

## **Familiar face to take on Panther net program Lyndsey Lyon returns to Ellsworth as head coach**

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Lyndsey Lyon helped lift the Ellsworth volleyball program to unprecedented heights as a player. Not too far removed from her days on the court of Martin Dittmer Gymnasium, Lyon will return to try and pilot the Panthers back to that level as the head coach. ECC athletic director Jack Denholm announced Monday that Lyon has been tabbed as the fourth Panther head coach in as many years. With her familiarity with Ellsworth and Iowa Falls, Denholm hopes the hiring will bring some stability to a program that has been in flux since Ed Geitz stepped down three years ago to focus exclusively on his women's basketball coaching duties.



"When we met as a committee, we were excited to have her apply for it," said Denholm. "She's familiar with the program, had an extreme amount of success here and at Grandview as a player. It's always nice to bring people with Ellsworth ties back into our program. The last few years we've struggled having constant people in there and Lyndsey is willing to make a commitment."

Lyon takes over for Fabiana Lima, who led the Panthers to a 5-30 overall record without a win in the Iowa Community College Athletic Conference last year. Lima was originally brought on board as an assistant coach last spring, but took over in a pinch when Chris Lesneski tendered his resignation.

"We knew when we put Fabiana in that situation that she was most likely a one-year fix for us," said Denholm. "It was going to cost her a lot to get a work Visa for another year but if she pursued her Masters degree she didn't have to do that. When she had an opportunity to get her education paid for versus paying for a work Visa, we sat down and talked and I encouraged her to do that."

Lyon, a 2006 ECC grad, departed the program as the Panther career kills leader and 2006 female athlete of the year. She went on to Grandview College where she was twice named to the Midwest Collegiate Conference honorable mention, as well as reaping academic accolades.

"I'm very excited and obviously I'm young, so there are some nerves," said Lyon. "But I've played a lot of volleyball and dealt with a lot of different personalities as far as other

athletes and teammates that hopefully I can figure out how to deal with each individual player and put a team out there that will get the job done."

After finishing her undergraduate degree at Grandview last spring, Lyon returned to her home town of Atalissa to help out with the family farming operation and coached the freshman team at Wilton High School. The varsity coach was pregnant and on bed-rest for much of the year, prompting Lyon to take on more responsibility at that level.

"I had a lot of fun at Ellsworth. I think my sophomore season was one of the first teams in a long team with a .500 season or better," said Lyon. "Knowing the atmosphere and the people around here, I know its a good place to be. I can tell recruits that there is a lot of potential here."

Geitz actually turned Lyon on to the opening and Lyon says she won't be shy about leaning on her old coach to learn the ropes.

ECC Volleyball since Lyon's sophomore season

Conf. Overall

2005 8-5 23-19

2006 3-9 19-21

2007 1-12 14-34

2008 0-13 5-30