

BACK ON TRACK

Men bounce back to win 2 straight

By Andrew Straub
Staff Writer

The men's basketball team should change its mascot from the Broncs to the Comeback Kids. After two consecutive losses, including an embarrassing 65-40 loss to Fairfield, it looked as if the Broncs would fade away from Metro-Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) contention. But much like the trucker hat trend, it just won't die, reeling off consecutive wins over Marist, 74-67, and Canisius, 66-63.

"We played a heck of a lot better," said Head Coach Don Harnum. "We got beaten pretty bad by Fairfield and to bounce back and go up to Marist and pick up the win is a real testament to our team. We didn't hang our heads. We had a good practice the next day then we went out and did what we needed to do."

Traveling to Marist last Friday, the Broncs stayed a step ahead of the Red Foxes throughout the game, letting it hold only one lead, 2-0. Rider went into intermission on a 12-5 run, putting the team in the lead 39-31. The second half was no different. Shooting with a hot hand (16 of 18 from the line) and playing disciplined basketball, the Broncs were able to hold off Marist, 74-67.

"We did something different with our matchups," said

Harnum. "Fairfield was a tough matchup for us. Against Marist we were able to exploit some of their weaknesses."

Leading the Broncs in scoring was sophomore Edwin Muniz with 25 points and junior Jerry Johnson added 22.

On Monday night, the Broncs hosted Canisius in its last home game this season at Alumni Gym. Rider did not disappoint its rowdy fans, going on an 11-2 run to take an early 26-18 lead, which carried to halftime, 35-27. Leading most of the second half, Canisius fought back and went on a 15-2 run to cut the lead to 58-57 with 5:15 left in the game.

This is as close as the Golden Griffins would get as Johnson capped off the win with his fifth three-point field goal of the game to give Rider a 64-60 lead with 2:24 left to play. Freshman Terrance Mouton sealed the win, scoring with 31 seconds to go giving Rider a 66-62 lead. Mouton had a career night, finishing with 10 points along with five assists.

"We tried to get the ball inside more to Steve and Edwin, especially early in the shot clock," said Harnum. "Earlier in the season we had success getting the ball inside and that's what we tried to get back to. We can get outside shots whenever we want. We

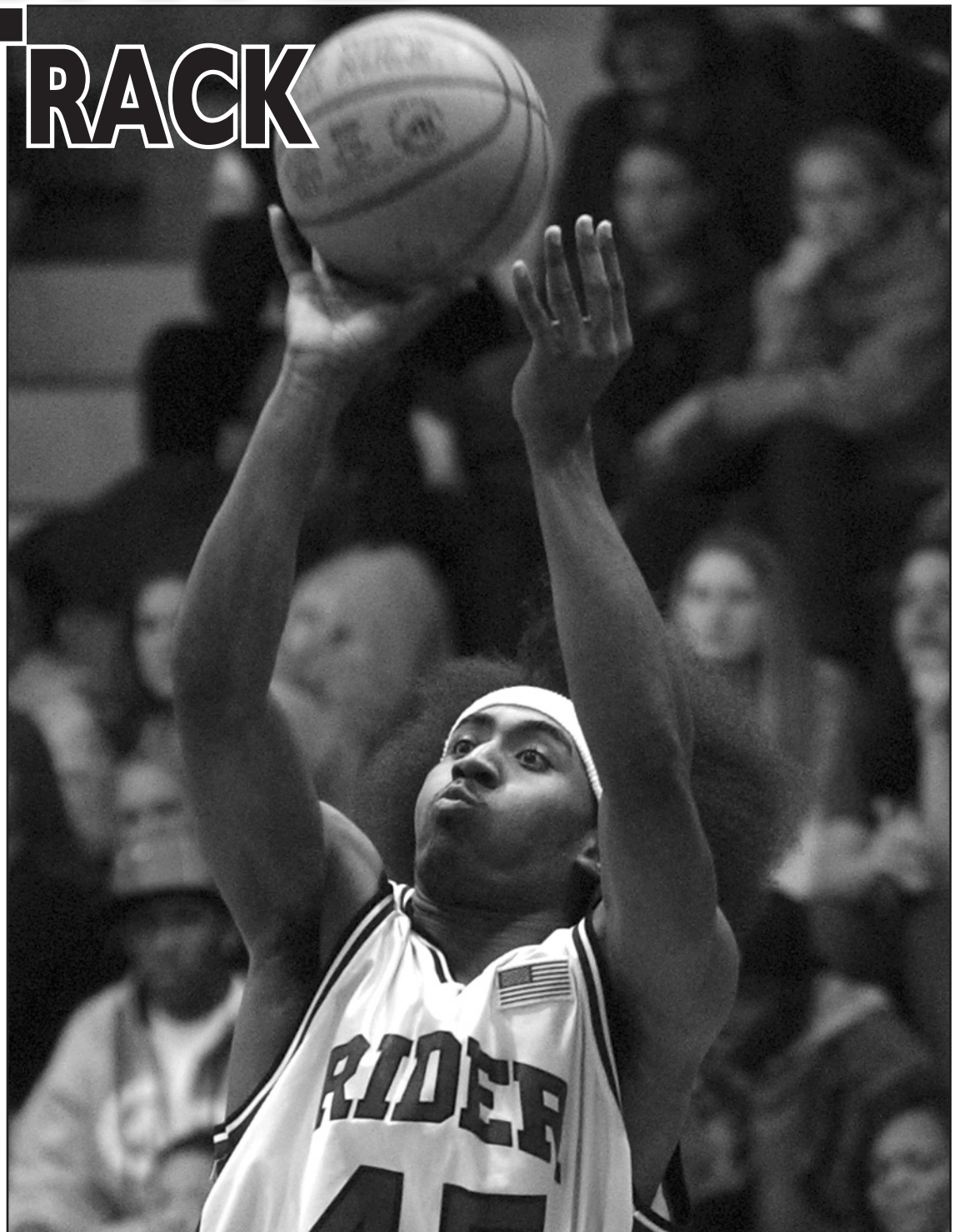


Photo by Pete Borg

Senior Laurence Young takes a shot during Monday night's 66-63 victory over Canisius. It was Young's final appearance at Alumni Gym during the regular season. The team will try to avenge its disastrous loss to Fairfield as the Broncs visit the Stags this Sunday afternoon.

have to learn to slow down and try to be more disciplined."

Rider sometimes struggles with maintaining discipline and patience, especially with an explosive player like Johnson.

"We have the most dynam-

ic player in the open court in the MAAC," said Harnum of Johnson. "We want to get out and run, but we have to work on learning to slow the game down when we need to."

The Broncs (15-10, 9-

5 MAAC) look to revenge its last blowout loss against Fairfield as it travels north to face the Stags this Sunday afternoon. Rider is currently in a three-way tie for third place in the conference.

DESIRE FOR MORE

Teams eye MAAC title

By Mike Caputo
Staff Writer

Winning a championship is not easy, nor is defending one. The Rider men's and women's swimming and diving team (RUSDT) is faced with both of these objectives this weekend as it attempts to make a splash at the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Swimming Championships, held at Loyola College in Maryland. The women's squad dominated last year by taking home the MAAC championship, while the men fell just short to rival Marist Red Foxes.

Confidence reigned in the thought processes of the

Rider swimmers the week of the championships, but the Broncs realize there is indeed a lot of work ahead before it can celebrate.

"I don't think any team will be in the way of us [winning the title]," said senior diver Erin Moore. "But Marist and Loyola are threats."

The men's team, on the other hand, is concentrating on Marist to avenge its heartbreaking loss in last year's MAAC championship.

"Marist is our top rival and concern," said junior swimmer Brad Lacey.

Indeed, Marist is a concern especially since the Red Foxes

and the Broncs are neck and neck when it comes to top individual finishing times during the 2003-2004 campaign. In all 16 swimming events, Rider and Marist account for 14 of the top finishes with the Broncs having six swimmers in that group.

There are other teams not to be forgotten in the championships and one of those teams is host Loyola.

"They [Loyola] have bragging rights at their home pool," said Lacey. "They think they are

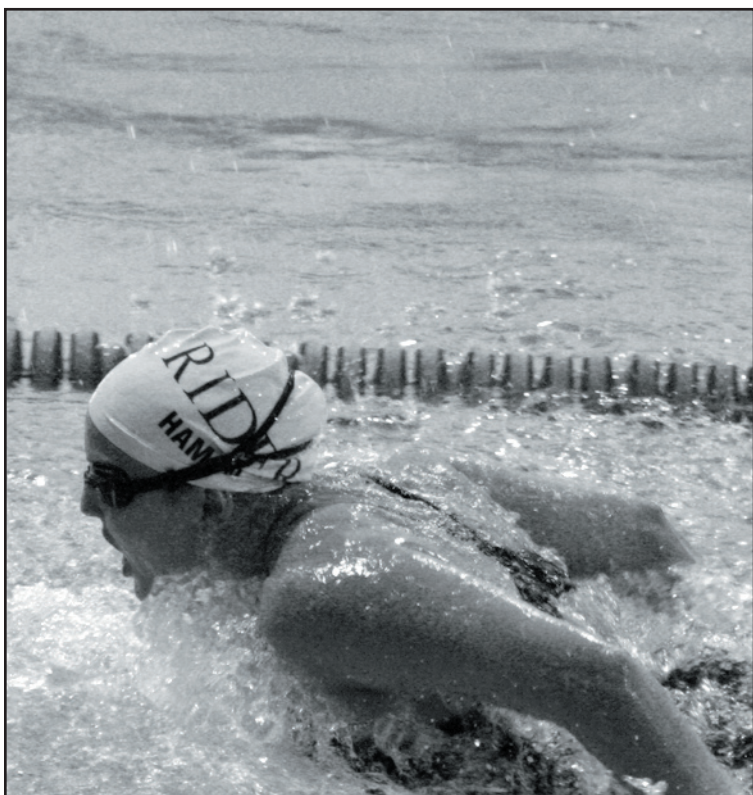


Photo by Hugh Tsung

Senior Erin Hamen swims at a recent meet. Rider is currently competing in the MAAC Championships at Loyola College this weekend. The women are looking to repeat, while the men are looking to overtake Marist, last year's champion.

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