**FEELS GOOD TO BE HOME**

Women’s soccer to host playoffs today

By Mike Caputo

Staff Writer

Often in sports, when the stakes are high, a team reveals its true colors. The women’s soccer team did just that when it mowed through its competition last weekend to earn a spot in the Metro-Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) playoffs that will be held today at Rider.

The playoff scenario posed a challenge for the Broncs when the team had to sweep the weekend’s games on the road in western New York combined with a Manhattan loss to Marist to earn a spot in the conference tournament.

“When we got the phone call on the bus ride home informing us that Manhattan lost, we went out of control,” said junior Stephanie Best. “We lost our minds!”

A memorable battle on Friday against the previously undefeated Niagara Purple Eagles served as the first step towards achieving its goals. Rider was victorious by a 1-0 score in double overtime as team scoring leader junior Tami Coyle scored the winning goal unassisted with season scoring leader junior Tami Coyle by a 1-0 score in double overtime as team achieving its goals. Rider was victorious.

Loyola beat us on their turf field and when they step onto our grass field, they won’t be able to handle us,” said junior Deidre Nowak.

The Broncs host the four-team MAAC championship tournament today. Second seed Niagara matches up with the third seed Fairfield Stags at 11 a.m. and the fourth seed Broncs take on the top seed Loyola at 1:30 p.m. Rider’s last loss was to the Greyhounds on Saturday, Oct. 25, at Loyola’s artificial turf field by the count of 1-0.

“Our home turf, our victory,” she said.

Best sums up the team’s mindset going into Friday’s showdown against Loyola by simply stating, “It’s our time.”

TWO DAYS LATER, THE BRONCS TOOK THE BUST OUT TO NEARBY CANISIUS TO FINISH ITS REGULAR SEASON QUEST AGAINST THE 0-8 GRIFFS (1-13-1 OVERALL). THE GAME REMAINED TIGHT AT THE END OF THE FIRST HALF AS RIDER HELD ON TO A 1-0 LEAD AFTER A GOAL FROM JUNIOR CASEY FAGAN THAT WAS ASSISTED BY SENIOR COLLEEN EVANS. SENIOR SARAH ARRALE PUT AN END TO ANY IDEAS OF AN UPSET WHEN SHE SCORED TWO GOALS, ONE UNASSISTED AND THE OTHER ASSISTED BY COYLE. NINE SAVES FROM WOLEON (FOURTH SHUTOUT) AND THE FIFTH SHUTOUT OF THE YEAR POSTED BY THE RIDER DEFENSE CAPPED OFF AN EXCEPTIONAL ALL AROUND TEAM EFFORT THAT LED TO THE PLAYOFF CLINCHING VICTORY.

“Going into the Niagara game, we knew as a defensive unit that they had a very good forward that we had to stop,” said Best. “We knew the two games were very important and we worked together on defense to put up the shutouts.”

The Broncs will definitely have its hands full when the undefeated Greyhounds come to town, but sophomore Aileen Ascolese is very optimistic.

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**‘Our home turf, our victory.’**

*Aileen Ascolese*

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Jared Vichko

The longest mile

The Kenyans were already headed on a plane back home. P. Diddy was sleeping comfortably in his bed, resting his tired and weary muscles. The cameras were gone; the spectators had dispersed and gone their separate ways. The workers had begun to pick up empty Gatorade cups.

Yet Zoe Koplowitz kept running. Koplowitz, the last person to finish the New York City Marathon, crossed the finish line with a time of 29 hours, 45 minutes. No, that’s not a mistake. 29 hours, 45 minutes.

Thirty years ago, Koplowitz was diagnosed with diabetes and multiple sclerosis (MS). To many athletes, being diagnosed with MS is viewed as a death sentence to an athletic career. So what did she do when she heard the news? Did she call it quits and hang up her sneakers? No, she’s competing in a marathon. That’s like trying to ride a bike without legs or throw a football without arms.

Even though she finished nearly 27 hours behind the winner, Koplowitz realizes that her time doesn’t really matter.

“I think that’s the ultimate lesson,” she said. “You just keep going until you get it done. You do what it takes.”

Doing what it takes meant starting the race at 5:30 a.m., four hours before the other runners began. Doing what it takes meant stopping every mile to stretch and, because she has diabetes as well, having her blood sugar tested.

Oh, and she wasn’t in a wheelchair. That would have been too easy. Koplowitz finished the 26.2-mile course on crutches. Crutches! And to think I complain that my hand hurts when I have to write in the blue exam books.

Don’t think that this was the ultimate goal or the last