The true summer job for all Rider athletes

By Mike Caputo
Sports Editor

College students look for jobs over the summer to make some extra cash, but student-athletes are already guaranteed at least one job. This job is unlike any other because it does not involve getting paid or getting a physical exam.

“Athletes from all teams are given training programs for the summer as well as through the school year,” said Strength and Conditioning Specialist and head of Mauer Fitness Center Gerry Green.

While summer may encourage nonstop beach visits and staying cool, it is essential for athletes to maintain a consistent physical program in order to ensure prime physical performance when their respective seasons arrive. Various forms of exercise are included in specific programs given to players.

“It is a lot of agility, skill work and lots of conditioning,” said sophomore soccer player Aileen Ascolese.

The coaches either perform the duties of trainer by themselves or they go for external help.

“Some team coaches feel able to devise summer programs themselves,” said Green. “Others hire external part-time strength coaches to construct and/or administer sport specific exercise regimes.”

One team that has a coach who prefers to devise his own plan is women’s soccer head coach Kevin Long. Long issues a workout book containing his expectations for the players over the summer.

“If you don’t do what he has in the book, you will not be prepared for the season,” said Ascolese.

Sometimes coaches encourage their athletes to perform their own methods of training over the summer. After a rigorous spring training program, swimming and diving coach Stephen Fletcher follows a more casual summer program.

“Each team member goes home and competes on their club team over the summer,” said sophomore diver Chris Coles.

Trainers and/or coaches are important in providing precise insight and individual attention towards the needs of every athlete on the team that they are working for. The trainers will administer physical tests on the athletes periodically. The test results act as a grade to allow coaches to determine whether or not the athletes carried out their respective programs.

“I typically do performance testing and evaluation prior to the end of the semester and repeat the test when the athletes return,” said Green. “In addition to compliance, the pre and post tests serve as an additional motivation for athletes who by nature are competitive and desire to be successful.”

The effectiveness of the program is based upon the individual athletes, but when the program is followed, the results are demonstrated on the playing field during the season.

“I believe coaches are pleased with the results,” said Green.

Coles believes that a steady diet of off season training in the spring and summer helps puts the team ahead of the rest the competition.

“Off season training helps us progress to that higher level faster,” said Coles.

Although summer training is positive, athletes like Ascolese are not ashamed to reveal the grueling nature of some of it.

“Everything about summer training is hell,” said Ascolese.

Athletes such as men’s basketball player Jerry Johnson enjoy having fun in the sun, but at the same time recognize the need to maintain physical shape to ensure peak performance.

Moving On Out

Changes are in baseball’s future

By Andrew Straub
Staff Writer

The only consistent aspects of professional baseball are that players will be traded and franchises will relocate to more profitable markets. In the case of Rider baseball, the team won’t be trading anyone, but they will be losing long-time manager Sonny Pittaro to retirement. The Broncos eventually will also be “relocated” to the backfields of Rider’s campus.

Currently, Richard F. Daly Field is quoted by Rider’s athletic website as being “one of the finest baseball facilities on the East Coast.” Exceptional features that the field possesses includes an electronic scoreboard and true dugouts.

The soon-to-be constructed diamond will be a completely new facility, offering more functions than the current field. Replacing the vacancy left by the baseball field will be a new soccer field, which moves from the backfields.

“I think the move will be a positive thing. It gives the team an opportunity to have a brand new attractive field that will help with recruiting new players,” said manager Pittaro who will be retiring after his 34th season as Rider Baseball’s head coach.

“The field we use now has a few tough things about it that the new field won’t. It will defi- nitely be a plus.”

These “tough things” were not specified by Pittaro.

The relocation of the baseball field is part of President Rosanski’s renovation plans. The assumption is that the move will improve student and faculty parking.

“The relocation will be good for the school and the program. There are lots of people working hard to make it a beautiful site,” said Pittaro.

“Hopefully when it is completed, it will allow Rider to host conference tournaments for years to come, the background elements are a great site for baseball.”

Along with the field relocation, the Athletic Department has begun a national search for a replacement for Pittaro.