Flag football to face TCNJ
ZBT represents Rider tonight

By Laura Sass
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The next big sporting event at Rider is not the MAAC basketball tournament or the baseball championship. It is an intramural flag football game in honor of Michael San Andres.

San Andres died last November as the result of a heart condition while playing football in the intramural league.

"After the tragedy, I really wanted to do something," said Geoffrey McBride, director of intramurals. "He really loved football. He came everyday to play. If a game had to be canceled because of weather or something, the phone call to tell him was the one I would dread because he would be so disappointed."

The intramural program offers such sports as flag football, soccer, basketball, softball and volleyball, as well as events such as a pool tournament, a home run derby and a slam dunk contest, a three point contest and a home run derby.

"The intramural program has been very successful this year," McBride said. "We even have one team from Westminster, but they have trouble making the game because of choir practice."

McBride attributes the success of the program partly to the amount of advertising that he and his staff have done, and partly to the staff itself.

"I think one of the reasons the program has improved so much is because we have a bigger staff this year," he said. "We have 33 people compared to the nine we had last year. We're also a lot more accessible this year as a department. I send people to Daly's for sign-ups constantly. I'm very visible on campus and talk to people, which also spreads the word."

McBride stressed the fact intramurals are for anybody who would like to participate in sports without dealing with the stress of being on a college team, not necessarily athletes or former athletes.

"Intramurals allows students who are good at sports but don't play on a college team, either because they didn't get enough scholarship money or because they didn't want to, a place to go," he said. "Everybody is welcome."

Although the program has been extremely popular this year, McBride is already thinking ahead to improve it.

"We've looked into entering leagues outside Rider," he said. "We want to make the league more competitive. It is pretty competitive now, especially the football league."

According to McBride, the football team went to great lengths to play, including discussing plans to line up their cars with headlights on for more light and playing in the snow.

"Our championship game was played in the snow," he said.

The football team will next be facing TCNJ in the Michael San Andres Memorial Football game on Friday, April 4, at 8 p.m. at TCNJ.

"I talked to his family and they're happy that we're doing it," McBride said. "They'll be at the game. Everybody misses him and is happy about dedicating the game to him."

I n the Robert Frost poem “The Road Less Travelled,” he agonizes between two roads, carefully thinking of which route to take. At last, he chooses the road less traveled, and in his own words, “that has made all the difference.”

If you follow sports, you too have had to make a decision recently about what road to take. Down one path, you could watch “The Road to the Final Four” and follow the recent NCAA Tournament. The other path, “The Road to Baghdad,” detailed the march that the coalition forces are making as they approach the city.

Comparing these two events, the Final Four, and the War on Iraq, makes about as much sense as comparing a paper cut and bypass surgery. In terms of the effect on our society and the magnitude around the world, what is more important, basketball or war?

I’m not saying that games should be called off or postponed. The soldiers are over there fighting to defend our current way of life, not so we would alter ours. Sports, and their impact on our society, need to be viewed as what they are, simply games.

Metaphors and terminology that were previously used to describe athletes, games or terrific plays need to be used with more caution and reverence.

If someone hits a game-winning shot, don’t call it courageous. Courage is staying up 24 hours straight while you’re engaged in a firefight, trying to kill someone who’s trying to kill you. When someone leads his or her team to an impressive victory, let’s not label them as heroic. A real hero throws their body over a live grenade, sacrificing his or her life to save others.

When athletes mess up in the NCAA tournament, they return home heartbro-