

Ohio State Announces Athletics Hall Of Fame Class Of 2020



Twelve all-time Buckeye greats will be inducted into the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame this fall.

The distinguished class of 2020 includes Aaron Brown (football), Eric Brunner (men's soccer), Karen Dennis (director of track and field and cross country), Amanda Furrer (rifle), Steven Kehoe (men's volleyball), Daren Lynch (men's gymnastics), Regis Monahan (football), Lance Palmer (wrestling), Don Perry (men's gymnastics), Samantha Prahalis (women's basketball), Amanda Purcell (rowing) and Francis Schmidt (football coach).

The elite group of Ohio State student-athletes and coaches is scheduled to be officially inducted at a Sept. 25 dinner and introduced at halftime of the Ohio State football game against Rutgers at Ohio Stadium Sept. 26.

Since its inception in 1977, the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame has inducted 446 athletes, coaches and administrators through 2019.

Dennis and Schmidt will become head coaches No. 29 and No. 30 in the hall's history. After the inductions of Brown and Monahan, the number of inductees for football will increase to 128.

Brunner represents the fourth men's soccer standout to be inducted, while Furrer is the third woman from the rifle program chosen for the hall of fame. Kehoe is the sixth men's volleyball player to receive the honor, while Lynch and Perry will bring the number of men's gymnasts inducted to 13.

Purcell will be the seventh rower to receive the distinction, Palmer will be wrestler No. 18 enshrined and Prahalis will be women's basketball player No. 18 to be inducted.

What follows are brief bios on each of the outstanding Ohio State student-athletes and coaches to be inducted in the 2020 class:

Aaron Brown

Football (1974-77)

Aaron Brown lettered in football from 1974-77, playing a vital part on talented Buckeye defenses with Big Ten titles in 1974 and 1975. The nose tackle was a three-year starter for head coach Woody Hayes at nose tackle and ranks No. 15 in program history with 314 career tackles.

Brown also recorded 32.0 tackles for loss across his Buckeye career, an exceptional total for a nose tackle. As a senior in 1977, Brown earned a spot as a First Team All-American, and the team captain

concluded his standout career with 14 solo tackles against Alabama in the Sugar Bowl.

Brown ranks No. 11 in program history in career tackles for loss yards with a remarkable minus-181 and second in single-game TFL yards when his tackles for loss against Minnesota in 1976 resulted in minus-42 yards for the Golden Gophers.

As a member of four teams that won at least a share of the Big Ten title, including two outright championships, Brown played in two Rose Bowl games as well as making appearances in an Orange Bowl and Sugar Bowl. During his dominant Ohio State career, the Buckeyes boasted a 39-8-1 overall record with a 29-3 ledger in the Big Ten.

Following his Hall of Fame career in scarlet and gray, Brown was selected by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1978 and enjoyed a 10-year professional career with the Bucs, Atlanta Falcons, Philadelphia Eagles and Winnipeg of the Canadian Football League. He was selected to the Ohio State All-Century Team by the Columbus Dispatch in 2000.

Eric Brunner

Men's Soccer (2005-07)

Eric Brunner led Ohio State men's soccer on an historical run in 2007 , ending in an appearance in the NCAA College Cup Final after winning the Big Ten championship.

The first Buckeye to earn First Team All-America honors for men's soccer, Brunner was a 2007 MAC Hermann Trophy candidate and a First Team All-Big Ten honoree in addition to making the 2007 College Cup All-Tournament team.

A Dublin, Ohio, native, Brunner was the first Ohio State men's soccer player to make the United States National Team in 2008. He was drafted by the New York Red Bulls and played in 103 Major League Soccer games. During his Hall of Fame career, the 2007 captain started 79 of his 89 games played.

Karen Dennis

Director of Track and Field and Cross Country (2003-present)

Karen Dennis is widely recognized as One of the most respected names in the track and field community. She joined the Ohio State staff in 2003. Dennis spent four years as an assistant track coach (2003-06), served as the women's track and field/cross country head coach from 2006-14 and was named the Ohio State director of track and field and cross country prior to the 2014-15 season.

Under Dennis' direction, Ohio State has won eight Big Ten Championship team titles, including the women's 2020 indoor conference title and an indoor and outdoor sweep in 2018-19. The women's program won its first Big Ten indoor title under her leadership as well as the first outdoor title in 42 years.

The men's program swept both the indoor and outdoor Big Ten titles in 2018, making Dennis the first woman in Big Ten history to lead a men's team to a title in any sport. In her Hall of Fame tenure, Dennis has coached Ohio State student-athletes to more than 60 individual Big Ten titles, more than 50 First and Second Team All- Americans and has helped guide student-athletes to five national championships.

During her remarkable coaching career, Dennis has won USTFCCA Regional Coach of the Year seven times and Big Ten Coach of the Year four times. She has already been inducted into both the USTFCCA Hall of Fame and Michigan State Athletic Hall of Fame.

Beyond domestic competitions, Dennis was the head coach of the women's 2000 Olympic Team, 1989 World University Games coach, 1991 Pan American Games coach and coached in the World Championships in 1995. The Ohio State hall of famer is an advocate on the USATF International Competition Committee and is a past president of the Athletic Congress Women's Track Coaches Association.

Amanda Furrer

Rifle (2010-12)

Amanda Furrer prepared for her standout Olympic career against the world's best by starring as a Buckeye for four seasons. She earned five All-America honors as a member of the Ohio State rifle team and qualified as an individual for the NCAA Championships three times. The Spokane, Wash., native placed in the top 10 nationally in all three of her national championship appearances, finishing as high as seventh.

Furrer finished No. 15 at the 2012 Olympic Games and also won multiple medals at the national championships. On the conference level, Furrer's five Western Intercollegiate Rifle Conference titles and propelled Ohio State to three WIRC team crowns.

Steven Kehoe

Men's Volleyball (2008-11)

Steven Kehoe led the 2011 Ohio State men's volleyball team on an incredible run concluding under confetti as NCAA national champions. The standout setter snagged Most Outstanding Player awards for both the MIVA and NCAA postseason tournaments, helping him win Ohio State Male Athlete of the Year recognition as well.

The 2011 title campaign also included Kehoe's second of back-to-back All-America and MIVA Player of the Year awards. He corralled All-MIVA First Team status thrice (2009, 2010, 2011). Kehoe remains ranked Top 10 in school history for career assists (4,012), digs (595) and aces (97).

A Fisher College of Business student, Kehoe earned nearly every academic award out there, including the 2011 Big Ten Medal of Honor.

Daren Lynch

Men's Gymnastics (1998-01)

Daren Lynch excelled at Ohio State from 1998-2001 and represents one of only three Buckeye gymnasts to win the NCAA vault championship. Earning the title in 2001, Lynch also guided Ohio State to its third NCAA team championship that season.

The Londonderry, N.H., native was a three-time All-American in scarlet and gray. He dominated at the conference level, winning the 2000 Big Ten vault title and led the Buckeyes to their eighth Big Ten team

championship as a captain in 2001. Lynch was a Big Ten Medal of Honor finalist as well as a four-time Ohio State Scholar-Athlete and an Academic All-American.

Regis Monahan

Football (1932-34)

Regis Monahan starred for Ohio State from 1932-34 as a guard and tackle while also doubling as a kicker. In 1934, Monahan was a team captain and First Team All-American while leading the Buckeyes to win a share of its first Big Ten title in 14 years. Monahan also famously appeared on the front of a Wheaties box in 1935.

With Monahan paving the way on the line, the Scarlet and Gray posted an 18-3-3 record from 1932-34, boasting one of the nation's most explosive offenses his senior season in 1934. That Ohio State squad scored 267 points in only eight games and scored 30 or more points on five occasions. The Pittsburgh, Pa., native played four professional seasons with the Detroit Lions from 1935-38 and was part of the Lions' 1935 NFL championship team following his Hall of Fame career in Columbus.

Lance Palmer

Wrestling (2007-10)

Lance Palmer was an All-American all four seasons wrestling for Ohio State, making him one of just eight four-time All-Americans in school history. He advanced to the 2010 NCAA Championships finals for his highest national finish as runner-up. Palmer also finished in the top four twice, including as a true freshman in 2007.

Also thriving in the Big Ten, Palmer was not only crowned the Big Ten champion at 149 pounds in 2010, but he also earned Most Outstanding Wrestler of the Championships recognition.

The 2010 team captain tallied 121 career victories, ranking in the top 10 in the prestigious history of Buckeye wrestling. Palmer also stood out in the classroom, earning the Ohio State Academic Achievement Award as voted on by the Ohio State faculty and staff.

Don Perry

Men's Gymnastics (1952-55)

Don Perry was a four-year letterwinner for the Buckeyes from 1952-55 and was Ohio State's first All-American in 1954 after finishing fourth on trampoline at the national championships. Perry, who captained the Buckeye squad for three seasons, earned CGA All-America honors in 1954 and 1955 in tumbling. Perry competed internationally and placed fourth at the 1956 Pan-American Trials. He also was a member of the Buckeye track team for a year.

He received his master's degree in physical education from Miami University and pursued a career as a teacher and high school coach for nearly 30 years. He has also returned to the Big Ten as a gymnastics judge and served as the President of both the Ohio and National High School Gymnastics Coaches associations.

Samantha Prahalis

Women's Basketball (2009-12)

Samantha Prahalis enjoyed one of the most productive careers in Ohio State women's basketball history, ranking in the top 10 in school history in nearly every statistical category, including points, assists, steals, field goals made, three-pointers made and free throws made. Prahalis is still the Big Ten leader in career assists with 901 and is one of just three players in NCAA history with 2,000 points and 900 career assists.

A two-time All-American, Prahalis finished her Buckeye career with the 2012 Big Ten Player of the Year award after averaging 19.8 points, 6.3 assists and 4.1 rebounds per game. Her illustrious career also included a pair of Big Ten regular-season titles, three Big Ten Tournament titles, 109 victories and four NCAA Tournament appearances.

After her outstanding Ohio State career, Prahalis was the sixth overall pick in the 2012 WNBA Draft by the Phoenix Mercury. She averaged 11.6 points and 4.5 assists in her first season and was runner-up in Rookie of the Year voting. Prahalis then went on to make multiple stops overseas in Romania (2013-14), Russia (2014), Turkey (2015), Italy (2015-16) and Hungary (2016-17).

The Commack, N.Y., native coached three seasons at a pair of New York high schools from 2017-20 and is currently an assistant coach for the women's basketball program at James Madison University.

Amanda Purcell

Rowing (2003-05)

Initially a walk-on to the Ohio State rowing team, Amanda Purcell worked to become a First Team Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association Pocock All-American in 2005 while also earning CRCA All-Central Region and Second Team All-Big Ten honors as well that year. She became just the second Ohio State walk-on to earn All-America honors.

Purcell led the Buckeyes' first 1V8 boat to a No. 1 ranking in 2004 in a season when the Buckeyes recorded just their second top four finish (1V8) nationally. Also an excellent student, she achieved a lot in the classroom as well, becoming a three-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree while earning three Ohio State Scholar Athlete awards.

Francis Schmidt

Football Coach (1934-40)

Francis Schmidt was the head coach of the Ohio State football program from 1934-40 and his comments about arch-rival Michigan - "Those fellows put their pants on one leg at a time, the same as everyone else" - led to the tradition of awarding gold pants to players and coaches following wins against the Wolverines.

During his seven seasons with the Buckeyes, Schmidt's team recorded a 39-16-1 record with an offense that was dubbed "razzle dazzle" by the media because of its use of reverses, laterals and passes. In his first season at the helm, his team scored 267 points, marking the second most in school history up to that point.

Schmidt's second team, in 1935, was nearly as good, outscoring opponents 237-57 and finished 7-1 to

win the Buckeyes' first Big Ten title in 14 years. The dominant season ended with a 38-0 win against the Wolverines, which was part of a stretch from 1934-37 when Ohio State outscored Michigan 114-0.

In 1939, Schmidt led Ohio State to an outright Big Ten championship, which was the program's first in 19 years. Schmidt, who also coached basketball and baseball at various stops prior to Ohio State, was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1971.

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