

# READY TO ROCK

## Broncs host MAAC tourney

By David Hurka  
Staff Writer

Rider's regular season is now over, and the men are looking to put the end of their season behind them. Rider closed out the year on a three game losing streak. They are the seventh seed in this year's MAAC Tournament and will play Saint Peter's tonight.

Rider played strong in its last two games against Niagara and Canisius, but was not able to pull out a victory. The Broncs eliminated a nine point deficit against Niagara in the last minute and a half, including a three-pointer by Robert Taylor with three seconds left to send the game into O.T.

In overtime, however, Niagara proved to be resilient, pulling out the victory against the Broncs, 78-72. Sophomore Jerry Johnson had 12 points, while junior Lawrence Young led the team with 13.

Against Canisius, Rider played without its leading scorer, Jerry Johnson, so the team needed someone to pick up the slack. That person was freshman Edwin Muniz, who had a career day, scoring 29 points.

Rider again recovered from



Photo by Jennifer Kuhn

Sophomore Jerry Johnson takes a shot over a Loyola defender in the final home game of the season. The Broncs will play Saint Peter's tonight at 7:15, at the Sovereign Bank Arena. This is the first time Rider has hosted the MAAC Tournament.

a late deficit, as they trailed by 11 before starting a 13-6 run with Muniz scoring 11 of the 13. They closed the gap to a mere four points, but would get no closer and fell to Canisius 84-74. Muniz's performance in the last week of the season helped him earn a spot on the MAAC All-Rookie Team, and Jerry Johnson received a spot on the first team All-MAAC, which puts him in the running for MAAC Player of the Year Honors.

The Broncs now have to put all awards aside as they begin their charge in the

MAAC Tournament. As the seventh seed, they have a long and difficult road to travel, but it was the seventh seed last year, Siena, that eventually won the tournament and earned a spot the NCAA Tournament.

Rider and Saint Peter's split their meetings this year, with each team winning on their respective home court. Both games were close, as Rider won their game by four, and Saint Peter's took their victory by only three. Despite the low seed, the players have high hopes for the tournament.

"I'd like to be a higher seed,

but Siena showed last year that seeding isn't all that important," said senior Tank Wahlmann. "It all comes down to a four day tournament."

Rider will also look to improve upon its record in both the MAAC Tournament and the Sovereign Bank Arena. In MAAC post-season play, the Broncs are 2-5, and have been knocked out of the tournament each year in the quarter-finals.

At the Sovereign Bank Arena, Rider is 2-6 overall, with a win against Princeton this year, as well as a loss against Siena.

Head coach Don Harnum believes that the Sovereign Bank Arena gives the Broncs some home-court advantage.

"We're playing in a place we're familiar with. Hopefully we'll have the largest contingent of fans there so it will really be a home court advantage," he said.

Wahlmann agrees, though he says the arena is lacking something.

"It's not like playing in the Zoo here, but it's better than Buffalo or Albany," he said.

**See "MAAC" page 10**

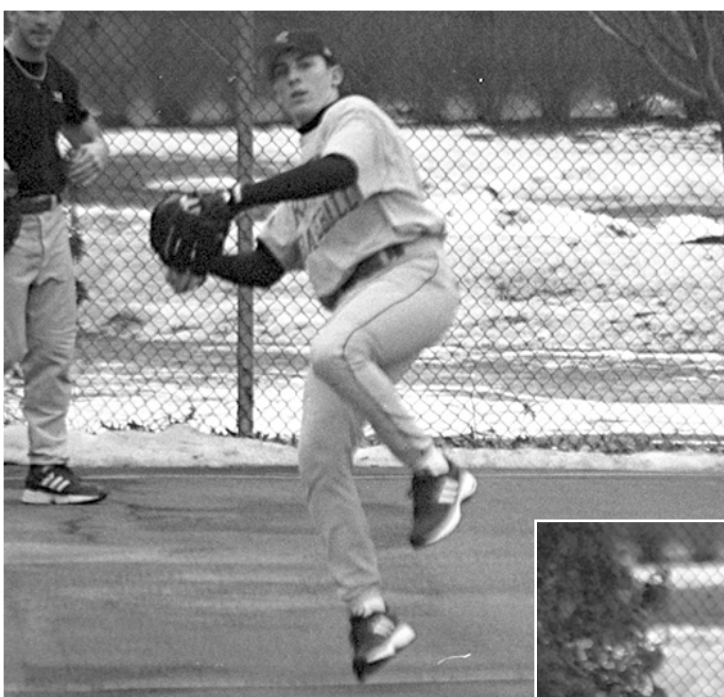


Photo by Jennifer Kuhn

Freshmen Mike Poalise (above) and Charles VanSchaick (right) field balls at a recent practice. Their season opener has been postponed due to snow. The new opener is now this Tuesday against Drexel at 3:00.



## Swinging affair

### Baseball looks to repeat past success

By Jared Vichko  
Sports Editor

When someone is cooking, they follow a recipe. When someone successfully combines all the ingredients together, it can turn out to form something wonderful. This year, all the ingredients are in place for a

highly productive baseball season, and the outcome should be very successful.

The baseball team is filled with veteran leadership across the board, as well as young talent ready to step into the spotlight.

"We feel very confident going into the season," said senior Casey Long. "We have a lot of returning players who are very experienced."

Long, a returning second team All-East infielder at third base, batted .419 last year with a Rider single season record 88 hits. He also has the record for career hits at Rider, and is a very consistent defender.

Filling out the rest of the infield are first baseman Jared Carle, second baseman Dante

Paolillo, both seniors, freshmen Bryan Wagner or Steve Sciaraffo at shortstop, and Long at third.

"Our infield is loaded with veterans," said Long. "We have three seniors, and we all are very comfortable playing with each other. It's good for the freshmen playing alongside older players. They should learn a lot faster."

The outfield consists of two seniors and a junior, and is one of the best in the conference. Senior centerfielder Carl Loadenthal stole 20 bases last year and was second on the team in triples and third in runs scored. He has 135 career hits, putting him in the top 30 all-time at Rider.

**See "Ball" page 10**