

Champions!



Afro-Chella on Page 3

ADMIN ADDRESSES BOLIN CONCERNS

GEORGE SVOBODA
MANAGING EDITOR

Midwestern State received over \$40 million in state and donor funding to renovate and modernize Bolin Hall. The renovation will start over winter break and is expected to last approximately two years.

Approximately \$11 million will go to updating health and safety in the building, including elevators and fire and lab safety. The rest of the budget will go to modernizing the building and creating shared spaces for students to relax between classes.

“Maybe 25% is about basic needs and life safety,” Interim Provost Margaret Brown Marsden said, “Things like furnishings, we have a separate budget for, that’s part of the larger project budget.”

According to Brown Marsden, the Texas Tech University System has a requirement to use 1% of the budget for public art, so MSU plans to commission a local artist.

The renovations will reduce the ability to conduct some research, but Bolin’s faculty and administration are working to limit the impact. Math and computer science research will be largely unaffected; the main concern is deciding on a location with enough power for a computer lab. Geosciences are doing most of their labwork this semester so that they can do analysis next semester.

“Dr. Rosco does a lot of dissolving rocks in

strong acids, so he’s done a lot of dissolving rocks this semester, and he’ll do a lot of looking at the fossils that came out of them next semester,” Interim Dean Sarah Cobb said. “They’re still going to be mostly working in Bolin, just in different parts of it,” she added.

Biology and chemistry are the two fields most affected by the renovations. According to Cobb, the scanning electron microscope, which is vital in biology, will be offline for a year. For chemistry, some research labs will temporarily be moved into the teaching labs, making it harder for equipment to remain set up for longer periods.

Biochemistry will move to the D.L. Ligon Coliseum, where a fume hood will be available for researchers who need it regularly.

“There will be some things moving back and forth from Bolin to the Coliseum,” Cobb said, “I think that’s the group that’s going to have the most trouble keeping that strong research going.”

MSU plans to do the renovations in phases. The east and west-half sections of the building can have their airflow restricted from each other, allowing one side of the building to be mostly unaffected while the other is under construction.

The architecture firm that MSU hired works with the contractors and construction teams to work on and correct the design as they progress.

“That team that we’ve hired has worked



PHOTO BY GEORGE SVOBODA | THE WICHITAN

Renovations are set to begin during the winter break, potentially spanning two years, Nov. 13.

in architect buildings before. They worked in the hospital to build something underneath the hospital before down in Southwestern, and so they have real experience in operating, trying to keep things operating, while we try to remodel,” Brown Marsden said.

Part of the renovation will be an expansion to Bolin, creating more room for the expanding student body.

Cobb said she understands student concerns about the impact on research, but, for the most part, research can continue. Research labs are expected to reopen in the spring 2025 semester.

In an effort to improve communication with students, Brown Marsden and Cobb held a forum on Nov. 2 to discuss the renovations with Bolin students.

Cobb also said the administration plans to create a monthly updated student mailing list.

To continue research and labs, the Bolin administration has collaborated with faculty through surveys and meetings to meet their needs.

There will be a meeting between the administration and the board of regents on Nov. 16 and 17 to finalize the plans and design for the renovation.

Editor’s Note: A previously published article detailing student concerns contained multiple factual inaccuracies. In particular, the previous article stated that the reason for the Bolin renovations was fire code and asbestos concerns; that is not the case, as the renovations are because of a \$40+ million budget to improve the building. The article has been updated, and we included this article in this issue to offer further information. We apologize for the issue and will work to avoid this problem in the future.



PHOTO BY GEORGE SVOBODA | THE WICHITAN

Bolin renovations are set to include a building add-on, improved safety and new public artwork, Nov. 13.

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SGA passes legislation, approves funds

GEORGE SVOBODA
MANAGING EDITOR

The Student Government Association met on Nov. 7 to vote on new legislation and discuss MSU's writing proficiency exam requirement.

Two pieces of legislation were introduced, Bill 101.2, "International SIM Card Distribution Act" by Vice President of External Affairs Vincent Peter, and Bill 101.3, "The Student Honor Creed Revision Bill" by Vice President of Internal Affairs Joseph Arthur.

Peter is looking to provide incoming international students who are arriving in the United States for the first time with SIM Cards and a free one-month trial, powered by Mint Mobile through a company called campusSIMS. The Global Education Office will head this operation.

"I was going through the Texas Tech System and I landed on an international students page, and I saw that they give their international students SIM cards for whenever the international students come in," Peter said, "I contacted the Texas Tech International Office and they told me 'Hey, yeah, we'd love to work with you, love to give

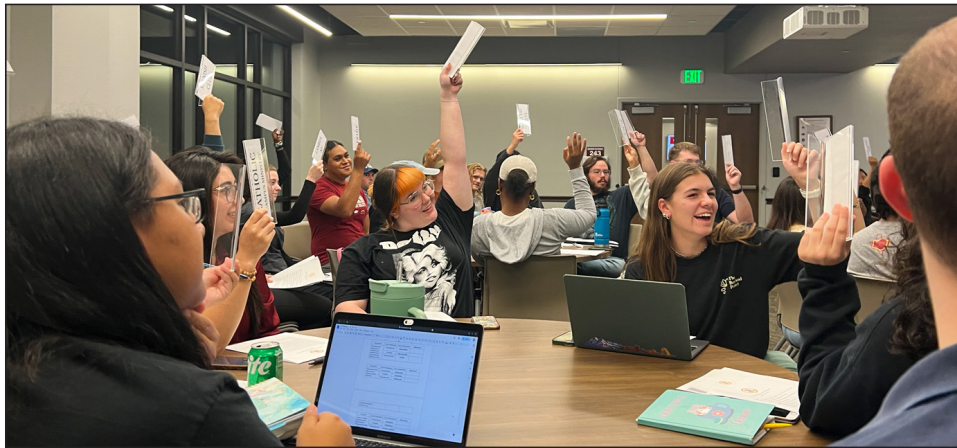


PHOTO BY GEORGE SVOBODA | THE WICHITAN

Representatives vote to pass legislation, Nov. 7.

you that information," he added.

According to Peter, the GEO already takes incoming students to phone companies in Wichita Falls to help them get their phones set up, so working with campusSIMS will expedite the process.

Peter's Bill 101.2 passed unanimously.

Arthur's Bill 101.3 was also passed unanimously, aligning the Student Honor Creed to the five core values of MSU, established in 2021. The Student Honor Creed is part of the student handbook, so the Texas

Tech University System Board of Regents must approve of the changes before they can take place.

Interim Provost Dr. Margaret Brown Marsden spoke with the SGA body about MSU's writing proficiency exam. MSU is the only university in Texas and the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges to require the exam. Students graduating after 2024 will no longer need to take the exam and will instead take writing-intensive courses that fit in with their major.

Three campus community fund requests, each \$250, were approved for the African Student Organization, the Organization of Hispanic Students and Spanish Club to hold cultural events, or in the case of OHS, to be reimbursed for part of Viva MSU's cost.

The overall Homecoming winners were officially announced, with the Caribbean Students Organization and MSU Lions placing 3rd, Sigma Kappa/Kappa Sigma placing 2nd, and the Redwine Honors Program taking home first place.

The final SGA meeting of the semester will take place on Nov. 28, at 7 p.m.

Afro-Chella celebrates and remembers

SABRINA HARRISON
REPORTER

The African Students Organization held Afro-Chella, a celebration of African food and culture, Thursday evening in Legacy MPR.

Afro-Chella was a ticketed event that ASO held in order

to celebrate the diverse culture of Africa. To do this, the organization decorated the room in traditional African textiles and set the tables with flags from various African countries. The president of ASO, Kome Tobi, explained that Afro-Chella was created in order to put a spotlight on Africa.

"We wanted to kind of bring Afro-fusion into like the American aspect," Tobi said.

The event brought in guests of all sorts, from African students not part of ASO to people from completely off campus. One of these people was Asia Zalewska, who heard about the event from her friend Christine Bkutu, a child education junior at MSU. Neither had ever been to an event like Afrochella before.

Bkutu is originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo and decided to come to event when members of ASO had approached her on her lunch run. She went on to explain that coming to Afro-Chella was a way for her to connect with more African people here at MSU.

"My mom wanted me to be more involved with culture like this, so I wanted to come see what it was all about," Bkutu said.

As for Zalewska, she explained that although she is not a student at MSU, she decided to attend the event because she wanted to participate in a new culture.

"I just enjoy new experiences," Zalewska said.

The night was filled with different cultural activities including dancing, a three-course meal, a best dressed competition and a performance by ASO's Afro Fusion Dancers. These events came together not only to celebrate African culture, but to help bring people together and carry out ASO's message of inclusion as well.

"ASO is not just for African people," Tobi said, "We want



PHOTO BY SABRINA HARRISON | THE WICHITAN

The Afro Fusion Dancers perform in Legacy Multi-purpose Room, Nov. 9.

everybody to come and feel welcomed and included because it's a different world."

As the night wound down, ASO held a tribute for those who had died in the End SARS protests in Nigeria. Young people in Nigeria held protests three years ago in order to fight against police brutality.

"We must never forget the lives lost," Tobi said, "and we should be inspired by their sacrifice to strive for a better future."



PHOTO BY SABRINA HARRISON | THE WICHITAN

Afro-Chella provided a variety of African food for students, Nov. 9.

BOXATHON

OPINION: BAD MANNERS OR A MISUNDERSTANDING

SABRINA HARRISON
REPORTER

I don't believe that the Kingsville band had malicious intent when they played over MSU's alma mater.

Before I get ahead of myself, I want to say that the Kingsville band is a very talented group of people. They have a beautiful sound and some really fun stand tunes, and I'm extremely grateful that they came to play with us for our Veteran's day tribute. Without them, I don't think our half-time performance would have been as fun, or would have sounded as full and beautiful as it did. They did an amazing

job; however, no matter how well they played, that doesn't change the fact that they played over our alma mater on Senior Night.

There's a certain decorum most bands follow and in general, playing over someone else's fight song or alma mater is frowned upon. Especially at the end of the game. It would have been one thing if it was a freak accident and both bands began playing their alma mater at the same time. It would have been one thing if the Golden Thunder Marching Band had started playing the alma mater after the Kingsville Marching Band

had started theirs. The fact of the matter is, Kingsville's band played their alma mater with little regard to the MSU band.

Though some may argue that the opposing band hadn't heard MSU's band when they started, I would argue that they just weren't listening. With over 280 members in their band, I find it hard to believe that not a single one heard the Golden Thunder Marching Band and didn't speak up about it. I understand that they had to make sure they played their alma mater before they left, but it's incredibly frustrating that they couldn't have given the

Golden Thunder two minutes to finish playing.

Though what happened was incredibly frustrating, it's easy to forget that mistakes happen. I don't believe that what Kingsville did was inherently malicious, just badly timed. At the end of the day, the Kingsville band drove over 12 hours to come perform at half-time with the Golden Thunder Marching Band when they could have easily chosen any other band to perform with. Despite the fiasco that was the end of the game, I'm still grateful for the energy and sound they brought to the halftime show.



PHOTO BY CECIL WITHERSPOON | THE WICHITAN

The MSU Golden Thunder and Javelina Marching Bands celebrate Veterans Day, Nov. 11.



PHOTO BY CECIL WITHERSPOON | THE WICHITAN

The MSU Golden Thunder and Javelina Marching Bands take turns playing the halftime show, Nov. 11.

Fall Festival sets autumnal atmosphere



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Marcus Morris, mass communication junior, makes cotton candy for Arthur Boatman, Assistant to the Registrar Office, and Brianna Satterfield, Museum, Collections Manager, Nov. 11.



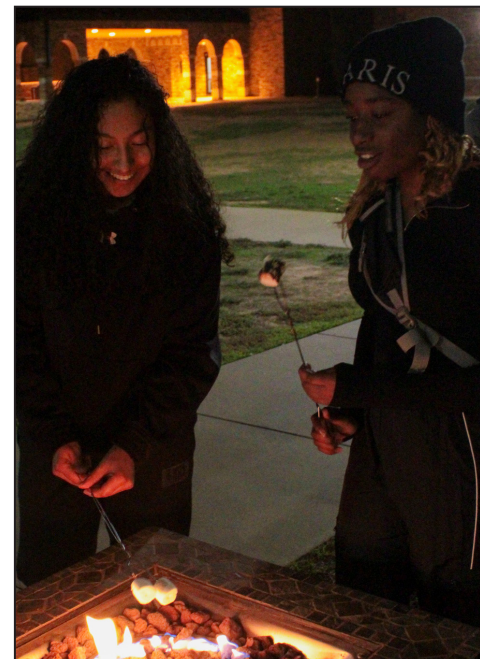
PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

From left to right Ashley Perez, math education sophomore, Miriam Nolasco, business management sophomore, Ashton White, mechanical engineering sophomore, and Erik Gonzalez, biology senior, paint pumpkins together, Nov. 11.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Student prepare their own elote organized by Omega Delta Phi Fraternity Inc., Nov. 11.



Jalecia Thompson, psychology freshman, and Elycia Acosta, radiologic therapy freshman, makes s'mores, Nov. 11.



Abby Martin, prepsychology sophomore, prepares her own caramel apple, Nov. 11.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Students and members of the community enjoy a hayride organized by the Texacoma Cowboy Church Horse Ministry at Faith Rens, Nov. 11.

From the Wichitan: We wish all our students, staff and faculty a happy Thanksgiving break and a joyous holiday season. We hope all are able to take time to relax, unwind and reflect over the next week. Happy holidays!

New women's coach refreshes team



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN
Zarria Carter (0), practices her shooting, Nov. 16.

DONOVAN JACKSON REPORTER

After a rough 2022-2023 campaign for MSU women's basketball, which saw the team win only two of the first 10 games and two of the last 10 games of the season and finish with a 6-22 overall record and last place finish in the Lone Star Conference, the Mustangs are ready to enter this season with a new leader at the helm.

Brenita Jackson takes over as the new head coach of the Mustangs after a stellar last season at Texas Wesleyan University in which she led the Rams to a 27-6 record and a tournament run into the 3rd round of the NAIA national tournament. Jackson was also a WBCA NAIA National Coach of the Year finalist last year and earned Sooner Athletic Conference Coach of the Year.

With this being Jackson's first year at leading a Division 2 program, Jackson faces a new ruleset and a higher talent pool in D2, but Jackson did not come alone. Jackson brings along 5 of her players from Texas Wesleyan including NAIA All-Americans Kertisa Amos and Makayla Coy, Zarría Carter, Zionna Barbee and Keara Felix to MSU. Jackson also adds freshmen and transfers Jaida Gomez, Catalina Cortez, Kyla Speights, and Nikki Green. In addition, Jackson also has her husband Kevin as assistant coach in his first year with the program as well. Eternity Jackson, Maya Kendall, Markayla Johnson, Paris Miller, Macy Flowers and graduate assistant Madelyne Denslow all return from last year's team.

Jackson shared early praise of her players for adjusting to the new style of play and competitive nature.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

The MSU women's basketball practice their plays, Nov. 16.

"They're very competitive and tough. So I think my group is working, they're learning and they are really figuring out what our new identity is gonna be. So I think it's looks pretty good right now," Jackson said.

The Mustangs kicked off the 2023-2024 campaign in Austin against the University of Texas in an exhibition game. Jackson was able to view some positives after the 11th-ranked Longhorns comfortably defeated the Mustangs 124-52. The Mustangs forced 9 Longhorn turnovers in the 1st quarter.

"If we can play that well against that big of a school. We should be able to carry that momentum over Division 2 teams that we'll come up against," Jackson said.

The Mustangs were also able to score on the Longhorns defense late.

"Twenty-two points in the 4th quarter is pretty good. We starting to figure where our shots are gonna come from within our system and we'll continue to build on that momentum and get better and have 4 quarters put together," Jackson said, adding, "I mean the bright spots were that we were tough and we didn't come out scared and we played with a lot of energy".

Midwestern State women's basketball kicks off their first road trip of the season on Saturday when they face off against Southeastern Oklahoma, followed by Oklahoma Baptist on Tuesday before ending their road trip with a back-to-back in San Angelo against Tampa next Friday and Missouri Southern next Saturday before returning back to D.L Ligon coliseum to begin conference play.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN
The MSU women's basketball team prepare for their upcoming game against Southeastern Oklahoma, Nov. 16.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN
Kyla Speights (13) and Eternity Jackson(1) practice passing between each other, Nov. 16.

New strategy shakes up men's basketball

ABBY TURNER
REPORTER

Pre-game rituals are a common thing for athletes to have. It provides a sense of control when days can be unpredictable. The MSU men's basketball team is not a stranger to the stereotype of pre-game rituals.

Pierre Sanders, accounting senior, eats six to twelve Toll House chocolate chip cookies before every game.

Mason Gibson, business management sophomore, has to have a bag of candy before every game, whether gummy sharks or Life Savers gummies.

Will Shepherd, business finance junior, has three things he does before every game. First, he showers, then eats a bag of trail mix, and lastly, he listens to one specific song, "Lean Chronicles," by Rio Da Yung Og.

But not every ritual or established plan can last forever.

As the MSU men's basketball team looks to bounce back from last season's 12-16 record, Head Coach Justin Leslie had to make changes in the off-season to better the team.

In the off-season, Leslie had to approach recruiting with a different mindset. He said he focused more on recruiting strength, speed and experience than his past approach of recruiting younger players.

"My track record has always been we recruit high school kids, and we redshirt them, develop them for two, three, or four years, and get older that way. I had to throw that system and philosophy out. The trick in basketball, especially in male sports in college, is you want to get old and stay old. How we got older had to change, so we had to go out and target more 21 to 22-year-old transfers that are more physically and emotionally ready for what a season entails," Leslie said.

Shepherd is one of the newer additions to the team in the off-season. He was looking for a school that would utilize him in the best way



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Men's basketball head coach Justin Leslie talks to the team, Nov. 9.

they could as a player.

"At Oakland, they didn't really utilize me the way I should be. Here, they told me that they needed a stretch four who could shoot, who could play on the floor, who could play a two through five. That was really what I was looking for. I wasn't trying to be stuck down at the post. I was trying to be that stretch four. It was perfect for me and fit for how we play," Shepherd said.

Leslie also took a new approach to defense and offense. He decided to play a new defense style, whereas in offense, he decided to return to his roots.

"We are playing a very different style of basketball than I have ever coached defensively. Offensively, we are getting back to my roots a little bit. Where I had to essentially look and be where am I most comfortable teaching. I think our team is going to be best where I am most comfortable teaching," Leslie said.

Sanders is one of two returning seniors.

Compared to last season's defensive style, the new type of defense is better suited for the players on the team.

"It has been more beneficial. It caters to the type of athletes we have on the team. We are able to go after and try and create more turnovers and play to our strengths. Of course, we have to be more conditioned and everything, but other than that, I think it is benefitting the athletes that we have," Sanders said.

Gibson, also a returning player, agreed with Sanders's statement.

"I agree with Pierre. Our best offense comes from our defense. So all the turnovers we get, all the steals, and all the stops, that's when we usually score on offense," Gibson said.

The start of this season's preparation differed from previous seasons. The team had the opportunity to play in an international tournament in Taiwan. Because of this tournament, the team got extra practice and games before the season started.

"We had ten extra days of practice and preparation in addition to ten straight days of team building and getting to know each other," Leslie said.

Leslie joked that the boys were so close that sometimes it seemed like he had to pull them back from each other.

"From day one, we were just gelled together as a team... The chemistry is just unimaginable right now," Sanders said.

Shepherd had the same thoughts on how closely the team had bonded from their trip overseas and the practices and time leading up to the tournament.

"It was basically two and a half weeks just being stuck together, so we basically had to bond," Shepherd said.

Apart from playing, the team was able to travel around and explore the city. Gibson said



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Reggie Hill (1) shoots the ball while Pierre Sanders (23) tries to interfere, Nov. 9.

the team prioritized spending time together.

"I mean, we did everything together. We got to walk around, eat meals, and all that stuff. The traveling was crazy. It was probably everybody's first time leaving the country, so everybody had a great time, and we were able to bond over that," Gibson said.

Just from the pre-season and the trip overseas, the coaching staff and the players can already tell that this year's team is different from last year's. Assistant coach Casey Weitzel gave insight into how this team compares to last season's.

"It doesn't. We didn't have the success we wanted last year, and we felt we had to get bigger, stronger, and more athletic, and we felt like we did that, so it just doesn't compare," Weitzel said.

The MSU men's basketball season began on Nov. 10. The team's next game is Saturday, Nov. 18 against St. Mary's University in D.L. Ligon.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN

Left to right Pierre Sanders (23) defends against John Gaines (0), Nov. 9.

Women's soccer goes 10-5-5 in conference

MADISYN BUTLER
REPORTER

The MSU Women's soccer team recently played their final games on Nov. 10 in the Lone Star Conference, going all the way to the semi-finals.

The team played hard throughout the season, earning 10 wins, 5 ties, and 5 losses. They lost in the semi-finals against Dallas Baptist University. Psychology senior captain Cassidy Savoy said she was proud of how far the team went.

"I'm happy how far we got, but I'm a little disappointed in just the end run of it," Savoy said, "I'm proud of how hard we worked to get there."

"It would have been nice to go further, but I think we did really well with the competition in our conference. There's not much wiggle room; all the teams are good competition," Physical therapy freshman defensive player Taryn Sultz said.

Savoy pointed out how the defensive line was a key to success this year.

"I think our defense really stepped it up this year more than anyone else. We had a lot of younger girls playing defense," Savoy said. "It was just the fact of when you're on the field, play like it could be your last game every single time. I think we did that towards the end and it really made us work harder"

The defensive line set the standard, having



PHOTO COURTESY OF MSU WOMEN'S SOCCER
MSU women's soccer team won against Western Colorado University by 2-1, Sep. 10.

several shutouts during the games.

However, both players agreed that Dallas Baptist University is the team's toughest competition every year.

"They're ranked like number one in the region," Sultz said, "But like I said, all the competition in our conference is really good, but we can put ourselves up there if we're consistent and we're playing good."

The team played Texas Woman's University during the quarterfinals, and the winning goal will be a moment both girls remember.

"We were in overtime and then Alle Romano scored a header with seven seconds left in the game, right before we go into PKs, she scored, and then we didn't have to go to PKs. It was amazing," Sultz stated.

"We worked really hard to get there and we didn't want to go to PKs, but regardless of it, I think people put their body on the line," Savoy recalled, "Like Alle Romano, she scored a goal in the last seven seconds, and just like the dog-pile moment was the best."

These wins don't come without hard work.

The team members' days start at 6 a.m. for practice.

"We warm up and then depending on the day of the week it is, so if it's like the day before a game, it's more like walkthroughs or preparing for whatever opponent we have," Sultz said, "If it's not the day before a game, it'll just be more just stuff we need to work on."

Savoy sees her role as captain as setting the tone, both in practice and in the game. She wants to encourage her teammates to take control of their own success.

"At the end of the day, props to the coaches for setting us up, but we're in charge of our own success and us being close and having unity regardless of what was going outside of it is what was so important," Savoy said.

Overall, the women's soccer team worked hard and played harder. However, their success is not ending here.

"We're coming back stronger out of the end of it. We feel like a force to be reckoned with, regardless of our results. And that, everybody on the team is hungry for more. And we want more," Savoy claimed.

Sultz is looking forward to being able to mentor the incoming freshman the way she was mentored this year.

"Hopefully I'll have more of a leadership role and hopefully we just win games," Sultz stated, "I wanna win a title so I'm looking forward to that."

Men's soccer dominates Lone Star Conference



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN
Liam Pritchard (22) places Midwestern State's name in the winner's bracket,

JESSICA BINZARI
REPORTER

The Mustangs conquered the 2023 Lone Star Conference title for the third year in a row, after a series of decisive victories against

Oklahoma Christian University on Friday and Dallas Baptist University on Sunday.

Coach Michael Meachum secured a hard-fought victory in the semifinals against OCU with a penalty kick from business management senior Mere Escobar, ending the game with a final score of 1-0. Escobar finished with an outstanding 17 goals.

The championship final brought together No. 1 seed MSU and No. 6 seed DBU in the fight for the LSC title. The Mustangs prevailed over the Patriots with a crushing 5-0 win.

The Mustangs opened the scoreboard with an early goal from sports administration senior Maycol Reyes in the fourth minute. The following four scores came from computer science junior Gabriel Gacovicaj #9, marketing junior Samuele Muroni, exercise physiology junior Liam Pritchard, and a second from Reyes. Reyes's two winning kicks against DBU brought the him to a career-high of nine goals. He was also given the Most Valuable Player Award for his performance in the LSC Championship.

MSU bettered the program's previous standings, reaching a historical 17 win-streak and placing their overall winning percentage at a record-breaking .975.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE GARCIA | THE WICHITAN
The MSU men's soccer team are ranked no. 2 in the LSC conference, Nov. 12.

The team's prolonged season now narrows down to the Regional Championship, which is the next title in sight for the Mustangs. Meachum shared what some of his main goals for the team are as they are preparing for their upcoming matchups.

"Obviously, we want the results to go our way every time we play, but the results aren't who we are, it's just a byproduct of the game. I think them being prepared mentally and physically and ready to compete every day is what I expect from them," Meachum said.

The Mustangs will compete in the NCAA

Division II Championship, qualifying to the tournament for the 18th time. After taking the first position in conference standings and winning the LSC championship title, No. 2 Midwestern State will take on the competition as the top seed.

The first two opening rounds will be played on MSU home ground on Friday starting at 3:00 p.m., featuring No. 8-seed Fort Lewis (Colo.) and No. 9-seed UC Colorado Springs. The winner will move up the bracket to face the Mustangs on Sunday afternoon for a spot in the third round.