Men's soccer loses at the end

By Paul Szaniawski

Men's soccer faltered in its final game of the season against Loyola, 3-1, but it wasn't the numbers on the scoreboard that defined the season.

The soccer team finished with an overall record of 4-10-4 and played some very tough teams early in the season from outside the division. But they were able to make two victories shy of a playoff spot going 3-4-2 in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC).

"It was a little disappointing," said freshman Owen Castle. "You always want to end the season with a high note, winning the game. We didn't come out to play that day. By the time we got there we only had 15 minutes to warm up. So we were a little unprepared and we got off to a slow start. That's what ruined it for us."

Despite four saves by junior Daniel Riveros, who was named defensive player of the week, from Oct. 24 to 31, Loyola's excellent soccer program, with three foreign players on defense and one at midfield, was too strong.

"We just got outplayed by a better team with several very special players," said head coach Russ Fager. "With a game like that you try to play your best win, no question about it. We didn't have a bad day, we just didn't have a great day."

Rider tried to initialize Scottish freshman Barry McGrellis, but he was recovering from broken toes and pneumonia most of this season. Another injury that hurt the team was junior Tim Jones' gallbladder infection, which caused him to completely miss the last eight games of the season after coming back fit and making sure he's healthy," said Fager. "If it can improve on this fifth place season, coming back next year, the team looks as well and led the team in scoring, but coach Fager couldn't name a dominant Rider player who would score more than five times in a season since 1998. He believes there are some players on his team who have the potential to do that next year, like Jones, if he's healthy, sophomore Michael Citron and Matlack, who led the team with four goals. Coach Fager hopes Matlack's stepping up late in the season is an omen for next year."

"It's going to be a matter of him coming back fit and making sure he's healthy," said Fager. "If he does that then he'll get the first crack to play up there for sure."

With some potential big game scorers, along with outstanding goaltender Riveros and the rest of the core group of players coming back next year, the team looks as if it can improve on this fifth place season, despite losing seniors Sandro DeCristofaro and Brian Lautinatis.

"That is tough. We are losing Sandro (DeCristofaro) and Brian Lautinatis," said Castle. "They're big players for us, but I think we can do a really good job next year."

Lautinatis led the team in points, goals and shots in 2003 and scored the game winner in an overtime shootout to give Rider a MAAC tournament victory that year.

"Sandro had a great year last year. He has been a tremendous worker for us," said Fager. "His work rate seems to cause goals for us, but he really didn't find himself in position to finish. And when he did, he just didn't get the ball in the back of the net."

DeCristofaro's 2004 season included a hat trick against Loyola, and he finished fourth in the MAAC, scoring five goals total.

The team's season highlights this year included a 5-1 home game over Canisius, the way it beat Iona 2-0 at home, and the win over Saint Peter's according to Fager.

"When you beat Saint Peter's anytime, anywhere, anywhere you've done a pretty good job because they've taken on some pretty good teams this year," he said. "So beating them 3-2 and scoring a goal very late in the first half and very late in the second half to secure the win."

Two days after that victory, Saint Peter's beat Niagara, who finished slightly ahead of both Rider and Saint Peter's and clinched the last MAAC playoff spot.

"The game at George Washington (GW) was a good day for us considering that GW three weeks later knocked off St. Louis who was in the top 10 nationally," Fager said. "Our tie (2-2) [at GW] was a big day for us."

Until next season the team hopes to improve physically. It has already had a team meeting and agreed to get in the weight room over the next few months to get an edge.

"We're going to work hard in the off season," said Castle. "We're going to be working hard in the weight room, running a lot and doing things we need to do to get prepared for next season."

"We're going to work hard in the off season. We're going to be working hard in the weight room, running a lot and doing things we need to do to get prepared for next season."

— Owen Castle, freshman

Men's Soccer

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]

\[\text{Men's Soccer} \]

\[\text{Score of 1 to 0} \]