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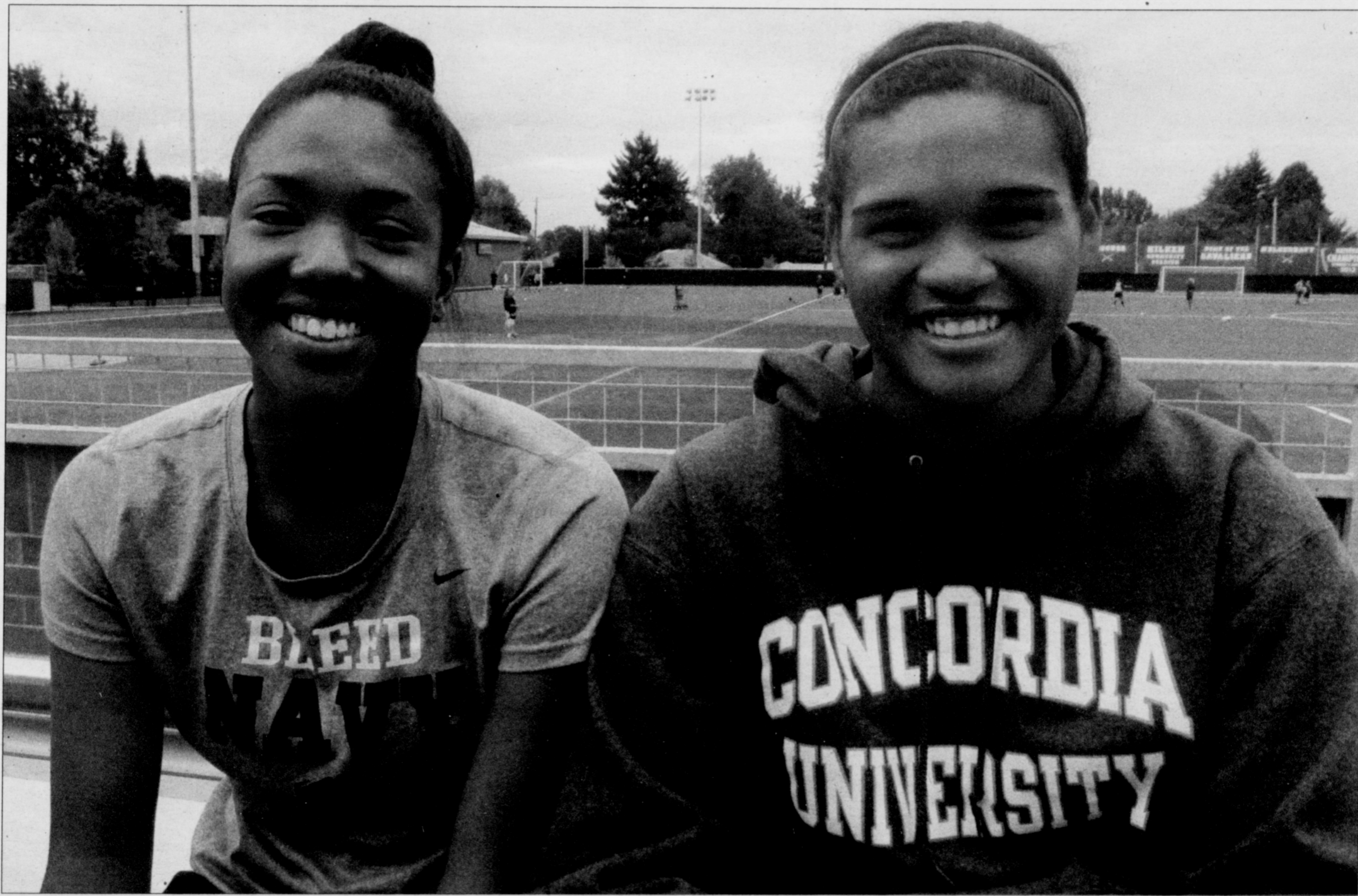


PHOTO BY MIKE BIVINS/PORTLAND OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Kianna Green (left) and Olivia Brock are two reasons the Concordia's women's soccer team is one the top-ranked programs in the country. The Cavaliers are defending their first ever national championship and are currently are one of the top ranked teams in the country.

Inserting Themselves *Concordia success makes a statement*

BY MIKE BIVINS
PORTLAND OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

When you are thinking about soccer in Portland you usually don't think about northeast Portland's Concordia University. The Timbers, Thorns or even the University of Portland Pilots generally are what comes to mind.

However, coming off an NAIA championship season, and currently sporting a stellar 10-1-1 record as well as being one of the top ranked women's soccer teams, not to mention the top ranked team in the Cascade Collegiate Conference, and boasting 28 wins in their last 29 games, the women's soccer team at Concordia is inserting themselves as a talking point in local soccer conversations.

The Concordia program has long been a success. The university's trust in longtime coach Grant Landy apparently has not been misplaced. In his 18 year tenure with the

Cavaliers, Landy is the second winningest coach in NAIA history with 321 wins and a winning percentage of better than 82 percent. Within Concordia's Cascade Collegiate Conference, the Landy-led Cavaliers boast an otherworldly winning percentage of 93 percent.

Yet as Concordia's 16 conference championships were abundant—NAIA national championships remained elusive. The Cavaliers had to settle for second place nationally three times before finally being able to turn the corner—defeating California's Westmont College in the NAIA finals last year to finally be able to call themselves national champions.

The national title arrived at a very opportune time, coming just after the school after accepted an NCAA Division II invitation. This will be last season Concordia competes in their old conference before moving to the new Great North-

west Athletic Conference.

The success of the women's soccer team and the growth of the university's participating in other sports certainly played a role in the upcoming move, according to Concordia Athletic Director Matt English.

Since 2002, English says, every Concordia team has captured at least one conference title.

To make a move of this magnitude you need to have all the pillars for success in place, and that means "the student athletes, the coaches, the faculty and the administration," he says.

It might have been destiny, but the Cavaliers recently played a rematch of last year's NAIA championship game. The setting was fitting as the No. 2 nationally ranked

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