

COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

SPRING 2018

HORIZONS

GRACELAND UNIVERSITY



2018 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

YELLOWJACKET PRIDE

MAKING HISTORY

FIRST-EVER

“Graceland Wins NAIA National Championship With Buzzer-Beater in Overtime” –Sports Illustrated

RELIVE THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MAGIC
View a photo gallery and recap video online:
graceland.edu/2018Champs

Record-Breaking

► Graceland finished its season winning its last 11 straight games, 12 of its last 13 and the Yellowjackets were 19-2 from Jan. 17 through the end of the season.

29-10
SEASON RECORD

5th win
★ CHAMPIONSHIP POSTSEASON GAME

1st win
★ CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

1st team

HEART OF AMERICA
ATHLETIC CONFERENCE
IN THE CONFERENCE
TO WIN ★ CHAMPIONSHIP

IOWA
IN THE STATE
TO WIN ★ CHAMPIONSHIP

★ 2018 NAIA Division I National Championship



DETERMINATION
The Yellowjackets gave us five straight tournament games played with heart and poise over only six days.



► These men love basketball. By the time they get to the March tournament they have put in long hours. But Coach Doty counted on that. His team is very disciplined.

HOOP DREAMS

The Grind

► We think of NCAA's March Madness, but honestly, the NAIA's championship is even more intense.

“The NAIA's version is truly nuts: 32 teams, seven days and one shared hotel. It is a virtual assembly line of college basketball, and for the true hoops fanatic it is basketball paradise. 500 players and coaches jammed into one place, for one very special week.”

David Waldstein
NY Times (3.17.18)

The road to the championship is an amazing feat in and of itself.

With 32 regular season and exhibition games and 19 Heart of America Athletic Conference (Heart) games, which does not include the post-season tournament, Graceland's basketball season is very long.



THE TOURNAMENT WEEK

MONDAY	MAR 12	TUESDAY	MAR 13	WEDNESDAY	MAR 14	THURSDAY	MAR 15	FRIDAY	MAR 16	SATURDAY	MAR 17	SUNDAY	MAR 18	MONDAY	MAR 19	TUESDAY	MAR 20
Champions of Character	Champions Banquet	The Parade of Champions	Texas Wesleyan University GAME 1 70-61	Langston University GAME 2 67-59	University of Montana Western QUARTERFINALS 86-82	Special Olympics Clinic	Louisiana State University–Shreveport SEMIFINALS 87-80	Louisiana State University–Alexandria FINALS 83-80 (OT)	The team performed a routine of layups, spoke of core values, engaged in a Q&A and then signed autographs at this community service event at Crossroads Academy Charter School.	Thirty-two teams watched highlight videos, honored the Champions of Character recipients — including Graceland senior Jeremy Deemer #24 from Lamoni — and heard the two Kansas City mayors and NAIA president speak.	A trademark of the tournament, all the players, coaches, officials and the tournament committee marched into the stadium Olympic style and packed themselves in, standing shoulder to shoulder.	The Yellowjackets earned their first-ever NAIA National Tournament win in their debut game on the national tournament stage against the defending national champions. They were just getting started.	Getting off to a slow start in the first half, the Yellowjackets put forth a big effort against a tough defensive team. LT Davis #2 scored 29 points, leading Graceland to the win.	Three Graceland University players scored more than 20 points each to lead the Yellowjackets to the win, earning Graceland a spot in the Fab Four.	The team took part in a community service event for the Fab Four.	Gracelanders dubbed the Municipal Auditorium “Closson South” and brought down busloads of Lamoni students to create a home-court advantage. LSUS had been to the national tournament 14 times and was ready to win, but Graceland believed. In the locker room, Coach Doty said, “We’re not done yet!” and they came out at halftime a changed team.	The final game was one for the movies. The tie-breaking, buzzer-beater, overtime, 3-point shot for the win will be repeated in history's best shots, and Graceland University has newly found basketball fame. Graceland won against LSU-Alexandria with a record-breaking crowd of 6,377 fans.

The games began Thursday. The first three days included 24 games with only 10-minute breaks between, which left no practice time for teams.

LEFT TO RIGHT
Will Nelson
Dalton Payton
LT Davis
Justin Harley
Jordan Dembley
Jeremy Deemer

RISE TO THE OCCASION

TEAMWORK

COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

ON AND OFF THE COURT

Class Act

I had a first row seat for the entire men's basketball season, and what a season it was. The student-athletes and coaches on this team taught us what is possible with hard work, determination, trust, attention to detail and teamwork. Witnessing their behavior on and off the court was a gift. Their kindness and humility, while being intensely competitive and committed to the excellence needed for a national championship, are models for our everyday work.

President Draves
Graceland University



As each game progressed, one unexpected win after the next, Graceland's secret sauce would slowly be exposed to the world. On paper, there were more talented and experienced teams in the tournament. But Coach Doty and his staff preached repeatedly that despite the odds being against them, by staying disciplined and playing together, they would do great things. And that they did.

Scott Thompson
Honorary Coach



Coach Doty remarked, "Our bench from top to bottom was committed to helping each other. This is the toughest national tournament to win in all of college basketball, as we had to win five games in six days to win it all. Thanks to my staff for staying up until 3 a.m. preparing scouting reports, thanks to my administration, and thanks to our students and fans, who single-handedly changed the culture of our program from the stands."



Award Recipients

Coach Doty and players were recognized for their outstanding performance — after a season of working together to overcome adversity and achieve victory.



LEFT TO RIGHT Will Nelson, LT Davis, Jeremy Deemer

All-Americans

Players were selected by the NAIA Men's Basketball Coaches Association All-America Committee. Graceland University's **LT Davis** and **Jeremy Deemer** earned NAIA All-American recognition.

Davis was named to second team, while Deemer was honorable mention for the second time in his career. Since moving to NAIA Division I, Graceland now has a total of four men's basketball players to receive the honor.

National Tournament Honors

LT Davis, **Jeremy Deemer** and **Will Nelson** each made the 2018 NAIA Division I Men's Basketball National Championship All-Tournament Team. Davis was also named the Chuck Taylor Most Valuable Player.

Nelson, a junior small forward, averaged 19.20 ppg in the tournament. The Kansas City, MO native averaged a career-high 30 points in the title game of the tournament. Nelson totaled 44 rebounds in the tournament to average 8.8 rpg.

Davis, a five-foot-11-inch guard from Rockford, IL, averaged 23.6 ppg. Known for his ability to hit the three, Davis shot 42.9 percent from beyond the arc.

CHUCK TAYLOR MVP



Deemer, a senior center from Lamoni, IA, shot 61.4 percent (27-of-44) in the tournament. He averaged 13.8 ppg and recorded a double-double in all five games of the tournament.

Scholar-Athlete

Jeremy Deemer was one of 63 NAIA Division I men's basketball student-athletes to be named a Daktronics NAIA Scholar-Athlete for the 2017-18 season.

In order to be nominated, a student-athlete must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale and must have achieved a junior academic status to qualify for this honor.

Team Honors AT A GLANCE



5 HEART ALL-CONFERENCE ATHLETES

2 NAIA ALL-AMERICANS (2nd Team, Honorable Mention)

1 DAKTRONICS NAIA SCHOLAR-ATHLETE

CoSIDA ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICAN

PRESEASON HONORABLE MENTION ALL-AMERICAN

HEART PLAYER OF THE WEEK Feb. 5, 2018

NABC TEAM OF THE WEEK Jan. 29 - Feb. 4, 2018

Coach of the Year

Just two years after being hired as head coach, **Craig Doty** put together the most historic season in Graceland's basketball history. Doty has guided his teams to a national tournament appearance four out of the last five years, with three championship titles: 2014, 2016 and 2018. He highlights his appreciation for the support of his wife, Alexys, and son, Braylon, who have traveled the national championship road with him each time.

Our commitment is to maintain a competitive men's basketball program that is focused on recruiting, retaining and graduating the best student-athletes in the nation. Working together with Doty, we won a conference and national championship in only his second year. As we move forward, there is confidence that the future is bright.

Scott Briell
VP for Enrollment Management



2018 DON MEYER AWARD

2018 NAIA NATIONAL COACH OF THE YEAR

HOOPDIRT.COM 2017-18 NAIA COACH OF THE YEAR & COACH OF THE WEEK presented by Just Play Solutions



THE POWER OF
TOGETHER

COMMEMORATIVE EDITION



GRACELAND'S CHEERLEADERS
How could it not feel like home for the Yellowjackets with thousands of supporters there rocking the stands?

Support From Our "Stingdom"

► Thanks to the generosity of alumni, Graceland students were provided bus rides, box lunches and free tickets.

Attendance Covered by Alumni
LAST THREE GAMES
of the tournament



933
STUDENT TICKETS



129
STUDENT PARKING

FINAL GAME
of the tournament



534 STUDENT TICKETS

Record-Breaking Attendance

FINAL GAME
of the tournament



6,377 AUDITORIUM TOTAL CROWD

► Approximately 80% of the Lamoni campus was at the final game, cheering side by side with an army of Graceland alumni and friends.

Approx. 80% LAMONI CAMPUS FAMILY PRESENT

THE HIVE IS ALIVE

Fiercely Loyal Fans

► In the welcome-home celebration, Coach Craig Doty shared his admiration. In addition to individual tributes to key players, he also thanked Graceland students, Lamoni and the entire Graceland family for their support throughout the tournament.

This is bigger than basketball at Graceland University. This is about a university; this is about a community; this is about an alumni base that is strong. The Power of Together!

Craig Doty
Head Coach,
Men's Basketball

A collective gasp. The buzzer sounds as the ball swishes through the net. And the Graceland crowd explodes as the Yellowjackets capture the championship.



Learning, wholeness, community — they were all on display for the entire world. It was a triumph on all fronts. I could not be more proud of my university.

Harry Ashenhurst
Chair, Board of Trustees

Yellowjacket Pride

Graceland Men's Basketball had an incredible season with incredible results. What was just as obvious to the team and the rest of the world was the incredible support created by the Graceland family. **The Power of Together** is more than a slogan; it wins championships.

The NAIA announced that a tournament attendance record had been broken due largely to the number of Graceland students (current and future), employees, families and alumni who showed up to support their team.

Graceland alumni are largely to thank for this phenomenon, as many stepped up to donate money — as well as time — to pay for transportation and entry costs into the tournament for any current and prospective student of Graceland University. It was this effort that gave Graceland the "home-court advantage."



Comments came from people who had gathered with other alumni or were sneaking a peek from work; on flights from Hawaii to the mainland, on cruises in the Caribbean and vacations at Disney World; from a casino in Las Vegas, and even while doing mission work in Guatemala. And that's just what we know about.

Far and Wide

The Power of Together expanded far beyond the Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City, however. While it's true that we may never know the full breadth of support from our Graceland family, we did ask the question leading into the semifinals of the tournament, and the response was amazing!

In more than 150 Facebook comments, Yellowjacket fans shared photos, videos and words of well wishes from all over the country and the world: Hungary, Spain, Canada, Mexico, England; from Hawaii to New York, Florida to Washington, California to Texas, Minnesota to even Alexandria, Louisiana, where the team we ultimately beat was from.

Shannon Kent-Dailey '96 may have put it best in a comment on a Graceland Facebook post:

Shannon Kent-Dailey I kept hearing the term "family" and that's exactly what Graceland is. I wish the stats were able to show this team the true number of supporters that stood behind them yesterday ... Congratulations Yellowjackets!!!



Graceland Forever

This season — this national title — the entire experience has meant so much more to so many people than just numbers on a scoreboard or stat sheet. This has been a family reunion in some ways.

The excitement of this display of Yellowjacket success has been a reminder for so many of the time they cherished and the people who meant so much. It provided the chance to once again feel perceptibly connected to a common home; one that is still here, on "the Hill" and in our hearts. And *that* is **The Power of Together**.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

🔍 View more of this commemorative edition online: graceland.edu/2018Champs

AVAILABLE NOW!

WEAR HISTORY

YELLOWJACKET

PRIDE

THE POWER OF **TOGETHER**



graceland.edu/ChampionGear

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