

## 1995

The Lady Hornets finished 5th in the MIAA Indoor Championships. Bridget Clem posted the best placing by an ESU woman by finishing 3rd in the 600 with a time of 1:29:31. The mile relay also posted a 3rd place finish. Deandra Doubrava was the Hornets only multiple scorer, placing 4th in the 400 meters and 5th in the long jump.

The 1995 track season featured Emporia State hosting the NCAA DII National Outdoor Track and Field Championships at Welch Stadium. Three outstanding individuals led ESU. Laura Rand was a junior who had gradually improved and progressed.

She threw 42-0 to finish 4th in the MIAA indoor shot put. Outdoors, she improved to win the MIAA with 46-0 and also won the ESU Twilight, Fort Hays Tri, and the Southwestern Invite. What she was about to do on May 27, 1995 would make ESU history. Throwing in her home ring, with the home crowd behind her, Rand responded with the best throw of her career, 47-9  $\frac{3}{4}$  to become the first Lady Hornet in any sport to win an NCAA Championship. Rand also starred in the discus, throwing 150-8 to win the ESU Twilight and 147-8 to become the MIAA discus champion.

Deandra Doubrava, from Scott City, Kansas, competed in track and also played volleyball. Doubrava would go on to be one of the greatest female athletes in ESU track history, and one of the best all-around athletes in school history, male or female.

ESU hosted the 1995 NCAA DII National Outdoor Track and Field Championships at Welch Stadium.



### Laura Rand: National Champion

Laura Rand was ESU's first NAAA Division II women's national champion winning the shot put in her home ring as ESU hosted the 1995 national championships. She was a four-time All-American and three-time MIAA champion in the throws.



Named the Gatorade Kansas Girls High School Track and Field Athlete of the Year in 1994, she started the indoor season by placing 5th in the MIAA 400 in 59.94. She would lower her times considerably outdoors to win the MIAA in 57.42 she then ran 55.56 in the NCAA Outdoor Championships prelim and 55.68 in the final to place 5th and earn All-American honors. She posted her season best of 55.24 at the ESU Twilight, won five outdoor meets, and set the school record of 24.90 in the 200 meters. Doubrava also

displayed her jumping abilities, long jumping 18-2 at KT Woodman and picking up wins in both the long and triple jumps at the Southwestern Invite and the ESU Twilights.

Joyce Burnett's accomplishments added to the list of outstanding individuals in the 1995 season. In the javelin, the Council Grove native threw an ESU record of 160-9 to win the ESU Twilight. She won the MIAA in 147-3 and added a 5th at the NCAA meet with 152-11. Burnett also picked up season wins at KT Woodman and the Fort Hays Triangular. The outstanding group of throwers was complemented by Kelly Hare, who threw the hammer 153-2 to win the MIAA meet.

The Lady Hornets finished 5th in the Outdoor Championships and tied for 13th in the NCAA DII Outdoor Championships.

## 1996

The 1996 indoor season again featured some of the top athletes in women's track history. Magali Schneider transferred from Wayland Baptist, where she had starred and would become an impact competitor at ESU. Her husband, Brandon, was the women's basketball assistant coach at ESU. Schneider teamed with Doubrava to become a dynamic duo. Schneider ran 55.70 in the 400 to place 6th in the NCAA Indoor Championships. Doubrava ran an excellent 56.88 in the prelims but did not advance to the final.

Doubrava ran to an ESU indoor school record 55.45 400 meters in an NCAA Qualifier meet. Doubrava ran the 600 at conference in 1:27.00 to win. Schneider also won the NIAC Invite, the K-State Invite, and captured the MIAA title in 57.09. Schneider set the school record in the 200 at 25.06 by winning the Jayhawk Invite. Schneider added another school record in the 55-meter dash at 7.13 and won the MIAA title in 7.28. Schneider showed her versatility in running a blistering 1:22.77 600-yard run to win the Jayhawk Invite. The Lady Hornets were stacked with quality middle distance runners, as evidenced in the 600-yard run as Kari Pitman ran 1:27.98, Jessica Oberg 1:28.51, and Bridget Clem 1:30.88 for the season.

With the plethora of outstanding middle distance runners and sprinters, it was no surprise the Lady Hornets were outstanding in the mile and two mile relays. The team of Schneider, Oberg, Pitman, and Doubrava clocked a 3:47.72 in the NCAA Qualifier right before NCAAs for an indoor school record and then improved on the school record with a time of 3:47.38 in the NCAA meet to place 4th. The same team also captured the MIAA title, as did the 2-mile relay of Pittman, Oberg, Schneider, and Billi Jo Ross in 9:33.65.

Doubrava displayed her jumping abilities by tripling 38-3 for 3rd in the MIAA and placing 12th in the NCAA Championships at 36-8½. Angela Cathcart contributed on the distance side by placing 1st in the MIAA 5000 in 18:09.11.

The defending national champion in the outdoor shot put, Rand, placed 4th in the NCAA indoor meet in the shot at 47-5 ¼. ESU continued its dominance in the weight throw with a 1, 2, 3 sweep at the MIAA meet. Hare won in 46-8 ¾ and was followed by Lynda Barnard in 2nd and Rand in 3rd. Hare established an ESU record of 47-1 at the Central Missouri Invite.

The Lady Hornets were 2nd in the MIAA indoor meet and 13th at the National NCAA indoor meet.

The throwers continued to display their power prowess during the 1996 outdoor season. Hare added the outdoor hammer to her ESU record resume with a 165-10 at the MIAA Championships to win. Lynda Barnard finished 2nd to Hare at the MIAA throwing 160-11 then turned the table on her teammate by placing 5th in the NCAA's in 159-3. Hare earned All-American honors by placing 8th in the NCAA final with a 150-5. Barnard captured the hammer throw title at the U.S. Junior Nationals (athletes under the age of 20) held in Columbus, Ohio, becoming the first Hornet to capture a national junior title.

Burnett popped a javelin throw of 163-3 to finish 2nd in the NCAA Outdoor Championships, with Hare finishing 9th in 136-10. Burnett (149-9) took the MIAA title, and led her teammates Hare (141-9) and Barnard (117-5) to a 1-2-3 sweep in the event. Laura Rand added a MIAA discus title in 150-8 and went on to finish 9th in the NCAA Outdoor Championships in 142-6. Rand also won the KU Relays, the JCCC

Relays, and the DII Challenge. Rand added shot put titles, winning the MIAA in 44-9, as well as a KU Relays title in 46-9 ½.

Speed was displayed in the form of Schneider, who won the MIAA 100 in 12.19 and finished 3rd in the NCAA meet with a 24.17 for 200 meters. Schneider was 2nd in the MIAA 200, won the ESU Invite, and the MIAA/NCC challenge. Schneider added another 3rd in the 400 at the NCAA National Championships, clocking a 53.33. She displayed her tremendous range, as she also posted the fastest ESU time of the year in the 800 meters with a 2:14.75 to win the ESU Open. She won the MIAA title in 2:16.79 and also added the DII Challenge 800 win. Doubrava was 3rd behind Schneider in the conference 200 and behind Schneider at the national 400, taking a 7th place finish in 54.81. The versatile Doubrava won the MIAA long jump at 19-4 and placed 6th in the NCAA National Championships (19-2) to go along with wins at the DII challenge and the ESU Twilight. Doubrava's triple jump skills earned her a 2nd at 38-0 at MIAAs. She also captured the heptathlon with 4795 points.

Doubrava and Schneider teamed with Pitman and Oberg to take 2nd in the NCAA 4 x 400 with a school record 3:42.94. The foursome had set the school record earlier in the year (3:48.27) in winning at the prestigious Drake Relays. The NCAA prelim time of 3:45.60 re-set the record before the team demolished the record in the final. The team showed their quality by winning at the MIAA, KU Relays, MIAA/NCC challenge, DII Challenge, and ESU Open. The relay success continued with the 4 x 800 relay taking a 1st at the KU Relays with Oberg, Pitman, Doubrava, and Schneider running 9:42.2. The distance medley relay also won at KU with Oberg, Ross, Cathcart, and Schneider in 12:33.30. The sprint medley added another championship relay title at Drake in 3:58.1 with Sharolyn Wilson, Bridget Clem, Doubrava, and Schneider.

Gillian Curtiss added an MIAA 2nd in the 400 hurdles, running 1:03.82 and also captured the DII challenge. ESU added distance points in the 10K with Michelle Daniel 2nd in the MIAA in 38:33.74 and capturing the ESU Twilight.

The Lady Hornets won the MIAA Outdoor Championships, their first ever MIAA title and placed 5th in the NCAA Outdoor Championships.

## **1997**

The dynamic duo of Schneider and Doubrava returned in 1997. Schneider placed 8th in the NCAA DII National Indoor Championships 60 meter dash in 7:31 and demonstrated tremendous versatility by placing 6th in the NCAA 800 in 2:10.32. She also won the Cyclone Classic in 2:12.18 and then improved to 2:12.14 with a 5th at the Husker Invite. She captured the MIAA title in 2:17.73. Schneider's tremendous season continued with a 56.99 to finish 2nd in the MIAA and she ran a season best of 55.80 to win the Wildcat Invite. She added a blistering 1:22.50 to her season resume to win the Nebraska Invite 600.

Doubrava was just as outstanding, running 55.99 for 6th place in the NCAA Indoor Championships 400. She placed 1st in 1:25.38 to win the MIAA 600. Doubrava also added a pentathlon score of 3515 to win the Jayhawk Invite. Schneider and Doubrava formed half of the 4 x 400 relay with Jaylane Gerber and Pitman that ran 3:42.35 at Iowa State and placed 4th in the NCAA indoor meet in 3:46.93. The two mile relay of Doubrava, Adrienne Johnson, Oberg, and Pittman won the Jayhawk Invite in a season-best 9:35.47 and also captured the MIAA title. Nikki Runnebaum hurdled a noteworthy quality time of 8:30 in the 55-meter hurdles at Iowa State. The Lady Hornets were 2nd in the MIAA Indoor and 21st in the NCAA Indoor.

Schneider had used up her collegiate eligibility for the 1997 outdoor season and the spotlight would shine on Doubrava. She ran 57.31 in the 400 to win the ESU Twilight but began to shift her attention toward the heptathlon and the 400 hurdles, where she ran 1:01.49 at the Billy Hayes Invitational and 1:02.06 to win the MIAA meet. Teammate Gillian Curtiss was 3rd in the MIAA 400 hurdles and ran a season best of 1:02.28 at the ESU Last Chance.

Doubrava won the MIAA heptathlon with 4949 points and finished 3rd in the NCAA Outdoor National Championships with 5095 points. In the long jump she had a season best of 18-9 ½ to win the ESU Twilight, and also won the ESU Relays at 18-0 ½.

The relays were once again of high quality during the 1997 outdoor season with the team of Curtiss, Jalane Gerber, Pitman and Doubrava finishing 4th in the NCAA Championships in 3:43.65. The 4 x 800 relay team of Sarah Walter, Doubrava, Pitman, and Oberg ran 9:26.32 to win the KU Relays.

#### **Joyce Burnett: National Champion**

Joyce Burnett won the 1997 NCAA DII National Outdoor Championships title in the javelin. Her mark of 167-0 in the old javelin is an ESU record by over 16 feet. Burnett finished 5th in 1995, and 2nd in 1996, before capturing her title in 1997.



Burnett led a throwing trio that was of national quality. Burnett enjoyed the most successful javelin season in women's track and field history, capturing the NCAA National Championship title in the javelin throwing 157-8. She threw a season best of 167-0 at the ESU Twilight, captured the MIAA title at 159-5 and also won the ESU Twilight, ESU Relays, KU Relays, and finished 4th at the Drake Relays. Lynda Barnard was also outstanding in the hammer throw, placing 2nd in NCAAs with 185-0, a new school record. She captured the MIAA title in 181-3 and also won at the Drake Relays, KU Relays, ESU Relays, and the ESU Twilight. Barnard also threw 138-11 to earn All-American honors in the NCAA javelin by placing 7th. Barnard was challenged in the hammer by Laura Mayo, a transfer from Allen County, who placed 6th in the NCAA final in the hammer at 169-1 and 2nd in the MIAA in 163-7. Mayo also won the Southwestern and Baker Invitational.

The team captured 2nd in the MIAA Outdoor Nationals and 8th at NCAA DII National Outdoors.

#### **1998**

The 1998 indoor track and field season was highlighted by the senior season of Doubrava. She finished 4th in the NCAA indoor 400 in 55.23, while winning the MIAA in 56.79. She also added a 3rd in the MIAA 200 in 25.57. Doubrava continued to shine in the long jump at 19-0 ¾ to win MIAA and place 5th in the NCAA champs at 19-0. Doubrava posted the season's fastest

#### **Laura Mayo: National Champion**

Laura Mayo won the 1998 NCAA DII National Championships in the hammer throw for ESU with a school record toss of 188-9. Mayo was a two-time All-American as she also placed 6th in the hammer in 1997.



600-yard time of 1:23.66 to finish 2nd at the KU Invite. She did not run the 600 in the MIAA, but the Hornets didn't miss a beat with Pitman taking the title in 1:26.67 and Kristin Brune in 1:26.94 for 3rd. Pitman recorded an indoor season best 800 in 2:14.75 at the Iowa State Qualifier and competed in the NCAA DII championships (2:15.62) but did not advance out of the prelims. Wendy Duran ran 2nd in the MIAA 800 in 2:17.99, and the 2-mile relay won in 9:41.00. Senior Laura Mayo picked up a 2nd in the MIAA shot in 52-1.

The Lady Hornets finished 2nd in the MIAA champs and 10th in the NCAA DII National Indoor Championships.

The NCAA DII Outdoor Track and Field Championships were scheduled to return to Emporia in 1999. With an eye on competing at home in her final season, Doubrava redshirted the 1998 outdoor season. Gillian Curtiss stepped up with an outstanding 400 hurdles performance at the NCAA meet to finish 2nd in 1:00.20. Curtiss ran 1:00.02 in the hurdles to win the MIAA and placed 2nd with a 56.09 in the open 400. She displayed her outstanding versatility, competing in the MIAA heptathlon, scoring 4076 points for 3rd. Nikki Runnebaum picked up a 4th with 4022 points.

The 4 x 400 relay team of Curtiss, Emily Bloss, Brune, and Pitman finished 6th in the NCAA Outdoor Championships final, running a season best of 3:49.97 in the prelims. They also won the MIAA Championship in 3:48.31.

Mayo, who had earned All-American honors by placing 6th the previous year in the hammer, made a significant improvement, by almost 20 feet. Mayo won the MIAA championship in 186-3 and then improved on that to become a national champion with a throw of 188-9 at the NCAA DII National Championships. Mayo also won the UMKC, Missouri Southern, and DII Challenge meets. Freshman Heather Leverington showed a preview of great accomplishments to come by winning the shot put at the UMKC, Missouri Southern, Mule Relays, and Baker Relays with a season best of 47-4 ½.

In 1998, the javelin specifications changed, shifting the weight distribution and making it harder to throw further. Amber Frese had the best ESU throw of the year in the Emporia Relays at 141-6 and therefore, she became the ESU school record holder in the new javelin. Joyce Burnett's throw of 167-0 stood as the old javelin school record.

The Lady Hornets placed 4th in the MIAA Indoor Championships and 10th in the NCAA National Outdoor Championships.

## 1999

The 1999 indoor season was highlighted by the emergence of Heather Leverington throwing over 50 feet and earning her first national title. Her 10 points gave ESU a 10th place team finish. It was the first ever DII Indoor National Championship and the first national title since Kelly McCammon captured the NAIA mile run back in 1986. The sophomore captured the

### **Heather Leverington: National Champion**

Heather Leverington was a five-time national champion in the shot put, winning the indoor title three times, and the outdoor title twice. She holds both the indoor and outdoor shot put records and set the NCAA D-II National Outdoor meet record in the shot twice in her career. Leverington won nine MIAA champions in various throwing events.



MIAA shot title at 50-1 ¼ (an MIAA record) and then bettered that mark with a 50-2 ½ to become the NCAA Indoor champion. She also picked up wins at KU, KSU, Pittsburg State and Central Missouri.

**Deandra Doubrava: One Woman Scoring Machine**

Deandra Doubrava scored an amazing 66 points in the 1999 MIAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships to lead ESU to a team title at home. She won four events: the triple jump, 200, 400, and heptathlon, and placed 2nd in the long jump and 100 hurdles. Her heptathlon score of 5219 points, included a 2:12.40 800 and was the top-ranked score in the nation.

Tara Hudspeth picked up an 800 win in MIAA in 2:18.72 with Robin Childers 3rd in 2:19.87. The one-mile relay team (3:59.18) and two-mile relay team (9:34.65) both won MIAA titles, with the two mile relay also winning at the Jayhawk and KU Invites. Sprinter Tiffany Burden added a 55-meter title

at the Kansas Invitational in a noteworthy 7.09.

The women placed 3rd in the MIAA Indoor Championships and 10th at the NCAA Indoors.

The 1999 women's outdoor season was highly anticipated for two reasons. ESU was hosting the NCAA DII track and field championships for the second time (hosted the first time in 1995), and the return of Deandra Doubrava from a redshirt year. Coach Harris had pointed his athletes for a peak performance at the home national meet and his plan worked to perfection, as ESU had a record setting year. Doubrava was amazing in scoring 66 points by herself at the MIAA meet. She would finish 2nd in the 100 hurdles at 14.22, win the 200 in 24.80, the 400 in 55.90, the triple jump in 38-7 ¾, and the heptathlon (which included a blistering 2:12.40 in the 800) with 5219 points. The throwers were also a force in the 1999 season. Besides Leverington, Jody Wood emerged in the discus, winning the MIAA in 153-11, and Lynda Barnard won the hammer in 170-5. Led by Doubrava's big points, the Lady Hornets captured their second-ever MIAA Championship as a team.

**Deandra Doubrava: National Champion**

Deandra Doubrava was a 14-time All-American and two-time national champion for the Hornets. She won both the 400 hurdles and the heptathlon at the 1999 national outdoor championships to lead the Hornets to a 4th place team finish. She won an MIAA record setting 18 conference individual titles.

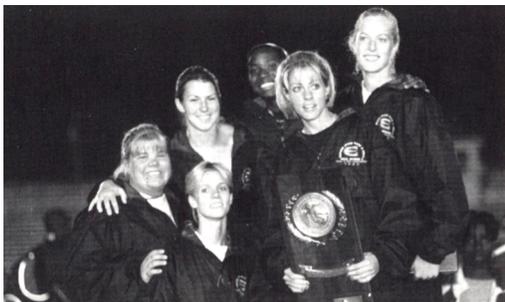


Doubrava would see her finest hour as a Hornet at Welch Stadium in her final collegiate meet. She recorded a meet record 5394 points in the heptathlon to win her first NCAA championship. She trailed after six events and needed to beat Texas A & M-Kingsville's Anna Olason by nine seconds if she was to win. She did just that, winning with a time of 2:13.52, almost 33 seconds better than Olason.

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**1999 Team Women's Track and Field Team  
4th at NCAA Nationals**

The ESU women's team finished 4th at the 1999 NCAA led by the National Championships of Deandra Doubrava and Heather Leverington.



She followed that up with one of the most memorable moments in ESU track history, Doubrava and Curtiss-Masters both qualified for the 400-meter hurdle finals. Curtiss-Masters had finished 2nd at the national meet in the 400 hurdles the previous season and won the 1999 MIAA Championship in 1:02.20. For the

She followed that up with one of the most memorable moments in ESU track history, Doubrava and Curtiss-Masters both qualified for the 400-meter hurdle finals. Curtiss-Masters had finished 2nd at the national meet in the 400 hurdles the previous season and won the 1999 MIAA Championship in 1:02.20. For the

final, she joined teammate Doubrava for a competitive run at a national title. The thrilling final saw the Emporia State teammates Doubrava and Curtiss-Masters storm down the final straightaway for a 1-2 national finish with the ESU faithful roaring. The final results: Doubrava 1st in 1:00.11, Curtiss-Masters 2nd in 1:02.08. Doubrava's senior season of outstanding 400-meter hurdling also included a PR and school record of 59.67 at the ESU Last Chance, a 5th at the Drake Relays in 59.67, and 1st at the Mt. SAC Relays in 60:06.

Curtiss-Masters concluded her brilliant career by teaming with Doubrava, Celeste DeTiege, and Kristin Brune in the 4 x 400 relay to place 4th at nationals with a 3:43.49. Lynda Barnard added to the Hornet success by placing 5th in the hammer throw in 169-7.

As outstanding as Doubrava's heptathlon victory was, and as thrilling as the 400-meter hurdle final was, they were not the only memorable moments of the meet. Leverington came into the 1999 National Outdoor Championships as the MIAA shot put champion at 49-7 ½. She had also won the 1999 NCAA Indoor National Championship earlier in the year and she had added wins in the Spring Twilight, ESU Relays, DII Challenge, UMKC, and USTA meets. Leverington rose to the occasion in her home ring, winning the NCAA Championship in the shot put, throwing a personal record 52-6 ½ to become a two-time national champion. The outstanding efforts and high finishes enabled ESU to place 4th, earning their highest NCAA team finish in women's track and field history.