

## **“Higher Expectations” for Everett, WVU Women**

by *MICHAEL MINNICH*  
*WVSports.com Staff Writer*

MORGANTOWN—Juniors with speed and an ability to get on the scoreboard are common at West Virginia. Steve Slaton does it for Rich Rodriguez at running back; Canadian flash Deana Everett, who is an early candidate for the Hermann Trophy (soccer's Heisman), does the same for Nikki Izzo-Brown and the women's soccer team at forward.

And just like Coach Rod has the spread offense to give opponents fits, a new three-forward system has paid dividends at the Dick Dlesk Soccer Stadium. Last year, West Virginia played with just two players up front.

“I think the team's doing really well so far. We obviously started playing a new system, so I think we're doing a really good job the first couple of games just adjusting to the system,” said Everett. “We definitely get into the attack a lot more, so I think that's great.”

The Canadian sensation is quickly moving up the scoring lists at WVU; her goal last Sunday against Wake Forest gave her 26 for her career. She's just the sixth Mountaineer to reach that milestone in program history, and her 22 tallies entering this year were the most ever by a player heading into her junior season. She also leads the team in assists entering this weekend's play.

“The job of a forward is to not only score goals, but to create goal-scoring opportunities, and Deana's doing a little bit of both. We're excited with where she's at,” said Izzo-Brown.

Expectations are high for this year's squad, ranked as highly at #16 in the national polls heading into this weekend.

“My freshman class was pretty big, so that we've had a couple of years under our belt, it should be a good year. I think for myself as well, I have higher expectations for myself now that I'm a junior.”

The Oakville, Ontario native played alongside fellow Mountaineers Amanda Cicchini, Robin Rushton, and Nicole Mailloux (who is a year younger) for club team Dixie Blaze in high school, where they were spotted by Izzo-Brown and her staff.

“We came over to scouting tournaments in the U.S., and coaches came out to watch us. I think she just found me at one of those tournaments. I think Nikki comes to Canada a lot to scout as well.”

It eased the transition for Everett.

“It made the adjustment a lot easier. Amanda was my roommate freshman year. Good to have them now, too,” she laughed.



She has three veteran strike partners in starters Ashley Banks and Kim Bonilla and super-sub Kiley Harris; freshman Megan Mischler of Moon, Pennsylvania has also impressed.

“I think she's doing a great job. I think it's an adjustment for all of us [playing the new system], and I think everyone's doing a really good job with it,”

The team missed an opportunity to pull an upset on neutral ground against #3 Texas A&M on September 14, falling 2-1; Izzo-Brown said the team could have pulled out a better result given ten more minutes.

“I think the big difference for us was the finishing aspect. If we'd put the ball in the back of the net a little bit more earlier in the game, then things could have been different. Got to capitalize on opportunities,” said Everett. “That game definitely showed us we can play with the #3 team in the country, so it's a confidence booster for us.”



Everett has represented the Big Red of Canada in international play at youth level, but isn't looking at making the senior national team just yet.

“I'm just not looking that far ahead right now. I'm just trying to focus on West Virginia and school and soccer here, but you never know what the future holds.”

*photos courtesy WVU Athletic Department*