Women’s soccer sets sights on a title run
By Jared Vichko

For the Rider women’s soccer team, last season ended with many questions of what would have happened if certain events occurred. What if the team had played its best soccer in the home playoff loss to Loyola? What if Rider hadn’t been the victim of several questionable calls which led to crucial goals? This afternoon, when Rider begins conference play at Siena, the time for questioning is over as the team begins its quest for the postseason.

“We are definitely excited about playing teams in our conference,” said junior defender Aileen Ascolese. “This is what we prepare for in the offseason, the reason why we practice. We are ready.” It would appear that the Broncs have been ready ever since its first game, as the team has jumped out to a 5-2-1 record.

“We feel that we are playing excellent in every area,” said Ascolese. “[The team] is constantly improving and striving to be the best. We’re taking more shots and putting more into the test and at the same time our defense isn’t letting anything in. We’ve been getting solid contributions from the whole team.” Being the best hasn’t been too difficult for the Broncs, who have been led so far by their offensive dynamo, senior Tami Coyle. Coyle who is chasing down the all-time scoring record at Rider (with only seven goals to go). She has twice been named the MAAC Player of the Week and leads the conference in goals (eight) and total points (18).

“She’s the hardest working player I’ve played with or against,” said Ascolese. “She’s hungry to win and she never quits. She’s a great teammate.” While many of Coyle’s accomplishments are recognized in the box score, it is her leadership that the team values most.

“She is our coach out there on the field,” said Ascolese. “She’s our captain and we definitely follow her lead. Whatever our coach wants us to do, she makes sure we do it.” The Broncs know what it will get from Coyle each and every game, but it has been the emergence of freshman defender Shana Herman, who already has scored two game-winning goals, that has provided the team with a spark.

“We knew coming in that she was talented and a terrific player,” said Ascolese. “But no one expected a freshman to be scoring game-winning goals. And she does it while playing defense. She brings a lot to our team.”

One of the game-losers came in the 2-1 overtime loss to Loyola? What if Rider had taken a shot at an equalizer at the end of the first half? “She is our coach out there on the field,” said Ascolese. “She’s our captain and we definitely follow her lead. Whatever our coach wants us to do, she makes sure we do it.”

The Broncs know what it will get from Coyle each and every game, but it has been the emergence of freshman defender Shana Herman, who already has scored two game-winning goals, that has provided the team with a spark.

“We knew coming in that she was talented and a terrific player,” said Ascolese. “But no one expected a freshman to be scoring game-winning goals. And she does it while playing defense. She brings a lot to our team.”

One of the game-losers came in the 2-1 overtime loss to Loyola? What if Rider had taken a shot at an equalizer at the end of the first half? “She is our coach out there on the field,” said Ascolese. “She’s our captain and we definitely follow her lead. Whatever our coach wants us to do, she makes sure we do it.”

The Broncs know what it will get from Coyle each and every game, but it has been the emergence of freshman defender Shana Herman, who already has scored two game-winning goals, that has provided the team with a spark.

“We knew coming in that she was talented and a terrific player,” said Ascolese. “But no one expected a freshman to be scoring game-winning goals. And she does it while playing defense. She brings a lot to our team.”

One of the game-losers came in the 2-1 overtime loss to Loyola? What if Rider had taken a shot at an equalizer at the end of the first half? “She is our coach out there on the field,” said Ascolese. “She’s our captain and we definitely follow her lead. Whatever our coach wants us to do, she makes sure we do it.”