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NOTRE DAME WOMEN'S SOCCER SIGNEE CLASS HEADLINED BY THREE NATIONAL TEAM PLAYERS
Five additions – including two other top ODP players – to provide even more talent and depth for 2004 squad.

Player	Position	Ht.	Hometown	High School	Club(s)
Amanda Cinalli	Forward	5-8	Maple Heights, OH	Laurel	Cleveland F.C.; U.S. Under-17s
Kerri Hanks	Forward	5-6	Allen, TX	Allen	Dallas Texans; U.S. Under-19s
Lauren Karas	Goalkeeper	5-9	Flower Mound, TX	Flower Mound	Dallas Texans
Ashley Jones	Midfielder	5-4	Westlake Village, CA	Westlake	Southern California United
Susan Pinnick	Forward	5-4	South Bend, IN	St. Joseph's	Jr. Irish Lightning; U.S. Under-17s

The Notre Dame women's soccer team has signed another highly-regarded class to national letters of intent, head coach Randy Waldrum announced today. The five signees include three forwards – **Amanda Cinalli** (Maple Heights, Ohio), **Kerri Hanks** (Allen, Texas) and **Susan Pinnick** (South Bend, Ind.) – plus midfielder **Ashley Jones** (Westlake Village, Calif.) and goalkeeper **Lauren Karas** (Flower Mound, Texas).

Hanks serves as captain of the United States Under-19 National Team while Cinalli and Pinnick are members of the U.S. Under-17 National Team, with each of the above three players earning high school All-America honors.

Each of the signees is a member of her respective Olympic Development Regional team, with Karas formerly a member of the U.S. Under-16 National Team player pool while Jones is a member of the Southern California United club program that currently is ranked No. 2 nationally among under-18 teams (behind the Dallas Texans club led by Hanks and Karas).

Notre Dame is set to lose just four players – forwards Amy Warner and Amanda Guertin, midfielder Kimberly Carpenter and outside back Vanessa Pruzinsky – from its 2003 team that was ranked as high as No. 2 in the national polls before finishing with a 20-3-1 overall record. In addition to the highly-regarded signees, the Irish also will look forward to a return to action from rising senior All-America outside back Candace Chapman and fifth-year all-BIG EAST midfielder Randi Scheller (both players missed all of the '03 season due to injury).

"This is the first time in my 19 years of coaching that we made early identifications of the top five players in the nation and then signed each of those players," says Waldrum, who saw his 2003 freshman class ranked No. 6 in the nation. "We obviously are extremely excited about this class, primarily because we were able to fill the attacking voids left by the graduation of Amy Warner and Amanda Guertin while replacing the playmaking of Kim Carpenter.

"Amanda Cinalli, Susan Pinnick and Kerri Hanks are tremendous attacking players and Ashley Jones will give us that playmaking spark. We also added one of the best goalkeepers in the country by signing Lauren Karas. This helps solidify that position, as we now have three quality goalkeepers.

"These last two recruiting classes have added the depth and talent necessary to compete each year for the national championship."

Hanks is considered one of the nation's top incoming recruits, after earning 2002 and '03 All-America honors while starring the past two years with the U.S. Under-19 National Team. She also is a leading player for the nation's No. 1-ranked club program and earned the Golden Boot top-scorer award at the 2003 USYSA national club championships, highlighted by her two-goal game in the Dallas Texans' title-game win over Minnesota's Tsunami Sota squad (2-0).

"Kerri clearly is one of the top forwards in the country and she is one of the nation's best goalscorers as well, with a feisty attacking sense to go along with good quickness" says Waldrum of Hanks, who totaled 47 goals as a freshman and sophomore at Allen High School before focusing on her national-team duty.

"Kerri is highly competitive and plays the game with a tremendous passion. She has that mentality about her that refuses to lose. Another exciting thing is that Kerri is a true student of the game. She keeps up with international futbol and she models herself after some of the world's greatest players. We will look for her to step in at the forward spot and fill that void right away."

Cinalli is a three-year veteran of the U.S. soccer program, currently playing alongside Pinnick on the Under-17 National Team. A future hopeful for the U.S. Under-19 squad, she also has played alongside Pinnick on the ODP Region II team and is co-captain of the Cleveland Futbol Club that won the 2003 North Ohio state title. She earned 2003 All-America honors from the National Soccer Coaches Association (NSCAA) and was named state player of the year after a stellar senior season at Laurel High School, totaling 37 goals and 26 assists for that district championship squad.

"Amanda caught our eye early on – not only in her technical ability with the ball, which is very impressive, but also with her tremendous workrate with and without the ball," says Waldrum

"With our pressing mentality as a team, she is a perfect fit for our style of play. Amanda is a competitor and has a wealth of top-level youth experience. She is very good with the ball at her feet and can play as a forward or even in the midfield."

Pinnick will remain close to home, following an impressive career at St. Joseph's High School and with the Junior Irish and Carmel Commotion club programs. She has served as an outside midfielder and forward with the ODP Region II Team and helped lead the Indiana ODP squad to a third-place finish at the 2002 national tournament – in addition to playing a key role on the 2003 Carmel Commotion squad that went 33-4-3 in a national runner-up season. Most recently, Pinnick earned NSCAA All-America honors after totaling 28 goals and 10 assists for the St. Joseph's team that reached the 2003 state title game.

"It's always exciting to keep our top local talent here at home playing for Notre Dame and Susan will follow in the footsteps of Lindsey Jones, another very successful local product who recently played for the Irish," says Waldrum of Pinnick, who totaled 76 goals and 36 assists during her four-year career at St. Joseph's.

"Susan has tremendous ability to run at players and is dangerous at all times due to her speed and athleticism. She can play out wide, which seems to be natural for her, yet over the past year she also has developed a comfort level playing in central positions."

The 5-9 **Karas** has been a member of the ODP Region III team since 2000 and will compete with the North Texas ODP squad as one of four teams at the 2004 national tournament (in Las Vegas during March of 2004), in addition to competing with the Dallas Texans club squad at the upcoming regional tournament. She owns a 0.40 goals-against average in 27 career game with the Texans while posting 34 shutouts in 67 career games at Flower Mound High School. Her career highlights include a shutout win over the U.S. Under-17 National Team (1-0) and a 2-1 win over the defending national club champion Sereno (Ariz.) Golden Eagles.

"Lauren is one of the top goalkeepers coming out in the 2004 class and we're very excited about her abilities in the goal, as well as her tremendous leadership qualities," says Waldrum. "She's very vocal with a great ability to organize her defense and has a very good physical presence in goal, much like our starter the past two seasons, Erika Bohn. Lauren also is agile, quick and very dependable. Her consistency is a strong point and we look for her to compete for playing time right away. She will fit in very well with Erika Bohn and Nikki Westfall as the three challenge and push each other on a daily basis."

Jones is a member of the ODP Region IV team and helped the ODP Cal-South state team win 2004 regional ODP title (qualifying them for this summer's four-team national tournament). She also is in her sixth season as a forward/midfielder with the Southern California United club program (currently No. 2 in the under-18 national rankings) and is on her way to leading Westlake High School to its fourth straight league title as the team's leading scorer (10 goals), after earning all-state honors as a junior.

"Ashley is a player that first captured our attention in Las Vegas over a year ago – she was simply a workhorse all over the field. She covers so much ground, fighting and competing along the way," says Waldrum of Jones, who helped the 2002 So. Cal. United squad reach the national-title game.

"She also is very capable with the ball at her feet, has a great tactical awareness of the game and has that combination of intensity on the defensive side of things, coupled with her attacking abilities. Most players have excellence in one of the two areas, but Ashley has both. She'll be a great addition to our team in the midfield, as she will give us a presence that is different than any of our returning players. She reminds me of Ashley Dryer, who had an incredible career at Notre Dame. As is the case with all of our signees, Ashley should figure into our lineup right away."

ADDITIONAL CINALLI NOTES – Third-year member of U.S. national team program ... current member of U.S. Under-17 National Team, playing alongside future ND classmate Susan Pinnick at recent training events at the Home Depot Center in Chula Vista, Calif. (June and Sept., 2003) ... also competed with Under-16 National Team during '02 tournament in Paris ... served as captain for U.S. under-17 team in game vs. Germany (March '03; in Bradenton, Fla.), registering two assists in that win ... hoping to crack U.S. Under-19 squad in the spring or summer of '04 ... member of ODP Region II team (as is Pinnick), playing in Italy at '02 tournament ... co-captain of Cleveland Futbol Club that won 2003 North Ohio state title ... that team has upcoming competitions at various tournaments around the state, plus the state cup and possible trip to regionals ... earned 2003 high school All-America honors from the NSCAA, after stellar senior season at Laurel High School that included 37 goals and 26 assists for district championship squad ... her other '03 honors included Division II state player of the year, first team all-state, all-county, league MVP and all-greater Cleveland (plus '03 team co-captain) ... earned all-star honors at '03 Houston Adidas Cup ... also played four years on the Laurel basketball team ... member of softball team as a freshman ... involved in various volunteer and charity activities in her community ... active in school government and several other school organizations ... honors student, with 3.47 GPA ... her brother Michael Cinalli is a former youth soccer player ... daughter of Ronald and Rose Cinalli ... born May 10, 1986.

CINALLI ON HER DECISION – "My official visit to Notre Dame gave me the opportunity to see another family that I could not wait to be apart of. My host was Mary Boland and her religious strength, tremendous soccer abilities and the love she received from her teammates and that she had for her teammates and the game were all the attributes I was looking forward to at college. My visit proved to me that Notre Dame is that perfect college. Just from sitting in the locker room before the games, I was able to see the relationship of the team and coaches and how close and fun it was to be a part of the program. There was such a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere at Notre Dame and I know it is the place that will encourage me to grow spiritually, academically, and athletically. I will try my best and bring a hard work ethic to Notre Dame, so that I may help my teammates in any way possible. I hope to bring a positive and encouraging attitude and also will bring my heart and a hard work ethic so that I may push myself to work my best and learn from my teammates and coaches. In return I hope, through my hard work, to help my teammates grow in their games. I also hope to strengthen my faith and pursue my desire to become a doctor. I know Notre Dame will provide me with spiritual support and a wonderful education."

ADDITIONAL HANKS NOTES– Has spent past two years as member of U.S. Under-19 National team, after playing two seasons at Allen High School ... ND sophomore-to-be midfielder Jen Buczkowski also is current member of U.S. Under-19s (as starting defender) ... named a 2002-03 and '03-'04 NSCAA All-American ... also a 2002-03 *Parade* magazine All-American ('03-'04 TBA) ... totaled eight goals in '03 international games as captain of U.S. Under-19 squad ... helped Under-19 team win Adidas Houston Cup in summer of '03, scoring hat trick in win over American All-Stars team, before playing international games in Germany (2G; 4-1) and Holland (1G; 3-0) ... became one of youngest players on 2002 Under-19 team that won gold medal at World Championship, replacing future ND teammate and current Irish midfielder Annie Scheffer (who suffered an ACL knee injury weeks before that inaugural Under-19 World Championship) ... member of Under-19 team that earlier had participated in Trinidad and Tobago at CONCACAF qualifying for the World Championship ... totaled 5 goals and 5 assists with '02 Under-19 team, in 11 games played and 4 starts (team went 22-2-2 overall) ... appeared in two World Championship qualifying games (2A), with goal in 12-0 win over Jamaica ... played earlier games in '02 vs. Costa Rica and Mexico (both in Pachuca, Mexico), also playing in European tour (vs. Germany and Sweden) and two additional games vs. Mexico in San Diego ... played on '02 World Championship squad that included fellow forwards Heather O'Reilly and Lindsay Tarpley (both now at UNC), Megan Kakadelas (Santa Clara), Kelly Wilson (Texas) and Angie Wozniak (Portland) ... member of ODP Region III team since '99 (also member of ODP North Texas state team) ... six-year member of one of nation's top club programs, the Dallas Texans (currently No. 1 in national under-18 rankings) ... played up an age group with Texans U-18 team in '03, earning Golden Boot Award as top scorer at USYSA national tournament ... scored in 61st minute to tie first game in four-team round-robin at '03 nationals (1-1 vs. Colorado Academy) ... Texans then tied Bethesda (Md.) Dragons (1-1) and beat Tsunami Sota (Minn.) in 3-0 game, with Hanks scoring twice in national title-game rematch vs. Tsunami Sota (2-0) ... played for 1999 and 2000 Texans teams that won state and regional titles (U-14 and U-15) ... named finals MVP and all-tournament at Alamo Cup with U-17 Texans squad, with her corner kick setting up Jessica Maxwell's tying goal vs. Challenge S.C. in title game (Hanks then placed a 22-yard free kick into upper right corner for 2-1 win) ... all-area selection and newcomer of the year at Allen High School (23 goals), earning all-area and all-region as a sophomore (24G) ... also accomplished in judo ... honors student, with 3.85 GPA ... father Gary played semi-professional soccer (futbol) in his native England, prior to moving to Texas ... daughter of Pam and Gary Hanks ... born Sept. 2, 1985.

HANKS ON HER DECISION – "I was looking for a great soccer program with good academics and great coaching. I really like the style of play at Notre Dame. It's a very classic and traditional style of soccer and the coaching is great. The program really emphasizes skilled play, which is what I was looking for in a college team. I stayed with Annie Scheffer during my official visit and got along great with all the girls on the team. It's like a big family and they have a lot of fun as a team. I felt I could fit in well at Notre Dame."

ADDITIONAL JONES NOTES – Member of 2003 ODP Region IV Team (also was in '2 player pool) ... member of California South state ODP program since 2000 ... helped Cal-South state team win '4 regional ODP title (qualifying for summer national tournament) ... six-year forward/midfielder with nationally-ranked Southern California United club program, serving as team captain since '1 ... has helped So.-Cal. United win three San Diego Surf Cups (a top national tournament), plus league and state titles in '2 and '03 ... member of '1 squad that reached national cup semifinals and '02 national runner-up squad ... helped lead So.-Cal. United to undefeated '03 fall season that included 5-0 win over San Diego Surf at Home Depot Center national training facility (Nov.) and 3-0 win over Colorado Academy during Thanksgiving break to win Surf Cup – earning No. 1 national ranking (now No. 2, behind Dallas Texans squad that features her future ND teammates Kerri Hanks and Lauren Karas; her So. Cal. United teams never have lost to the Texans) ... the team's upcoming tournaments include the Las Vegas Showcase and Nomads Showcase in San Diego (both in March), with national tournament set to begin in April ... leader of Westlake High School team that has lost just one league game in last three-plus seasons ... entered mid-Feb. as '03-'04 team's leader in points (10 goals) and assists, with the Warriors on track for a fourth league title (15-1-2 overall, 11-1-1 in league play; 66-11 scoring edge) ... helped '02-'03 team win Southern Section Division II Championship, with a 21-0-1 record ... four-year starter who was all-league and all-county her first three seasons, earning all-state CIF honors as a junior ... led '01-'02 team to section quarterfinals ... serves as captain of '03-'04 squad ... played defense as a freshman, on team that reached southern section round of 16 ... three-year member of Westlake varsity cross country team, earning team MVP, all-league and all-county as a freshman and sophomore (team captain as junior) ... named Ventura County runner of the year as a sophomore, when she ran in time of 19:31 at state finals (3.1 miles) ... two-year member of softball team, earning all-county and all-league as a freshman and sophomore ('02 team MVP) ... an honors student and governor's scholar, with 4.54 indexed GPA ... has volunteered more than 100 hours at Los Robles Regional Medical Center ... brother Brian Jones plays soccer for Southern California United BU16 team ... daughter of Doug and Lisa Jones ... born Aug. 20, 1986.

JONES ON HER DECISION – "After visiting Notre Dame, I knew it was the school for me. As I was looking for a university with a nationally competitive soccer program as well as high academic standards, Notre Dame was the perfect fit. Stepping foot on the campus, I knew ND possessed an atmosphere unlike any other school in the country. On my official visit, I admired the chemistry and unity of the team while being equally impressed with the coaches as they create a family-like environment coupled with the highest competitive expectations. I had so much fun staying with Christie Shaner and experiencing a little bit of college life. I am extremely honored to be a part of the Notre Dame program and tradition. I can't wait to begin competing next fall."

ADDITIONAL KARAS NOTES – Member of ODP Region III team since 2000, also playing for North Texas state ODP since '99 ... will compete with North Texas as one of four finalists at USYSA national tournament (Las Vegas; March '04) ... was member of U.S. Under-16 National Team player pool ... attended elite Adidas ESP Camp in '02 and '03 ... posted noteworthy shutout with ODP Region II team in 1-0 win over U.S. Under-17 National Team (Nov. '03, in Boca Raton, Fla.) ... will be traveling to Italy with Region II team in April '04, to compete in tournament that includes Switzerland's national team ... second-year member of national power Dallas Texans club program, which will compete in upcoming regional tournament (summer '04) ... owns overall goals-against average of 0.40 in 27 career games with Texans ... beat tunder-17 defending national champion Sereno (Ariz.) Golden Eagles in under-19 WAGS national tournament flight final (fall '03; 2-1) ... earlier played for Texas Sting from '99-'02 ... made big save to help Sting win '01 state title, adding two clutch saves in shootout at '01 regional ... those saves included the decisive stop in shootout vs. GSA Fury, sending Sting to final game of '01 regional tournament (held in Memphis) ... helped Sting win '01 Spring Classic at Dallas Cup ... also played for the Magic ('97-'99) and Hamilton (N.J.) Highjinx ('94-'97) club teams ... named to all-region and all-state teams as a senior at Flower Mound High School ... named district goalkeeper of the year in '02 and '03, also earning all-area honors for both seasons ... logged 67 career games – spanning nearly 5,000 minutes – in her career at Flower Mound, posting 0.80 GAA, 34 shutouts and 367 saves ... also lettered three years with track-and-field team, as record-setting long jumper ... member of the National Honor Society, with 3.8 GPA ... daughter of Dan and Denise Karas ... born May 15, 1986.

KARAS ON HER DECISION: "When looking at universities, I was drawn to the unique combination of a nationally competitive soccer program with world-renowned academics. I was struck by Notre Dame's tradition during my visit. In addition, the team was so welcoming, open and close-knit. I felt at home from the moment we met. Finally, coach Waldrum and his staff are world-class. I feel so fortunate to have the opportunity play, learn and contribute to Notre Dame."

ADDITIONAL PINNICK NOTES – Current member of U.S. Under-17 National Team (as is future ND classmate Amanda Cinalli), training with that team in Chula Vista, Calif., at Home Depot Center in June and Sept. of 2003 ... outside midfielder/forward with ODP Region II Team since summer of '02, playing at inter-regional events in Boca Raton, Fla., during Thanksgiving of '02 and '03 (she scored in 1-1 tie vs. Region IV during '03 event, adding assist in 3-1 win over Region III) ... member of ODP Indiana state team since '01, attending regional camp each of the past three years ... helped Indiana ODP team win Region II titles in '01 and '02 (third in nation in '02, in Plano, Texas) ... attended elite Adidas ESP National Camp (August '03) ... member of Carmel Commotion club team since winter of '02, helping that team finish as '02-'03 national runner-up (33-4-3 overall record) ... named MVP of Orange Classic in Fort Lauderdale (Christmas '02), helping Commotion go 3-1-1 en route to tournament title ... opened scoring in Orange Classic wins vs. Bethesda Rowdies ('03 Maryland ODP runner-up; 2-0) and Real Colorado ('03 Colorado runner-up; 3-1) before scoring in 1-0 title game vs. D'Feeters ('03 North Texas runner-up)... earlier helped Commotion win Volvo Germantown Showcase in Memphis (4-0-0), scoring first goal in title matchup with Indianapolis-area rival Dynamo-Katner ('03 Indiana champ; 4-3) ... also led team to Jefferson Cup title in Richmond, Va. (4-0-0; March '03), scoring second goal in 2-0 win over PDA Galaxy ('03 New Jersey champs) plus 1G-1A vs. Southcoast Scorpions ('03 Massachusetts runner-up; 4-0) ... went on to help Commotion win Region II title in Des Moines, Iowa (June 21-25, 2003), with 2-1 win over KCFC (Kan.) Dynamos, 6-0 win over NSA (Ill.) Lazars, 1-1 tie with Madison (Wis.) 56ers, 4-0 win over DSU (southern Ohio) and 1-0 win over Michigan Hawks (she scored vs. Lazars and had 1G-1A vs. DSU) ... the Commotion then placed second at June nationals in Germantown, Md., bouncing back from 7-0 loss to the Sereno (Ariz.) Golden Eagles before beating PDA Galaxy (1-0) and Greensboro (N.C.) Twisters (6-2; with Pinnick scoring the fourth goal), followed by 3-0 loss to Eagles in title-game rematch ... played six previous seasons with South Bend-based Junior Irish Lightning, totaling 32 goals in '01-'02 season ... helped Junior Irish win '01 league title and '02 West Carrolton tournament, plus runner-up showings at '01 and '02 Kalamazoo Shootout and the '02 Dynamo Round Robin ('02 state cup semifinalists) ... totaled 76 goals, 36 assists in four seasons at St. Joseph's High School ... earned NSCAA youth All-America honors before adding NSCAA high school All-America honors following her senior season (28G-10A) for '03 St. Joseph's squad that reached state-title game ... named first team all-state and NSCAA all-region in '03, repeating those honors she had earned as a junior in '02 (19G-16A) ... named first team all-state and all-district as sophomore member of team that won regional title and reached semi-state semifinals (16G-6A) ... totaled 13G-4A as freshman, earning first team all-district honors for sectional finalist squad ... two-year starting guard for St. Joseph's basketball team, helping '00-'01 team reach sectional finals before earning "most improved player" honors for '01-'02 team that won section title and reached regional finals ... has extensive involvement in extracurricular activities ... owns 3.96 GPA (class rank of 12 out of 184), with future aspirations including a career in law ... father Pat Pinnick received MBA at Notre Dame in 1985 ... daughter of Patrick and Jane Pinnick ... born May 27, 1986.

PINNICK ON HER DECISION – "I always have felt a special connection with the school. When I was given the opportunity to play with such a successful program, it exceeded my greatest expectations. My desire to attend the University was reaffirmed on my visit, when I stayed with Kim Lorenzen. She made me feel like part of the team and I was able to experience firsthand the family-like atmosphere. I am very fortunate to be able to work under the knowledgeable coaching staff, as part of such a talented team. I hope to be an impact player for the successful Notre Dame team and being surrounded by the best can only make me better. My goal is to play to the best of ability in whatever area I am needed."