ACCOMPLISHING ITS GOAL
Ice hockey team clinches playoff spot

By Andrew Straub
Staff Writer

The ice hockey team has certainly had a roller coaster ride of a season. Plagued by injuries and disappointing losses, the Broncs have been able to hold a 18-10 record and look to lock up a top three seed in the MACHA tournament sometime in its remaining four games. At times this season, the Broncs look like the team that has made it to the MACHA tournament championship for the last two years. Other times, it looks as if its skates could use a little more sharpening.

This weekend’s games were no different, as the Broncs lost a hard-fought game against Wagner, 7-2, but defeated the University of Maryland-Baltimore County (UMBC), 5-2, and Seton Hall, 7-2.

“The season has been real up-and-down so far,” said Nick D’Aurizio, co-captain. “We’ve played some real good teams real tight, but we’ve also lost some games we should have won.”

“We carried over our good play against Wagner to the UMBC and Seton Hall games,” said D’Aurizio. “We were coming off a few bad weeks of hockey, but we really turned it around and started to score and play better overall.”

- Nick D’Aurizio

Wagner does not indicate how close the game really was. trailing 3-2 at the end of both the first and second periods, Rider finally succumbed to an overpowering offensive unit, giving up four goals in the final period.

“We came out sluggish in the first 10 minutes and got beaten to all the loose pucks,” said freshman defenseman Mark Messemer. “But after we settled down we played right with them throughout the whole game.”

UMBC and Seton Hall were far different games.

The Broncs controlled the puck throughout both and broke out with a much needed offensive performance. The victories can also be attributed to strong goalie play by senior Jeff Moyer.

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The Beehives’ 10th win of the year in the remaining four games at home, including another showdown with Wagner. Come tournament time, based on Rider hockey’s raw talent, the team should be considered a force to be reckoned with and a heavy favorite to return to the MACHA championship.

Many questions can be asked of the team (7-5 MAAC, 13-10 overall), such as what direction that they are headed and how they will show up against the rest of the competition. The answers will hopefully reveal themselves tonight when Rider travels to take on the ninth place Marist Red Foxes.

Harnum said that the Broncs are not looking past any team, especially after its recent performances.

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Where do you want us to go; we are going to Poughkeepsie [Marist] tomorrow,” exclaimed Harnum after the Fairfield loss.

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