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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 7-8-04**

**AASU Announces Addition Of Women's Soccer For 2005**

**SAVANNAH, Ga.** - AASU women's soccer will kick off its inaugural season in 2005, becoming the ninth current Armstrong Atlantic State varsity sport. Athletic Director Dr. Eddie Aenchbacher announced the addition of the sport at a news conference today at AASU.

The Lady Pirate soccer squad will join nine other Peach Belt Conference squads who compete in the sport at the Division II level. Making the school's first foray into fielding a varsity women's soccer program, AASU will begin play in fall of 2005.

"Women's soccer has gained the reputation of the fastest growing varsity sport in the nation and the Coastal Empire area has reflected that growth," Aenchbacher said. "We hope our new soccer program will contribute to that growth and become another regionally and nationally-competitive varsity sport at AASU."

AASU did field men's soccer as a varsity sport from 1980-86, at the NAIA and the NCAA Division I level, under Aenchbacher, the coach for all seven years of competition. Aenchbacher will lead a national head coaching search for the women's soccer program, beginning this fall, with an expected hire to come in January of 2005.

The Peach Belt Conference has quickly become one of the deepest soccer leagues in the southeast, featuring the 2003 NCAA DII National Champion Kennesaw State Lady Owls. Two other schools – Columbus State and GC&SU – have recently added the sport as well and begin their inaugural seasons in the fall of 2004.

The Lady Pirates will play on a newly-developed soccer surface on campus, located behind Alumni Arena and adjacent to the AASU baseball and softball fields.

- Pirates -