

## Falcons women's soccer is 'Just ballin' with the bros'

By Sarah Turner, Sports editor



Isabel Dillehay. Courtesy of UM Athletics

The sound of a crowd's reaction to a game-winning goal at Varsity Field can be heard from anywhere on campus, and it's been happening a lot this season for the University of Montevallo women's soccer.

As Lainey Farabaugh and Isabel Dillehay like to say, the Falcons have just been "ballin' with the bros" this season, a motto that has helped remind them to just have fun on the field.

Farabaugh and Dillehay, both sophomores, were recruited by head coach Jake Wyman at the same soccer tournament in California. Farabaugh, who is from Pennsylvania, and Dillehay, who is from Colorado, are a long way from home here in central Alabama.

Last year's squad ended the season with a 12-5-3 record,

making it all the way to the Gulf South Conference Championship, where they lost to the Lee University Flames 3-0.

But the 2024 season meant a fresh start.

"We lost a lot of seniors, so it was pretty much a whole new team coming in," said Farabaugh, "so we set really high standards for ourselves even with all the new players coming in."

The 2024 season opened with a 1-0 win over Kentucky Wesleyan College and a 3-2 loss against McKendree University.

The Falcons traveled to Salisbury, N.C. on Sep. 14 to take on Catawba College, who was ranked as the ninth best team in Division II at the time.

Montevallo came away from the early season match with a 0-0 draw, but thought of the tie as a

huge confidence booster.

The Falcons then rolled into conference play, starting the season with a five-game winning streak in their GSC slate.

"We had a really good start to the season and we were like 'okay, we need to keep this momentum,'" said Dillehay.

The team's dynamic this year has been a key factor in their success. Dillehay said that they do everything together, from meals to practice to hanging out.

Dillehay and Farabaugh also spoke highly of their coaches, both Wyman and assistant coach Trey Gregory, who bring something new and fun to practice everyday.

Montevallo ended the season

in second place in GSC standings after a strong regular season showing.

Nov. 10 marked the start of the GSC tournament, and the Falcons hosted the Mississippi College Choctaws in a Sunday afternoon quarterfinal match.

The Falcons were in a tough spot at halftime, down two goals to zero.

"2-0 is the most dangerous lead in soccer," said Farabaugh. "It's one of the most known things, especially at halftime."

The Falcons could've easily gotten down on themselves and counted themselves out, ending their season prematurely.

At that point, "Most of us had the mentality where we were like 'we are not losing this game,'" said Farabaugh.

The Falcons notched their first goal of the match five minutes into the second half off of a strike from junior Shadia Valenzuela, but the Choctaws got one right back, making the score 3-1.

They might have been down, but the Falcons were certainly not out. Valenzuela notched another goal in the 66th minute to bring Montevallo down by just one, followed in the 85th minute by a Mississippi College own goal, evening the score.

Farabaugh then took matters

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into her own hands, and hit the game winner with less than three minutes left in the game, her fifth game-winning goal of the season.

The way the Falcons clawed themselves back into the quarterfinal match is a testament to their grit and preparation throughout

the season.

Dillehay and Farabaugh said that the team's identity this season has been made of toughness, grit and hard work.

"If we all would've just shut down there's no way we would've come back to win," said Farabaugh.

This win propelled them to their next match against the Union University Bulldogs on Friday, Nov. 15 in the GSC Semifinals.

Montevallo routed the Bulldogs in a high-energy match, winning 5-0, with Dillehay and Farabaugh both notching goals, and Farabaugh's goal coming as yet another game winner.

This was the most goals scored in a GSC semifinal since 2017, as well as the largest margin of victory in a GSC semifinal since 2016.

Next, the Falcons took on the West Florida Argonauts in the GSC Championship on Sunday, Nov. 17, with everything on the line.

The Falcons would be playing in their second straight GSC championship.

Despite their efforts, the Falcons ended 90 minutes with a 2-0 loss, and would have to hope their regional seeding would be enough to send them to the NCAA tournament.

On Nov. 18, huddled around a TV, the Falcons would find out their fate.

In historic fashion, it was announced that the Falcon women would earn their first at-large bid in program history to the NCAA tournament as the third seed in the South region.

Keep up with this magical run as the Falcons will take on Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Friday, Nov. 22 at 3p.m. in Melbourne, Florida.

## University Jazz Ensemble holds a 'swingin' fall concert

By Madison Smith, Managing editor



Madison Smith solo with ensemble. Photo by Bethany Singleton

The University of Montevallo Jazz Ensemble brought an energetic combination of jazz standards and contemporary hits to Palmer Hall on Nov. 12.

Directed by music professor, Dr. Joe Ardovino, the

concert featured a challenging repertoire that entertained a lively house of jazz enthusiasts and university students.

The evening's setlist highlighted the ensemble's versatility, opening with the classic hit, "Soul Man," which set an

upbeat and energetic tone for the night.

Other memorable performances included the ballad "Color Me Warm" and the smooth swing of "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You."

"Jazz is one genre of music

where it feels like the rules don't quite matter, and you can do anything so long as it goes with the melody," said featured trumpet player Beth Moates, reflecting on the creative freedom she enjoys while performing with the ensemble.

Each piece featured moments for soloists to shine,

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A standout performance was "Quiet Breaker," where the rhythm section and brass intertwined seamlessly to create a captivating blend.

The ensemble also featured vocal charts including "The Man That Got Away." Meanwhile, "Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart" added a playful touch, showing the ensemble's ability to balance classics with an upbeat flair.

The set list also included "Hey There," the nostalgic "Who's Sorry Now" and the lively "Signed, Sealed, Delivered!"

The concert concluded with "Santa Baby," leaving the audience on a high note and looking forward to the holiday season.

The Jazz Ensemble holds a special place in the hearts of the students involved, offering a unique opportunity to explore their craft in a collaborative setting. For many, it serves as a creative outlet where they can grow both musically and personally.

"Performing with the jazz band is important to me because I love making music with my friends," Moates said.

UM's Jazz Ensemble is one of several performance groups at the university, providing students with valuable opportunities to develop their craft and connect with the local community.

The ensemble will return for their spring concert next semester, promising another evening of exciting jazz performances. For more information on the University of Montevallo's music programs and upcoming events, visit [montevallo.edu/music](http://montevallo.edu/music).