In the Thick of Things

Men’s basketball beats Manhattan, climbs out of the MAAC basement
By Paul Szaniawski

It was Manhattan’s worst first half this season since its 18-point performance against #23 nationally ranked Syracuse and their lowest total game score, according to Manhattan Head Coach Bobby Gonzalez.

“We thought Rider was better than their record and tonight they showed that,” Gonzalez said. “Where we struggled we just couldn’t score the ball.”

Manhattan was forced to play the Broncos without its highest scorer, 6-foot-6-inch sophomore forward and guard C.J. Anderson, who was suspended from the team indefinitely.

“If you take a Ke Ke Clark off Saint Peter’s or you take Stevie Bird off Jona or you take Jared Jordan off Marist or Jason Thompson off Rider or Antawn Jordan off Siena or you go to any team in our league and you take the top player off the team, they’re not going to be the same,” said Gonzalez. “That aside, that’s the only thing I’ll mention; I don’t want to make excuses. Rider deserves credit, they outplayed us.”

Anderson, who has averaged nearly 19 points a game this season, also did not face the Broncos last season. In his team’s twenty-nine-point blowout loss.

“You can’t control who shows up,” said Dempsey. “You show up and whoever gets off the bus that’s who we play.”

Terrance Moston had 19 points and 5 assists against Manhattan and continued his great play with 14 points and 3 assists in Rider’s following game, a 81-62 win against Canisius. Sophomore forward Jason Thompson added 26 in that game and scored 21 in the Broncos’ last game, a 84-70 loss to Niagara.

The Broncos have won three of their last five division games and have found themselves back in the thick of MAAC competition, building up steam before the playoffs. Rider is one game away from being in the middle of the division.

 “[Last] Tuesday against Manhattan and Friday against Canisius were definitely two of our better performances of the year,” said Dempsey during the Rider Basketball Radio show Tuesday.

Tonight the team will have its second-to-last division game away from the Zoo of the regular season against Fairfield at home.

“We’re going to have to go up there and match their intensity, especially in the first half because we’ve been getting off to some slow starts,” Dempsey said during Tuesday’s radio show.

With hopes set on the MAAC playoffs, the men’s team will have to quit its worst habit of the season cold turkey. Dempsey summed it up.

“You don’t make a living coming back from 18, 19, 20 points down,” he said.

Wrestling team back on path of destruction
By Paul Mullin

Of all the sports teams at Rider, the one that receives the least recognition is the wrestling team. Ironically, it has been one of the more stable and out-standing teams to compete, and this year has been no different.

After compiling an 8-5-1 record thus far this season, the wrestling team moves to take on Clarion tomorrow in a home match that Assistant Coach John Hangy feels will be a good match for the Rider team.

“They’re having a rough year,” said Hangy. “We have a good history against them, and we are much more balanced and confident.”

The team continues to be successful this season despite several injuries in its starting lineup. Head Coach Gary Taylor said this will be a major concern against Clarion.

“If we can have more people healthy we’ll be all right,” said Taylor. “We’ve been a little banged up this year.”

Thanks to two freshman wrestlers stepping up, their games, the Broncos have stayed in the game this season.

Doug Umbelhauser (174 lbs.), named the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) Rookie of the Week on Tuesday, and Mike Kessler (149 lbs.), who received the honor last week, have had strong showings all season long.

“They’ve always been a hard team to beat,” said Taylor. “We’ve had our share of injuries.”

Sophomore Ryan Smith prepares to escape a hold against Rutgers’ Ricky Ringle. Smith went on to pin his opponent in less than six minutes. Rider won 26-15, losing only four matches.

Rider’s success despite injuries to the solid group of wrestlers he has “We’re not a bad team,” Taylor said. “Even [when] we’re not at full strength, we are still a very solid team.”

At the CAA Duals held at

Senior Aaron White goes up strong with the ball in a green sea of Manhattan defenders.

Photo by Matt Freedman

Hofstra University on Friday, Jan. 20 and Saturday, Jan. 21, the Broncos went 4-0-1 against five division opponents. According to Hangy, this sort of success was not a surprise for the team.

“We expected to be number one or two,” said Hangy. “We usually fight Hofstra for it. We just have stronger traditions and expectations. And that’s what gets you to nationals.”

Despite the injuries the team has suffered, Hangy maintains that the lineup will remain the same for tomorrow’s match at home.

“You’ll be seeing the same lineup as we had against Columbia,” he said. “We don’t like to move them around much.”

By Paul Mulin

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