Despite weekend stumble, volleyball still playing well

By Mike Caputo
Staff Writer

Rider women’s volleyball team has been prone during the last couple of seasons to dig itself into holes, but the team is now bumping the competition and spiking down all critics.

The Broncs have surged to a 7-6 record in the first month of the 2003 season and have already surpassed the 2002 season during the last weekend of August. The Broncs finished with a 2-2 record by splitting the games on each day.

“Overall our team has improved immensely,” said Niewender. “There is much more to the team beyond the sensational seniors, according to Head Coach Emily Ahlquist. "They have evolved into a cohesive unit and are all leaders," she said.

The abundance of young talent also contributes to the winning attitude of the Broncs, such as fierce junior Jaclyn Levi and sophomore standout Stefanie Lombardo.

An impressive showing at the competitive LaSalle Invitational kicked off the 2003 season during the last weekend of August. The Broncs finished with a 2-2 record by splitting the games on each day.

On day one, the Rider squad fell to St. Francis in a three close games and stormed back later in the day to defeat Morgan State in five games.

Day two, once again, started with a loss, this time against the host LaSalle. Nevertheless the Broncs managed to bounce back and beat Lafayette in four games. Levi and Householder combined for an outstanding 45 kills and 55 digs on day one while Niewender starred with a combined 19 kills on day two.

The team went home to Colgate and Colgate came out run-ning at the start of the second game in a row with a score. Just a little over eight minutes later, sophomore Courtney Berros scored her team-high fifth goal of the season, with the assist coming from Ashley Boulden. She added the final goal with 5:54 remaining.

Rider’s offense was again solid, as the team only allowed Longwood two shots, both stopped by Bearish, giving Rider the shutout.

Colgate came out running at the start of the second half, making this her second half, going to a one point lead for most of the second half.

The Rider offense played a fundamentally sound game. Maddy Boulden scored on a well-executed pass from Conlon 13:14 into the game. Sophomore Ally Hunter scored an unassisted goal at the end of the first half, giving Rider a one point lead for most of the second half, followed by a hard-fought game against Colgate, having to hold a one point lead for most of the second half.

The Broncs’ attack was solid, as the team only allowed Longwood two shots, both stopped by Bearish, giving Rider the shutout. Rider’s defense was again solid, as the team only allowed Longwood two shots, both stopped by Bearish, giving Rider the shutout.

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