess Dow Field in late September. The game was aired live on the CBS College Sports Network (see related story, page 2).

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our entire campus community for their contributions both leading up to the game and on gameday. The gameday atmosphere was captivating and provided a truly special experience for our student-athletes and coaches. Looking up at a sea of fans that evening, mostly clad in blue and white, was quite a sight to behold.

I also want to extend my congratulations to the men's soccer program, who maintained its presence on the national stage in reaching the NCAA Tournament for the 32nd time in program history.

On the individual front, kudos go out to juniors Alasia Griebel of the women's cross country team and Michelle Desmarais of the women's soccer team. Griebel qualified for the NCAA National Championships after posting the highest individual regional finish in program history. Desmarais, who carries a 3.95 cumulative grade point average, was recognized as an Academic All-District selection by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) for her academic success.

Community engagement continues to be the forefront of a comprehensive student-athlete experience. Our student-athletes have participated in a wide range of events and volunteered nearly 1,500 hours so far this semester. Furthermore, we have created new partnerships with several area organizations, including the New Haven YMCA Youth Center and the Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy.

Thanks for your continued support of Owls' athletics. I hope to see you at an upcoming home game.

Until then, I wish you and your families a happy and healthy holiday season and start to the new year.

Go Owls!

Patricia D. Nicol
Director of Athletics
Track and Field Programs Announce Creation Of ‘James Barber/Wilton Wright’ Alumni Meet

The Southern Connecticut State University men’s and women’s track and field programs have announced the formation of the James Barber and Wilton Wright SCSU Alumni Track Meet. This year’s event took place on Dec. 10. The announcement was made by current coaches Chris Covert and John Wallin.

Barber was the long time women’s coach for the Owls, where he mentored numerous All-Americans. In 2002, he served as the head coach of the USA women’s team versus Great Britain and Russia, as well as the head coach of the USA Women at the IAAF World Cup competition.

He is one of the founders of the U.S. Track Coaches Association and was named USTCA Indoor Regional Coach of the Year. While coaching at SCSU, Barber was named 2005 Northeast-10 Women’s Outdoor Coach of the Year.

Barber was an outstanding student-athlete at Southern and was the captain of football and track teams.

Wright was affiliated with SCSU for 46 years with the men’s track and field program. He coached 100 All-Americans and a combined 24 National champions (1963-98) as head coach, and then moved over as an assistant to Jack Maloney. During the 1985 season, Wright coached 13 All-Americans, which remains in place as the single-season high to the current day.

A member of the SCSU Hall of Fame, he also served a six-year term on the NCAA Cross Country/Track and Field Rules Committee.

Football Squad Wins Nationally Televised Home Game

The Southern Connecticut State University football team jumped out to a 21-0 lead and never looked back in a 28-7 triumph over American International College in a nationally televised game on the CBS College Sports Network on Sept. 23.

The game was played in front of nearly 4,000 fans at Jess Dow Field. It was the program’s first-ever appearance on national television.

Senior running back John Wiechman tallied two touchdowns in the winning effort for the Owls.

Defensively, Samuel Johnson led the Owls with 10 tackles. Dan Lamberton also had a strong showing with six tackles and 1.5 sacks.

John Wiechman rushed for two touchdowns in the win.
Southern Connecticut State University • Owl Club Newsletter • December 2010

Patricia Nicol Named To NEICCCA Executive Committee

Patricia Nicol, Director of Athletics at Southern Connecticut State University, has been named as a member of the Executive Committee for the New England Intercollegiate Amateur Athletic Association. Nicol will serve as the Division II representative on the committee.

In her seventh year as Director of Athletics and 12th year as an athletic administrator at SCSU, Nicol has enjoyed a long affiliation with the sports of cross country and track and field. She was a multiple NCAA qualifier as a collegiate student-athlete at the University of Rhode Island. Nicol was inducted in the URI Athletic Hall of Fame in 1990 for her accomplishments as a student-athlete.

Men’s Soccer Earns 32nd NCAA Berth

The Southern Connecticut State University men’s soccer team qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the 32nd time in program history thanks to a strong 2010 campaign. The Owls finished the year with a 14-2-4 overall mark and were edged in a shootout in their second round match against Dowling.

The team ascended to a national ranking of as high as No. 18 during the course of the regular season. SCSU finished second in the Northeast-10 Conference regular season standings and also reached the semifinals of the league tournament.

Nine student-athletes received year-end honors from the Northeast-10, highlighted by the selection of junior captain Paul Templeton as the league’s Defensive Player of the Year.

Captain Victor Hernandez and the Owls reached the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

Alasia Griebel and Kieran Ramsey Named Comcast/Southern Connecticut State University November Athletes Of The Month

Juniors Alasia Griebel (Bristol, Conn.) of the women’s cross country team and Kieran Ramsey (North Hollywood, Calif.) of the men’s basketball team have been named as the Comcast/Southern Connecticut State University Athletes of the Month for November.

Griebel qualified for the NCAA Division II Women’s Cross Country Championships by virtue of her second place finish at the NCAA Regionals on Nov. 21. That finish marked the highest individual finish in program history at a regional. In the process, Griebel helped the Owls post their highest regional finish in school history. She also placed third overall at the Northeast-10 Conference Championships on Nov. 7 and collected All-Region and All-Conference accolades for her efforts during the month.

Ramsey played a pivotal role in the Owls’ resurgence (4-1 overall, 2-1 northeast-10) to start the 2010-11 season. He averaged a team-best 15.8 points and added 7.8 rebounds per contest in the month as the men’s basketball team jumped out to its best start since the 1999-2000 season. Ramsey was ranked as high as second among all northeast-10 Conference players in field goal percentage during the month. He was also named to the league’s weekly honor roll following a season-opening weekend sweep of Chestnut Hill and Bridgeport.

For the third consecutive year, Comcast is serving as the title sponsor of Southern Connecticut State University’s ‘Athlete of the Month’ recognition program. Initiated in September, 2007, the ‘Athlete of the Month’ program recognizes one female and one male student-athlete each month for demonstrated excellence on the playing field.

About Comcast Corporation

Comcast Corporation (Nasdaq: CMCSA, CMCSK) (www.comcast.com) is one of the nation’s leading providers of entertainment, information and communication products and services. With 22.9 million cable customers, 16.7 million high-speed Internet customers, and 8.4 million Comcast Digital Voice customers, Comcast is principally involved in the development, management and operation of cable systems and in the delivery of programming content.

Comcast’s content networks and investments include E! Entertainment Television, Style Network, Golf Channel, VERSUS, G4, PBS KIDS Sprout, TV One, 11 regional sports networks operated by Comcast Sports Group and Comcast Interactive Media, which develops and operates Comcast’s Internet businesses, including Comcast.net (www.comcast.net). Comcast also has a majority ownership in Comcast-Spectacor, which owns two professional sports teams, the Philadelphia 76ers NBA basketball team and the Philadelphia Flyers NHL hockey team, and a large, multipurpose arena in Philadelphia, the Wells Fargo Center, and through Global Spectrum, manages other facilities for sporting events, concerts and other events.

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Let it be known that on a chilly night in November, 2010, the formal renaissance of the Southern Connecticut State University men’s basketball program was on display for all to see inside an electric Moore Field House.

Riding the heels of two non-conference wins to open the 2010-11 season, the Owls hosted LeMoyne College. It was both the home opener and the Northeast-10 Conference opener for Southern Connecticut.

Last season, LeMoyne defeated the Owls twice and also gained national recognition with an exhibition victory over Big East member Syracuse. Last season, Southern Connecticut won a total of only two games.

This, however, is a new year for the Owls. There’s a new head coach, a new group of student-athletes, and most importantly, a new direction for achieving success on the court, in the classroom and in the community.

Head coach Michael Donnelly, a lifelong Connecticut native, took over at the top of the Owls’ perch in May after building the nearby Post University program into a formidable regional presence during a seven-year run.

On this particular November evening, Donnelly’s first on the home bench at Moore Field House, there was something different right from the start – in a positive way.

The atmosphere inside the arena was boisterous and provided a true home-court advantage. The attendance for the evening was the best single-game turnout in years.

And the team on the court practically led the contest from start to finish, eventually winning by 18 points to remain undefeated.

In all, the Owls ended up winning their first four games of the season, the team’s best start in more than a decade.

Practically overnight, there is a sense of optimism surrounding the Owls that has a campus excited about a program that had endured its share of recent struggles.

The Owls have jumped out to a 7-1 start, including a dramatic come-from-behind win at perennial league power Saint Rose in which they trailed by 22 points with 9:44 remaining in regulation. SCSU won the game at the buzzer on a running jumper by freshman Greg Langston. As an encore, the Owls pulled out a thrilling double-overtime triumph over Assumption at Moore Field House.

Donnelly, though, believed the seeds were planted for a turnaround during the fall.

“We had a really good preseason,” he said. “It started with the first team meeting back on Sept. 1. We didn’t have one bad day in my opinion with our conditioning, our weight training or our individual sessions. Everyone conformed
immediately with the expectations and demands and that set the tone. There was zero resistance for what we were doing. That positive frame of mind carried over into (team) practice.”

One of Donnelly’s immediate tasks was blending together a group of six returners with eight newcomers, while also teaching the entire group a new system in the process. Furthermore, within the larger group were a wide array of subsets, ranging from four-year members to Division II transfers to Junior College transfers to true freshmen – and more in between.

However, it’s a cast that connected almost immediately and is quickly changing the culture around the program.

“The chemistry has been great,” Donnelly said. “I noticed that right away…The team has shown a lot of maturity in my opinion…Everyone is taking ownership.”

“We’re trying to get them to understand that they can’t be afraid of it (success),” Donnelly said. “Don’t think that you’re getting lucky. You just have to embrace it. Right now, we are a good basketball team, there’s no way around it.”

The Owls have also made a concerted effort to engage the local community during the fall semester. The team conducted clinics at both the Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy and the New Haven YMCA Youth Center, in addition to a ‘Hoops for Hunger’ event at Moore Field House.

“We talk about it (community outreach) a lot as a team,” Donnelly said. “The guys love it. They want to do more of it. They get a lot out of it working with kids. They really have embraced that. We’re going to continue to get our name out there.”
Southern Connecticut State University • Owl Club Newsletter • December 2010

ABOUT THE SCSU OWL CLUB

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Alasia Griebel Qualifies For NCAA Women’s Cross Country Championships

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She also placed third at the Northeast-10 Conference Championships.

For her efforts, Griebel was named All-Region and All-Conference.

Owls Continue To Excel In The Community

Community outreach has remained at the forefront of the efforts of Southern Connecticut State University student-athletes and coaches during the course of the fall semester. The Owls have volunteered just over 1,500 hours since the start of the academic year.

The department has continued its partnerships with several area organizations, including the New Haven Public Schools, the American Cancer Society and the March of Dimes.

In addition, SCSU student-athletes have also been active with drives such as those benefitting the Connecticut Food Bank and our military members.

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Thirty-Four Student-Athletes Named Academic Achievement Award Winners
By The Division II Athletic Directors Association

Thirty-four student-athletes from Southern Connecticut State University were named as 2009-10 recipients of the Division II Athletics Directors Association Academic Achievement Awards presented by WeatherPORT. The Academic Achievement Award is a program that recognizes the academic accomplishments of student-athletes at the Division II level.

In order for a student-athlete to receive an Academic Achievement Award, the athletics director of the Division II institution must be a current dues paying member of the DII ADA. In addition, the student-athlete must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale, have attended a minimum of two years (four semesters) of college level work and have been an active member of an intercollegiate team during his/her last academic year.

Here’s a look at the honorees:

Nicole Burton, Women’s Soccer
Michelle Desmarais, Women’s Soccer
Jennifer Petrillo, Women’s Soccer
Amanda Burden, Women’s Swimming/Diving
Lauren Sasso, Women’s Swimming/Diving
Kayla Wainwright, Women’s Swimming/Diving
Marcia Hollingsworth, Volleyball
Sarah Houseknecht, Volleyball
Jenna Tammler, Volleyball
Broghan Miller, Volleyball
Brittany Hill, Softball
Khristle Lee, Softball
Lauren Karn, Field Hockey/Women’s Lacrosse
Elaina Heiple, Women’s Lacrosse
Marissa Ryan, Women’s Lacrosse
Ann Farrier, Field Hockey
Jennifer Peterson, Field Hockey
Laura Brustolon, Women’s Cross Country/Track
Alasia Griebel, Women’s Cross Country/Track
Alexa Banda, Gymnastics
Sarah Darst, Gymnastics
Jessica Kiback, Gymnastics
Samantha Laraway, Gymnastics
Logan Lentz, Women’s Basketball
Alex Fiola, Women’s Basketball
Paul Templeton, Men’s Soccer
Spencer Charette, Football
Bryan Dorsey, Baseball
Sam Greenberg, Baseball
Greg Malen, Baseball
Clyde Chapman, Men’s Basketball
Jason Polakowski, Men’s Track and Field
Alicia Gray, Women’s Track and Field
Ashley Bell, Women’s Track and Field

Former Owl Cathy McGuirk Recognized As A 2010 Elm City Legend

Former Southern Connecticut State University field hockey and basketball standout and longtime Branford High School field hockey coach Cathy McGuirk was recognized as a 2010 Elm City Legend on Nov. 8 at the Omni Hotel in New Haven.

This year’s Elm City Legends also included Scott Burrell (former NBA World Champion and collegiate player at the University of Connecticut), Deborah Chin (Director of Athletics, University of New Haven), Robert DeMayo (North Haven High School baseball coach) and Dr. Richard Diana (played professional with Miami Dolphins, two-sport standout in football and baseball at Yale).

A 2009 inductee into the Connecticut Field Hockey Hall of Fame, McGuirk has served as the head coach at Branford High School for more than three decades. During that time, she has led the Hornets to 34 straight state tournament appearances. She is a two-time Connecticut Field Hockey Coaches Association Coach of the Year and was named Region I Coach of the Year by the National High School Coaches Association in 1993.

McGuirk is also a member of the Southern Connecticut State University Alumni Athletic Hall of Fame, as she was inducted in 1995.
SCSU Honors Wounded Warriors at Home Football Finale

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT OWL CLUB

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