

1 Engineering senior and midfielder/forward Etienne Lussiez battled against a Notre Dame player. The September game went into overtime and resulted in a narrow 1-0 win for Notre Dame. Photo by Julie Gursha.

2 LSA senior Brian Klemczak wound up to boot the ball to a teammate across the field. Klemczak was named Academic All-Big Ten in 2010 as well as received the U-M Athletic Academic Achievement Award. Photo by Julie Gursha.

3 LSA freshman and forward James Murphy watched intensely as engineering senior and midfielder Latif Alashe weaved past a Penn State player. Photo by Julie Gursha.

4 Engineering senior Etienne Lussiez had one shot on goal against Notre Dame on Sept. 16. Photo by Julie Gursha.



FRESH KICKS

WRITTEN BY KAITLIN SCHULER. DESIGNED BY JACKIE VRESICS.

With big wins against Ohio State and Michigan State during its 2012 season, the University's men's soccer team felt strong going into the Big Ten and NCAA tournaments. For LSA freshman Jack Brown, the OSU game was memorable for more than one reason. "It was such a special occasion: my first start, against our biggest rival, as a freshman, and scoring the game winning goal in double overtime. I don't think I could ask for a more memorable moment in my four years." LSA juniors Fabio Villas Boas Pereira and Ezekiel Harris scored two earlier Michigan goals in regulation, making the final score 3-2.

When asked to sum up the team's season in one word, Harris chose the word "win." He explained that, "At the end of the day, no matter how good or bad things go, as long as you win and work hard you can be happy. We as athletes are judged oftentimes from the outside looking in and the first thing people look at is how many wins versus losses you have. When you win there is absolutely no better feeling in the world." The men finished their season with eleven wins to boast; big victories included games against Northwestern, Wisconsin and Oakland. Business freshman Jason Stacy attributed their success to motivation and goal setting. "I think one of the key things is to have a group of motivated guys that will do whatever it takes to win or achieve a goal. Before our season started we sat down and made a list of goals that we wanted to get out of this season, and with the exception of one or two, we have accomplished them."

Their quirky game rituals helped as well. Stacy explained that he always puts his left cleat on first and Brown listens to calming music and visualizes playing on the field. Harris has a different approach to superstition: he wears dress socks underneath his game socks. "I think it started from the Sunday afternoon games right after church when I was younger and not having enough time to change. Guys give me a hard time about it sometimes but I don't care; they are comfortable!"

Regardless of what brought this team success, the men were thankful for their opportunity to participate in athletics at a top university. Brown's advice to incoming Michigan athletes summed up the feelings of hard-working University athletes: "Work hard, play hard, study harder."

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