

Above: (l. to r.) Laura Hernandez '13, Maricela Padilla '13 and Angelica Figueroa '12 at soccer practice with assistant coach Carmen Padilla '07.

(Left Photo): Angelica Figueroa '12 (left) and Maricela Padilla '13 (right) gain valuable experience playing on the Mexican National Soccer Team, and Laura Hernandez '13 (center) on the Columbian National Team, which they bring to their Pacific soccer careers.

Soccer's International Flavor

BY JOYCE MCCALLISTER

Pacific's women's soccer team is young — seven of 11 starters are freshmen and sophomores — and has three spectacular treasures.

Angelica (known as “Gelly” on the field) Figueroa '12 and Maricela (Cela) Padilla '13 aren't only Tigers, they also play for the Mexican national team, and their *comarada*, Laura Hernandez '13, holds dual citizenship with Columbia and is a member of that national team.

Carmen Padilla '07 paved this path when she played seven years for the Mexican National Team, including all four years she was at Pacific. She is now an assistant coach for the Tigers working with head coach Keith Coleman and his wife, Michelle Coleman.

As a student, Padilla scheduled her spring semester classes in the first part of the week and then played for the Mexican National Team the latter part of the week. Because of Pacific's support, she was also an Academic All-American during her University career and became the first in her family to graduate college.

Is that why little sister Cela, who has played soccer since she was six, is here now?

“I tried to stay out of her whole situation, and let her decide,” Padilla said. “Of course, I had such a good experience here. It's a wonderful opportunity for her.”

Figueroa was one of Soccer Buzz magazine's Top-200 Recruits, one of only three freshmen chosen in the Big West. She joined the Mexican National Team in 2007 and made her playing debut in fall 2008, taking part in Olympic qualifying play.

Playing for a national team, one that competes in the World Cup and the Olympics, isn't an option for most American players. “There are 300 schools in Division 1 alone,” Keith Coleman pointed out, and only 22 players are chosen. So if a player has dual citizenship with another country, it's a tremendous opportunity for international competition.

Hernandez grew up in Washington state. She played for Columbia's 17-and-under national team the spring semester of her senior year in high school.

When she returned to the U.S., it was her mother who made contact with Pacific. “All these girls had higher profile options,” Coleman said, “and we're pleased they decided to become Tigers.”

So what's different about playing for a national team? “The technical practices,” Cela Padilla explained. They focus in footwork, where college teams focus on physical training and tactics. “It's more of a passing game,” Figueroa said about playing internationally.

All three said the national team experience helps them focus more thoroughly on soccer. At Pacific, there are also the academic requirements, which of course is why they have all chosen college.

“This team has a lot of potential to grow,” Michelle Coleman said. “We are top contenders this year.”

Figueroa has already garnered her first Big West Player of the Week honor for the week of August 30, and at the end of September she and Cela Padilla were tied for second in the Big West for overall scoring.

Athletics Hall of Fame 2009

Pacific's Hall of Fame added five individual athletes and a team at ceremonies held last spring at Alex G. Spanos Center.



Charlotte Johansson Erickson '95, Volleyball 1991–94: Earned all-conference honors four times, all-district/region honors three times, was named conference player of the week twice and was Academic All-American from 1992–94. She holds many Pacific records.



Todd Hosmer '95, Water Polo and Swimming, 1989–94: Led the Tigers to a first-ever appearance in the NCAA Water Polo Tournament in the 1993 season, and scored 64 goals over the course of that season, an average of 2.61 goals per game. He earned All-American honors three times in water polo. He earned Big West Swimmer of the Year honors in 1992, and finished in the top 10 at the Big West Conference in three different events during the 1993–94 season.



Bill Sandeman '65, Football and Swimming, 1961–64: Played for the Tigers football team from 1962–64 followed by an eight-year career in the National Football League, playing for the Dallas Cowboys, New Orleans Saints and the Atlanta Falcons, where he was an offensive starter. He also swam for the Tigers from 1961–63.

Howard Stokes '51, Track, 1949–50:

Set the fastest time in the country at a 1949 AAU meet, running the low hurdles in 23.1 seconds. His largest contribution to Pacific came after graduation when he was the first president of the Tiger Track Club, an organization of downtown boosters committed to strengthening the university's sports through scholarships and financial assistance.

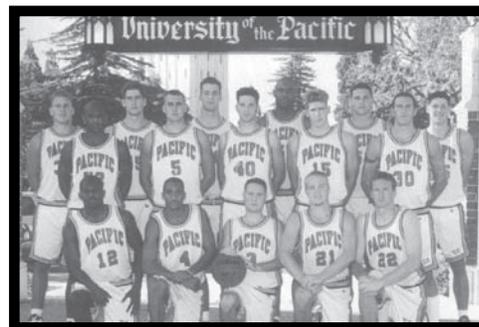


Fred Van Dyke '41, Swimming,

1938–39: Before he graduated in 1941, Van Dyke held six backstroke records and nine Pacific Athletic Association records. He held a world record for 24 hours. He had a spot on the U.S. team in contention for the Olympics. In 1978, he resumed swimming in the Masters class, breaking world records in 50-meter backstroke twice and in 50-meter butterfly.



1996–97 Men's Basketball Team: Pacific followed a season-opening loss with 16 straight wins, including seven in a row in Big West Conference play, finishing the season 24–6, which tied the record for most wins in school history. The Tigers won the Big West Tournament in Reno and made Pacific's first appearance in the NCAA tournament since 1979.



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