Women’s soccer falls at home
By Mike Caputo
Staff Writer

Good things may always come to an end, but in the case of the women’s soccer team, great things are just beginning. A program that once lived in the basement of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) has progressed and transformed into a conference powerhouse after only seven seasons of existence.

In 2003 destiny revealed itself on Rider’s home field last Friday, Nov. 7, as the fourth seeded Broncs were pitted against top seed Loyola Greyhounds. Loyola came into the match-up with an undefeated MAAC record and a 2-1 victory over Rider in Maryland only a couple of weeks earlier.

The dreams of a conference title began to become a reality when Sarah Artale scored an unassisted goal about nine minutes into the first half.

“Even down 4-1, we never lost confidence; we kept fighting hard,” said junior Leah Craig.

“Tami Coyle kept hopes up; she was the one who put us back in it,” said senior Jennifer Marcella.

“I think the bad calls by the refs contributed, but I also think we should have stepped up more and scored more goals.”

Artale, Rider’s leading career scorer, got her 11th goal of the 2003 campaign and added her third assist of the season as the Greyhounds emerged victorious.

While Rider didn’t make excuses for the loss, it did acknowledge the poor officiating.

“There’s nothing we can do,” said Coyle. “We can’t change his [the ref’s] decisions. I think the bad calls by the refs contributed, but I also think we should have stepped up more and scored more goals.”

Artale and Coyle, along with seven others, were honored at the pre-MAAC tournament awards banquet. Coyle’s offensive dominance throughout the entire season earned her the MAAC offensive player of the year award and first team all conference honors. Junior Andrea Giulian also received first team honors while Artale was one of those games.

“We’ve had a lot of illnesses and injuries early in the season,” said junior defender Ken Ryker. “As soon as we can get some people back and clicking again, I think we’ll play consistently better for the rest of the season.”

The Lafayette Leopards came out firing to start the first period. Scoring just 20 seconds into the game, Lafayette showed Rider what it was up against. The Broncs responded with three goals in that same first period to go up 3-1. Exchanging goals in the second period, Rider maintained its two goal lead at 5-3. The third period was a far different story.

With a few questionable calls by the referees, Rider squandered its lead late in the period. Leopard Pete McLane sealed the Lafayette comeback with a power-play score past freshman goalkeeper Damon Noonan with only 17 seconds remaining in regulation.

“We didn’t play great from start to finish,” said junior Goaltender Nick D’Aurizio. “We came out sluggish for the game; you could tell in warm-ups.”

“Tami Coyle was great. We don’t play 100 percent. This was one of those games.”

Saturday’s game was a much different story. Regrouping