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Hornet soccer hopes to reload

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A year after winning the NAIA national championship, Concordia soccer knew they had to work to keep their success going.

The Hornets also knew they had a good core of players returning and were able to work hard and finish the 2010 season with an 8-3-3 record and a berth in the NAIA tournament again.

Though Concordia would lose in the first round in a penalty shootout to Penn State-York, head coach Brent Duhkie said it was a continued step in his goals for the program.

“The goal is to make sure the program remains consistent,” Duhkie said. “The last four years we have been blessed in making the NAIA tournament and we want to continue to do that as we go along.”

The Hornets are now working hard in the off-season to replace six seniors from the team in hopes of getting back to the national tournament again next year.

“We have a lot of rebuilding to do,” Duhkie said. “A lot more than last year. We are losing our goalkeeper, defenders, midfielders and a striker. It’s taking a chunk away from us.”

The coach said it would be the younger players on the team, which will now have to step up to fill the void.

“You expect the underclassmen to step up and make plays,” Duhkie said. “They have now been in the system at least a year and the time has come, but we are also working hard to recruit new players who can come in and contribute, as students as well as athletes.”

Duhkie’s recruiting strategy tends to bring him toward kids who can contribute, not just on the field, but in the classroom too.

“Of course we want to have athletes with talent and skill, but if they can’t be good citizens and student as well, then they are no good to us. We are always trying to build this program. That’s our goals.”