



Welcome to Madera Community College Mountain Lion Athletics!

In July 2020, Madera Community College earned full-college status and became the 116th California Community College. Once recognized as such, Madera was able to establish an athletics program. We became a member of the Central Valley Conference and began planning for women's soccer. The Mountain Lions will compete in the CVC beginning in August 2023.

Building a successful athletic program requires a lot of planning, organizing, and collaboration among many entities. To be successful, such a program must have a team of dedicated and enthusiastic people working together for a common goal. A successful team is comprised of faculty, staff, and administration from the college, as well as partnerships with community members.

MISSION STATEMENT

Build a competitive athletic program that will generate a sense of pride for our students, for our college, and for our community.

Ensure all student-athletes have the experience, support, and opportunity to achieve academic and athletic success.

Create an environment which facilitates character and leadership development, dedication, teamwork, and a vision for success.

As we build the foundation for Mountain Lion Athletics, you will see coaches, athletic trainers, counselors, coordinators, faculty, staff, and administrators working together to make the dream of an athletics program become a reality.

If you walk around campus, you will begin to see some changes, as well. We will soon have an athletic training room, new equipment in the fitness center, and banners on display. You will see students wearing soccer shirts and faculty and staff in our Madera Athletics polos. Most significantly, the soccer field is under construction and will be ready for play at the end of the summer. We have purchased soccer goals and benches, and put up mesh on the back fence. Soon, we will have bleachers for our spectators. It is exciting!

As we look forward to the future of Madera Athletics, we hope to offer more sports like men's soccer, men's and women's cross-country, track and, possibly, softball and women's wrestling. For now, we are limited in what we can offer by our facilities but, as the college grows and expands, we are hopeful that our athletic program will be able to expand and offer more sports.

MCC Women's Soccer Schedule

8/18	Scrimmage	3:00 PM
8/25	at Modesto	3:00 PM
8/29	vs. De Anza	4:00 PM
9/5	vs. Cuesta	3:00 PM
9/9	vs. American River	3:00 PM
9/12	at West Hills	4:00 PM
9/15	vs. Porterville	4:00 PM
9/19	at Fresno City	4:00 PM
9/22	BYE	
9/26	vs. Clovis	4:00 PM
9/29	vs. Taft	4:00 PM
10/3	at Merced	4:00 PM
10/6	at Sequoias	4:00 PM
10/10	vs. Reedley	4:00 PM
10/13	vs. West Hills	4:00 PM
10/17	at Porterville	4:00 PM
10/20	vs. Fresno City	4:00 PM
10/24	BYE	
10/27	at Clovis	3:00 PM
10/31	at Taft	3:00 PM
11/3	vs. Merced	3:00 PM
11/7	vs. Sequoias	3:00 PM
11/10	at Reedley	3:00 PM
11/15	CCCCAA Playoffs	TBD
11/18	CCCCAA Playoffs	TBD

Get ready!

MCC's FIRST home match will be on Tuesday, August 29! Show up ready to *ROAR* for your Mountain Lions!

We are currently planning fundraisers for summer and fall so that we can involve our community members with planning for our future. The support of our community will make a profound impact on the quality of our athletic programs. We want our students, college and community to take pride in Mountain Lion Athletics.

Kristen Mattox
Athletics Coordinator



THE FIRST MOUNTAIN LION

Establishing a new athletics program involves a lot of breaking new ground, but Madison Barba is ready to lead the way on the field.

One of a new athletics program's first milestones is the commitment of a student-athlete who exemplifies sportsmanship and excellence on the field. Madera has a crop of such talent like Madison Barba, MCC's first student-athlete, waiting for an opportunity.

A Madera High School graduate, Barba spent two years as a varsity athlete, serving as the Coyotes' captain during her senior season. She also played for hometown travel team Madera United and, in her own words, feels prepared to be a cornerstone as the Mountain Lions enter a new era.

Mountain Lion Mailer: When did you first get involved in soccer?

Madison Barba: I started playing on a rec team when I was three or four years old, then I started playing travel soccer in 2013. The last travel team called itself Madera United and then, after I graduated high school, that ended and here I am, playing college soccer!

MLM: So did your parents look at you and think you were always gravitating toward a soccer ball, kicking it back and forth?

MB: They put me in all the sports – softball, basketball – but I didn't really like softball since it was too slow for me! I really liked playing basketball but it was during the same season as soccer, so eventually I had to choose just one.

MLM: After playing soccer and loving it nearly all your life, did you want to get into community college playing the game?

MB: I knew I wanted to go to community college and I wanted to play soccer, but I didn't have any scholarships and I knew that I wanted to transfer to a four-year school. I wasn't really looking into Fresno City since they already had so many girls on their roster and because I'd have to travel there, so I thought, "Okay, that's the end of my career."

Then, midway through the fall semester last year, my mother-in-law said, "Look on Instagram, [Madera has] a soccer team!" I reached out to coach [Jerry] Stupar and he said he'd love to have me.



Madison Barba (pictured above) made history as the first student-athlete to commit to Madera Community College after being named Defender of the Year by the Madera Tribune in 2022.

MLM: Your mother-in-law! You don't see a lot of younger people getting married these days and you're engaged.

MB: Yes! I'm engaged, but I'm not married right now. My wedding date is May 20th and Coach Stupar tells me I'll be the first person he's coached that's been married.

The other reason I debated playing college soccer is because I want to go to nursing school. Right now, I'm taking the pre-requisites for it. I was scared that I wouldn't be able to handle playing and doing that. I already knew I wanted to transfer to Fresno State for my BSN.

MLM: Why nursing?

"I want this team to set the standard for every team that comes after."

MB: In high school, I did an athletic training class. I'd be at the football games giving water, helping if players got hurt. I liked it, I liked the helping. The other thing I like about nursing is the scheduling and that it has so many opportunities, there are branches that I can really work anywhere.

MLM: What appeals to you about being on the field in a game of soccer?

MB: It's just the competitiveness. Getting to

push people around, the physicality. The other thing I like about soccer is that it's more of a team sport. When you're all out there on the field, and there's 11 of us, it's all of us working together.

MLM: What do you think you excel at most when you're out on the field? Where's the position that strength comes out best for you?

MB: My favorite position is either outside back, center back, or defensive midfielder. I play more defense, but I think that allows me to be a leader and see things.

MLM: What would you say to a high school athlete who wants to play collegiate sports and still maintain academic studies?

MB: Collegiate sports are more competitive than high school. You need to keep practicing after the season stops so that you're ready for it, but college isn't a scary as it might seem. You get to make your schedule and have the ability to get what you want out of it, but you need to be more self-motivated, too.

MLM: Do you have expectations for the upcoming season and goals for the team?

MB: I want to prove people wrong because a school like Fresno City has a big program. They go to playoffs and championships. Since we don't have a team right now, college athletes may not want to come here. But I want to prove people wrong and show that our team will win games, and I want this team to set the standard for every team that comes after us.

COACH STUPAR IS READY TO BUILD

Jerry Stupar has a record of developing winners from the ground up. He's eager to do so again as MCC's first women's soccer head coach.

Starting a new athletics program isn't for the faint of heart, but Jerry Stupar has been here before.

In fact, the first Mountain Lions head coach has been here multiple times. Stupar played a role in building title contenders at two other community colleges before being tabbed to do the same for Madera. With nearly two decades of coaching experience, he is confident that MCC's women's soccer team can be a force with which to be reckoned.

Mountain Lion Mailer: Can you tell us a little bit about your history as a coach?

Jerry Stupar: I'm a product of the community college system. I attended College of the Canyons where I lived most of my life, in Santa Clarita Valley, then I went to Cal State Northridge where I played Division I soccer.

Jerry Stupar (pictured below, left) knows how to coach a winner, starting on staff at College of the Canyons in southern California before a stint at Antelope Valley, where his women's team won a championship in 2011.



I had a dilemma about whether I wanted to go into nursing or kinesiology, so I coached at my high school alma mater and started the boys' soccer program at Valencia High School...

MLM: Before you had graduated?

JS: I attended and played at CSUN and coached soccer in the off-season. I was a young varsity coach! I had to transition out of coaching for a time when I got hired by Los Angeles City Fire. I got too busy for it, but fell in love with coaching again when I attended graduate school, went into kinesiology again and loved it. Ironically, COC had an opportunity to coach and teach at that point – while I was still in grad school – so it was a good opportunity. I knew those were my passions.

MLM: What was the transition like going from high school to college coaching?

JS: The big challenge was getting teaching experience. I knew team management and eligibility as a former junior college athlete, and thankfully I had good mentorship under a veteran instructor. I started the inaugural men's soccer program at COC in 2003 and helped fix the women's program as associate head coach for both teams.

Then, in 2008, Antelope Valley needed

someone to fix their women's program. That team was 1-19-2 before I got there, but they knew that they wanted to add a men's program, too. We brought the first championship in school history there in 2011 and finally started that men's team – that was my third new program! – in 2016. My son actually got to play on that inaugural team, too, so that was a really special time for me.

MLM: What brought you to Madera?

JS: To be the pilot, that's a big deal. I had administrative experience that spans an athletics department as well as 18 years of coaching experience and an opportunity to teach full-time. And Madera is a big soccer community like Antelope Valley, so I wanted to part of something historic. I want to put Madera on the map for athletics.

MLM: What has recruiting been like so far?

JS: Off-season training consists of your returning players, so right now we don't have any! The high school seniors that I'm recruiting, I won't see them until June, so what do you do in spring? I've had to network with community members and ask whether players might be floating around campus and, as a result, here came Madison [Barba], who wasn't playing anywhere. She was hesitant at first because it's a major paradigm shift to be

"We're going to be competitive in every match."

a student-athlete, but it started with her and word of mouth brought Jazmin Pinon and others.

We're going to have 20-something freshmen and one sophomore! When you're thinking about playing for Madera and see players like Madison, Jazmin, and a transfer like Aaliyah Herrera, they brought legitimacy to this new program.

MLM: When is the first scrimmage?

JS: Our first match is against Modesto on August 25. We have a scrimmage set up for the Friday before, but the opponent isn't set in stone. What we're really looking forward to is the first home game against DeAnza on the 29th, we want to make that a celebration. We want everyone to come out!

WE GET TO SET PRECEDENTS

While student-athletes and coaches prepare to win on the field, Kristen Mattox is fired up to do the same off of it as MCC's athletics coordinator.

You might think that putting a roster together and spending time on the practice field would be the toughest parts of building a new athletics program. Kristen Mattox knows better, though.

That's because, as Madera Community College's athletics coordinator, Mattox recognized long ago that winning off the field starts long before student-athletes make the effort to win on it. A fierce competitor herself, MCC athletics' leader sheds light on how she got to this point.

Mountain Lion Mailer: Can you tell us about your background in sports?

Kristen Mattox: As the daughter of a pro athlete, sports were a part of growing up. My family has a strong connection to community colleges, too: I played volleyball, basketball, track, and tennis at Fresno City College while my dad coached football there. Two of my sons are involved with FCC football right now: My youngest plays and my oldest is the offensive line coach.

Needless to say, I have a wickedly competitive spirit and I'm driven now to ensure that Madera isn't at the bottom of SCCCD's food chain. I want our athletics program to be something in which the community can take pride. That's why I'm doing this and it's probably why my nickname is "Mad Dog".

MLM: How did you get that nickname?

KM: I was originally called "Moon Dog" in 7th grade, but by high school it became "Mad Dog". There are a few reasons for that change: When I know what I want, I'm feisty and tenacious like a dog with a bone, and I'm known to play a lot better when I'm mad.

MLM: How did your time at FCC prepare you for this position?

KM: Playing four sports prepared me to be a jack of all trades. As the child of a coach, I was dragged to practices, events, and games my whole life. I hung out with coaches, trainers, equipment managers, and athletic

directors, so I observed and took notes.

That background prepared me for assisting in the development of this athletics program. I use what I learned as a student-athlete to help plan and prepare for our student-athletes at Madera. I understand the struggles and I can use that to help others find success in the classroom and on the field. The great thing about starting a new program is that we get to set precedence about the expectations we have for our student-athletes. Putting in the work to prepare our first athletes will pay off for future recruits.

MLM: What do you think athletics brings to a community college?

KM: I think athletics is a huge part of the college experience for both four-year institutions and community colleges. It brings students together, gives them a sense of belonging, something to cheer for. Community colleges are unique, though, since we only have students for two years. We need a means to get them involved quickly, then, because they're only here for such a short time and research shows that students who are involved in

campus activities do better.

MLM: What does sports have that other collegiate endeavors might not have?

KM: They're unique for many reasons. Athletes tend to spend a lot more time with teammates and coaches, and that time together is far more intimate than it is, for example, between classmates. Teams eat, sleep, work, *and* play together. Most importantly, they rely on teammates to put the individual work in so that they can meet their common goals.

MLM: What are your expectations for the upcoming season?

KM: I want to win half of our games and have a 3.5 team GPA. Those are realistic goals that can be accomplished through hard work and a lot of support from faculty, staff, administrators, and counselors. If we meet them, it will build a strong foundation for our future programs and help with recruiting future teams.

I also want to get the community involved with our program. It is important that our teams have people in the stands supporting

"You have to be able to be proud of where you came from... 'No frills, all Madera.'"

them during games. Lastly, I want all of our student-athletes to have a positive experience and leave with life-long friendships, great memories, and skills to navigate their futures.

MLM: What do you believe are the long-term goals for our athletic program? How would you define Mountain Lion student culture?

KM: Madera College's culture has always encompassed vision and dedication. We're made up of people who have always worked hard to meet goals and I don't think that'll ever change, so students leaving Madera should do so with a sense of pride in their college, community, and accomplishments. They should know they have tools they need to create successful futures for themselves. I hope they will become leaders and role models for those who will follow in their footsteps.



Kristen Mattox (pictured above) is a long-time kinesiology instructor at Madera Community College and the school's first athletics coordinator.

ATHLETICS STAFF DIRECTORY

VP of Learning & Student Success:

Dr. Marie Harris

Athletic Coordinator:

Kristen Mattox

Athletic Eligibility:

Gary Nicholes

Title IX Coordinator:

Julie Preston-Smith

Student-Athlete Counselor:

Maria Enslinger

Student-Athlete Counselor:

Carly Berry

Student Success Coach:

Thannia Huerta

Mountain Lion Mailer

Writer/Editors:

Loren Palsgaard, Matthew Kenerly, Ray Sanchez

QUICK FACTS

Location: Madera, California

Founded: 1996 (college center), 2020

Enrollment: 9,300

President: Dr. Ángel Reyna

Athletic Coordinator: Kristen Mattox

Contact: 559-675-4800

Nickname: Mountain Lions

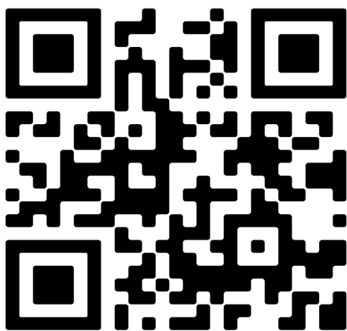
Mascot: Maddie

Colors: Black and Gold

Conference: Central Valley

DONATION INFORMATION

Mountain lions don't usually run in packs, but we want *YOU* to be part of our MCC pride! To learn more about how you can contribute to our athletics department, scan the QR code below or visit Madera Community College Athletics' [donation webpage](#).



The first three recruits to MCC's women's soccer roster (left to right: Aaliyah Herrera, Madison Barba, and Jazmin Pinon) are a glimpse of what's coming to the Central Valley Conference, beginning in August.

WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

Women's soccer is just the start for Mountain Lions athletics! Here's what you can expect at MCC in future years:

- Men's soccer
- Men's and women's cross country
- Softball
- Women's wrestling



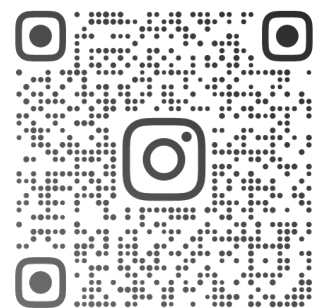
PITCH BEAUTIFICATION WITH TREE FRESNO

Look good, play better. On April 19, our Mountain Lion community helped Tree Fresno plant trees on the eastern side of MCC's future pitch!

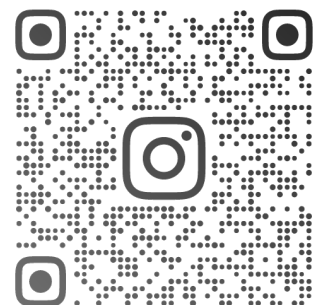
To learn more about how you can help make Madera "San Joaquin Green", visit www.treefresno.org.



Hi! Maddie wants you to follow MCC Athletics on social media!



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@MADERACOLLEGESOCCE