

Broncs battle to the end

Team takes top-seeded Richmond to the wire

By Jared Vichko
Sports Editor

Everyone remembers what happened the first time Rocky Balboa fought Apollo Creed. Before the fight began, people gave him a snowball's chance in hell to win. Everyone except Rocky himself thought he was going to lose badly. But as the bout began, everyone's pre-fight predictions began to fade. Even though Creed retained the title, the respect belonged to Balboa.

This past weekend the field hockey team played the role of the underdog, as it traveled to top-seeded University of Richmond for the NCAA Play in Game. Armed with sticks instead of boxing gloves, the Broncs took Richmond to the wire but came up short, 2-1.

The game pitted the Broncs offense, one of the most prolific in the country, against the Richmond defense, which came into the game 10th in the nation in total defense.

The visiting Broncs jumped on the board first, sending a message that they weren't just going to back down because they were the underdog. Freshman Courtney Bertos scored on an assist from fellow freshman Victoria Barrington to put Rider ahead 1-0 with 15 minutes remaining in the first half.

Though the Broncs were trying to play the role of Cinderella, midnight struck early as Richmond tied the game 1-1, 14 minutes into the first half, and then scored the deciding goal less than a minute later.

"We all went out and played our hardest, we just came up short," said freshman Ally Hunter. "We scored first



Photo by Jennifer Kuhn

Sophomore Katie Sebastian goes after the ball at a game earlier this season. The Broncs season ended on Tuesday with a 2-1 loss in the NCAA Play-In Game to Richmond University.

so we knew we had a chance to win."

Though the Broncs lost, the team was still happy with their performance.

"It was a very clean and well played field hockey game," said Bertos. "No one expected us to be in the game. The fact that we had a lead and a chance to

win the game is a great testament to our team."

"We played better than we had all season," said senior Krissy Merrill. "We were at a tremendous disadvantage. We played on their home field and challenged them all the way to the end. We

just gritted our teeth and did it."

With a victory, the Broncs would have advanced to the NCAA Tournament. Unlike March Madness, this tournament only features 16 teams, so Rider qualifying would have been

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Women's soccer falls in finals



Photo by Jennifer Kuhn

Sophomore Tami Coyle and the Broncs lost in the championship on Sunday.

By Nicole Santore
Staff Writer

Women's soccer made history this past weekend by making it to the MAAC Championships. If they won, they would have been the first women's soccer team ever to qualify for the NCAA tournament.

On Friday, Nov. 8, Rider defeated Fairfield University in the semifinals of the MAAC tournament in double overtime. This was a big win for Rider considering they lost to Fairfield a week before that.

"It showed that we had more heart and wanted it more," said freshman Ashley Johnson.

Junior Sarah Artale scored her first goal with 30 minutes left in the second half. Fairfield tied the score later in the half and forced the game into overtime. Artale scored the winning goal with 3:25 left in the second overtime.

"The team came out ready to play," said sophomore Tami Coyle. "We prepared all week for this game and it showed."

Goalie Erin Wolleon had six saves. This win advanced the team to the

finals.

"We played really well, we picked it up in the end for it being such a long game," said junior Molli Burns. "It was a really good showing."

The championships were played on Sunday, Nov. 10, against Loyola. Loyola had won the past two consecutive MAAC titles. They were the number two seed.

Rider was defeated in a tough game, 3-0. Wolleon made six saves and Loyola's goalie, Erica Niemann, only made four saves for her eighth shutout.

"We were happy with our performance," said Artale of the game. "It was tougher since we only had 24 hours to prepare."

Artale, Burns, and sophomore Stephanie Best were named to the All-tournament team.

On Thursday, Nov. 7, both Artale and Burns were named to the first team All-MAAC Soccer Team. Coyle was named second team and freshmen Allison Spehar and Johnson named MAAC-All-Rookie Team.

Artale was second in the MAAC in goals, goals per game, points per

game, shots, shots per game, and eighth in assists. Also this year, she scored 16 goals and 36 points giving her 30 goals for her career and 70 career points, all records at Rider.

"It felt good," said Artale. "Last year I made second team so this year was pretty exciting."

Burns, a midfielder, started 18 games with one goal and one assist.

"We had a young defense that played well with a new system that worked," said Burns.

Coyle missed several games at the end of the season from a knee injury but still had started 15 games with four goals and three assists.

Spehar, another midfielder, played in 16 games and had five goals. Johnson started in 18 games scoring one goal and one assist.

Marianne Hanna was named MAAC All-Academic team for this season. She had a 3.3 GPA as an Elementary Education student. She played in 16 games and started 14 of them. She had three goals and three

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