By Jared Vichko
Sports Editor

After a tumultuous beginning to the men’s tennis season, the squad has bounced back and is looking to build momentum heading into the post-season. The team, which began the season 0-2, won its last two matches against Coppin State and Monmouth to improve to 2-2.

“We’re finally starting to come together as a team,” said freshman Dan Honig. “If we continue to work together, good things will happen.”

Good things did happen against Coppin State this past Monday, where Rider emerged victorious 4-3. Sophomore Mike Greenberg won in doubles and also won five straight games at fourth singles.

“That was a good win [against Coppin State],” said Honig. “Everyone stepped up and seemed to inspire his teammates.

“Mike and Neil won a big tiebreaker,” said Honig. “We really needed that point. That was huge.”

Elliot Eche, who typically plays third singles, was forced to first after Rider’s top player, senior Frank Ruggiero, was absent due to a job interview. Though Eche lost 6-4 6-3, he played valiantly in the defeat and seemed to inspire his teammates.

“Elliot normally plays three but he was moved up because our number one wasn’t there,” said Honig. “He had to play first and he did very well.”

Building on their previous win, the Broncs dismantled Monmouth 7-0 on Wednesday.

“Everyone played well [against Monmouth],” said Honig. “It was a total team effort. We took care of business and did what we needed to do.”

Ruggiero, Eche, Stancio, Greenberg, McConnell and Stepp all won easily in singles. Ruggiero, who was absent against Coppin State, came back to win 6-2 6-2 to lead the way for the Broncs.

“Frank did great at number one,” said Honig. “It was good to have him back but everyone else played good around him too.”

After falling to Monmouth in the fall, the win shows the overall improvement of the team and is a sign of maturation of the younger players.

“These wins will help us as we jockey for seeding in the upcoming playoffs,” said Honig. “The next four matches for us are all winnable. Hopefully we can turn this into six straight wins.”

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**Softball anything but soft**

I’ve heard that insanity can be labeled as doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. So call me crazy when I assume that a good team on campus gets no support. It’s official now. You can now add softball, along with field hockey, wrestling, swimming and diving into the ‘great but no one cares’ file.

So what is your reason for not going? It can’t be there isn’t a good product on the field. The Broncs are 18-8 and sitting atop the MAAC. It can’t be because you think this year is a fluke. The team is returning MAAC Champions and boast the MAAC Preseason Player of the Year, Heather Beintema (who’s a sophomore by the way).

It can’t be because you aren’t familiar with the team. Come on, this is Rider. We’re not a big school. If two people hook up at a party on a Thursday night, everyone knows about it. It’s not like it is when you take 10:20 class on Friday morning. It’s fairly easy to distinguish the athletes on campus.

It can’t be because you’re busy. I hear too often that students complain that there is nothing to do on the weekends. Perhaps they should take a stroll down to the athletic fields and see one of the finer teams in Division I compete.

If someone does happen to catch a game, he or she may have the privilege of seeing Beintema pitch. She already has a Rider single-game record for strikeouts with 15 and she hasn’t allowed a run in her last 38 innings. She has six shutouts already. You’ll have more luck scoring with Jessica Simpson than you have with her. She was named the MAAC Rookie of the Year. MVP of the playoffs and first team All-MAAC. If she played on the men’s basketball team, they would rearrange sunsets.

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