

SPORTS

Pride Snuffs Bishops In Key Soccer Match

By Decree Sports Staff

Greensboro—Greensboro College snapped the NCWC men's soccer team's conference unbeaten streak at 28 by downing the 18th-ranked Bishops by a 2-1 score.

The streak dated back to the 2004 season and saw NCWC go 26-0-2 during its four-year span. Wesleyan is now 12-3 overall, 4-1 in conference play.

A perennial nemesis in the conference tournament, The Pride (10-6-1 overall, 4-1 in USAC) jumped to a 2-0 lead on goals by Fredrik Edlund and Andrew Clark. Wesleyan struck back with an Ousmann Sarr goal, assisted by Arkadiusz Trochowski, but failed to score in the waning minutes.

The Bishops lost despite a significant advantage in shots (21-8) and shots on goal (7-3). Freshman goalkeeper Porir Gudnason suffered the loss for NCWC.

Prior to the Greensboro loss, the Bishops had been an offensive juggernaut. In its recent five-match winning streak, the Bishops scored a total of 26 goals and yielded two. On seven occasions this season, the Bishops have scored five or more goals. That includes a 13-0 drubbing of Ferrum, a 9-0 win at Averett, and more recent 8-2 and 9-0 home victories over Guilford and Chowan.

"We like to play an attacking style of soccer with a lot of quick passes and movement off of the ball," Coach Jason Kilby said in describing his current team's style of play.

The high offensive output would mean nothing if the Bishops falter in the playoffs. Last year the team won its first 16 games, finishing the regular season undefeated, and ascending as high as number two in the national rankings. Then it lost its first match in the conference tournament at home against Greensboro. The Bishops took their first two matches in the NCAAAs, but lost in the third round, again at home, to Loras College of Iowa.

"We have a lot of new faces so we started a little slow this year," Kilby explained, referring to early season losses to Rutgers-Camden and Mary Washington. "I believe we are progressing. I hope we will peak at the end of our season."

The Bishops scoring has been paced by Danny Persson, who has leads the team in goals (22) and total points (50). Other top scorers include Owen White (8 goals, 3 assists), Christopher Helm (3, 13), Robert Ivanovich (6, 6) and Ousman Sarr (8, 3).

The Bishops play a key match on November 1, when they host Christopher Newport. A win may secure the Bishops home field advantage in the conference tournament as the regular season champ.

Women's Soccer Evens Its Conference Mark

Tori Tenner headed in the decisive goal with 33 seconds remaining in last Saturday's game, as the Bishops defeated visiting Ferrum College, 2-1, and raised their conference mark to 3-3-1.

Tenner was one of eight seniors honored before the game by head coach Beverly Biancur in Senior Day activities. The other seniors are Bryanne Godfrey, Reva McCloud, Mikey Case, Alex Fountaine, Rachel Hernandez, Lauren Stearns and Megan Kintner.

Wesleyan (5-8-1, overall) managed a 1-0 lead at intermission, thanks to a goal by Carolina Mussi in the 37th minute. McCloud was credited with her 12th assist of the season after threading a pass through the middle to a cutting Mussi, who beat Panther keeper Katie Hodkinson with a low shot to her left. Ferrum tied the game in the 77th minute on a score by Kelsey Walter.

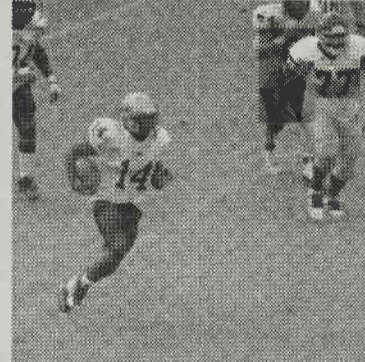
The match looked to be headed for overtime with less than a minute remaining, but a key foul called on the Panthers just outside the box set up an Aubrey Bonorden free kick. The sophomore delivered the ball into the box, setting the stage for Tenner's decisive goal.

Offense Continues to Sparkle in Recent Wins

By Jarad Brown
Decree Sports Editor

Battling Bishop records are falling every Saturday on the football field, which can only mean that it's fall again and the North Carolina Wesleyan season is in full stride.

Since starting its season 1-2, the Bishops have gone 3-1 in conference play. They beat Methodist University and Averett at home, then lost to Maryville in Tennessee. Then last Saturday night the Bishops piled up over 500 yards on offense in beating host Shenandoah, 47-28.



Antonio Harris looks for running room against Methodist. Photo by Grace Wallace

NCWC 42, Methodist 0

NCWC opened conference play with a 42-0 thrashing of Methodist University. It was the conference opener for both teams, but it was NCWC making a statement, scoring on its first four possessions and gaining over 560 total yards.

After forcing two punts, a safety, and a turnover on downs on Methodist's first four possessions, the Bishops leapt to a 29-0 halftime lead.

"All of our goals are still right there in front of us," NCWC Coach Mark Henninger said.

NCWC came out in the second half, and put any hopes of a comeback to rest as Stedman Mathis broke the longest rushing play in Wesleyan history, 84 yards for a touchdown.

The win marked the twelfth in row in conference play dating back to the 2006 season.

"This is exactly where we wanted to be when we started this program five years ago," Henninger said. "I think it's a nod to all of the players we just graduated, the upper classmen we have now, and the new players we've brought in."

NCWC 24, Maryville College 37
One week after extending its conference winning streak to 12, North Carolina Wesleyan players and fans watched it come to an abrupt end.

A trip to Maryville, Tennessee proved to be one the Bishops didn't want to make, as they gained only 37 total rushing yards, en route to losing to

Earlier in the week, the Bishops were beaten, 5-1, by conference foe Methodist University in Fayetteville.

The Monarchs raced out to a 3-0 lead with goals in the 18th, 21st, and 36th minutes, with Erica Nath scoring the game's second goal and eventual game winner.

Wesleyan's lone score came off a successful corner kick as Bonorden booted home her fourth goal of the season from 20 yards. NCWC trailed 3-1 at the break.

Methodist out-shot Wesleyan 24-9 in the match. NCWC goalkeepers Godfrey and Sarah Hess recorded seven saves apiece, while MU keeper Kasey Nichols made four stops on the day.

(Article courtesy of Sports Information)



Bishops midfielder Aubrey Bonorden in recent action against Chowan. Photo by Grace Wallace

a conference opponent for the first time since 2006.

The Bishops did gain over 235 yards through the air, but three interceptions and 142 yards' worth of penalties proved too much for NCWC to overcome.

"We simply didn't match their intensity," Henninger said. "We weren't as excited to be there as they were and it showed on the field."

NCWC 49, Averett University 24

After seeing its conference winning streak end at the hands of Maryville College, North Carolina Wesleyan threw themselves back into the win

Volleyball Team Sets School Record for Wins

By Decree Sports Staff

Greensboro—The NCWC volleyball team eclipsed the school record for conference victories, gaining its 12th and 13th against Mary Baldwin and Greensboro College on Saturday.

The wins move the Bishops to 13-2 in the USA South and 23-6 overall. Since losing two matches to Christopher Newport on September 24, the Bishops have won a total of 13 consecutive matches, seven by 3-0 scores. The team seems destined for a tournament showdown with the CNU Captains, who have built a 14-0 conference record and 26-6 overall mark.

Junior Brittany Insley led the Bishops in Saturday's two wins, recording a total of 27 kills and a hitting percentage of .535.

Earlier in the week, Wesleyan treated fans to one of its most exciting games of the season by downing Chowan University, a non-league opponent, in a five-set thriller by a 3-2 score (25-23, 22-25, 25-18, 20-25, 15-10).

Three Bishops tallied double-digit kills as Insley (18), Barbara DeRatt (15), and Leslie Hassell (12) all turned in solid performances. With their 11th straight victory, the Bishops improved to 21-6 on the season.

The teams fought to a 2-2 tie after four sets. In the deciding game, Chowan held a slim 10-9 advantage down the stretch. But the Bishops earned six straight points with the help of three Hawk attack errors and kills by Insley and DeRatt.

The Bishops finished with 55 kills as a team to Chowan's 53. NCWC also held a slight advantage in blocks at 9-6, while both teams recorded 10 service aces.

Hassell and Insley completed double-doubles with 14 and 12 digs, respectively. Insley also turned in five blocks, as did sophomore teammate Carla Pridgen. Kelly George once again anchored the Bishop defense with a team-high 17 digs, while freshman setter Mackenzie Tingle dished out 46 assists and had a game-high six service aces.

"Our team has begun to click really well," said Insley.

Coach Robin Pietryk attributes the team's success to the additional experience that her sophomore-laden team has gotten since last season. "That and the addition of a couple key new players have made us a more solid team."

Six freshmen returned from last year's team, and several have made key contributions.

Pietryk singled out George for her fine work on the back line. As the libero, George plays a defensive role, responsible for getting the ball to the Bishops setters and front-line hitters. "Kelly plays every point, but her work is unnoticed because it's a defensive position," the coach said. "It's really the most important position on the court."

Another key, Pietryk said, is that DeRatt, a sophomore, has moved to the right side of the front court, a position that allows her to take advantage of her left-handedness. "She's been able to play to her strength now," Pietryk said.

Before the season began, Pietryk had been concerned about the setting position, as all-time leading setting Caitlin George had been lost to graduation. But she has been pleased with the play of Tingle. "She's been getting the hang of our system," Pietryk said. "She's been doing a good job. She's really been getting her timing down" with the hitters on the front line.

Hassell, a freshman, has helped strengthen the outside hitter position, teaming with the NCWC's only senior, Sydney Bens, who led the team in kills (14) and hitting percentage (.480) in a recent conference victory over Meredith. "We're more complete in that position" than the team was last year, the coach said.

Despite the team's overall improvement over last year, NCWC struggled in its last match with Christopher Newport, the perennial conference powerhouse, as the Captains swept a double-header, 3-0, 3-0, on the Bishops home court.

Pietryk admits that her team must put forth a superlative effort if it is to vanquish the Captains, ranked 23rd in the nation, in the conference tournament, should the two teams meet.

column on a record-setting afternoon.

It was evident from the start that the Bishops game plan was an assault from above, as quarterback Bo Jordan completed his first eight passes and ended with 250 yards and three scores.

"(Passing) was the game plan coming in," Jordan said. "We saw some match-ups in (Averett's secondary) that we liked and got the ball to our playmakers and took advantage."

The win wasn't simply an airmail package; the ground game was clicking on all cylinders as well, gaining over 260 yards.

Despite five lost fumbles and over

"They give everyone problems," Pietryk said. "Most of their kids are five-ten to six feet. They've got a huge height advantage on most teams that they face. They're tall and they jump well and they're experienced."

Insley cited the speed of CNU's team. "They play at a completely different level than other teams in the conference," she said. "They play at a very fast pace. We'll need to quicken our game against them."

The coach said her team will need find a "little weaknesses" in CNU's team.

Regardless of which teams they face in the conference tournament, Pietryk said the Bishops will likely need to win their conference in order to qualify for the NCAA Division III tournament.

(Sports Information contributed to this article.)

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It was last spring that the players sought assistance from Public Justice, a national public interest law firm.

"This is a great win for the athletes at North Carolina Wesleyan and everyone who cares about equal opportunity for women in sports," said Public Justice's lead counsel Burton Craige, a Raleigh-based attorney in private practice with experience in Title IX suits. "We're delighted that the school has agreed to reinstate the team."

During a recent phone interview, Craige confirmed that Public Justice was first approached by the group of Wesleyan athletes. Craige and Public Justice performed their legal work on a pro bono basis, Craige said.

In a May 12 letter to the college, Public Justice charged that the school's decision to eliminate women's lacrosse violated Title IX, Craige said. Negotiations soon followed.

"Anytime you answer the phone and it's a lawyer on the other end, it gets your attention," Dr. Stanley Caine, NCWC's interim president, said in an interview. "Lawsuits can force you to make decisions you don't want to make but that's not the case here, because the reinstatement is not simply to comply with any type of laws or regulations. I think it's important to realize that the college was not found to be guilty of wrongdoing. Public Justice probably views this as a victory, and I can understand why, but no type of ruling was ever made against the college."

Dr. Caine related that it took little time for the college to reach a decision. "Getting all of the legal documents signed took longer than the discussions to reach a decision," he said. "(The reinstatement) is to the benefit of the college and the young women involved. We concluded that, especially with the strong interest shown by a number of the young women, there was a good chance that lacrosse could succeed if we gave it more time to develop. That is what we intend to do."

In a statement, Athletic Director John Thompson said the Athletic Department is pleased to revive the lacrosse program. "The nucleus of the previous team has remained on campus," he said, "and we look forward to bringing in a head coach to recruit for the program as quickly as possible."

Thompson added that the lacrosse program, plus a new women's golf team scheduled to compete in 2009, will help Wesleyan's overall recruitment of female students, as the college expands to eight women's sports. The moves come at a time when the college faces significant retention and budgetary problems.

In determining Title IX compliance, one factor is the ratio of male to females at the college. The regulations take into account students in the adult degree program as well as the ones in the traditional day program, said NCWC Sports Information Director Rikki Rich.

120 penalty yards, the victory was never in question, thanks to NCWC out-gaining the Cougars by over 300 yards and racking up 25 first downs.

The large disparity in yards is in large part due to a defense that allowed only 48 rushing yards and recorded three sacks.

Two of those were by Wesleyan's new sack leader, Quinderra Spellman. Spellman's sacks were his fourth and fifth of the season (NCWC single-season record), and his 10.5 and 11.5 of his career (NCWC career record)

The win pushed the Bishops record to 3-3 and 2-1 USA-South. "I think it was a great win for confidence. We were much more excited today," Coach Henninger said. "Going into our bye week after a loss was tough, and this was a great way to get back on track."

NCWC 47, Shenandoah 28

Wide receiver Orlando Webb set the tone for last Saturday's win, snaring a 79-yard pass touchdown pass on a flea flicker play during the team's opening drive.

For the game, Webb caught four passes for 143 yards and two touchdowns. Jordan finished 16-of-29 for 215 yards and three TDs, while freshman tailback Stedman Mathis continued his impressive play, racking up 158 rushing yards.

The defense was spearheaded by senior Quinderra Spellman who made a game-high 14 tackles and added to his team record with 1.5 sacks. Carlos Railey and Reshard Patterson each recorded interceptions.

(Sports Information contributed to this report.)

Since 2004, when football was introduced as the sixth men's sport, the main campus has been dominated by males, who now make up 57 percent of the student body. By contrast, the ADP is 74 percent female and 26 percent male, according to data provided by Cliff Sullivan, the college registrar.

Wesleyan's lacrosse team had competed for two seasons, in 2006 and 2007, and at the time the team was eliminated, college officials were concerned that player recruitment had not met expectations, noting that, in order to field a team, Wesleyan relied on athletes who had come to campus to play other sports, such as soccer.

During the 2007 season, there were 16 players on the roster, 13 of whom played in at least half of the team's matches.

On learning that the team would return, players expressed excitement.

Megan "Gumbo" Kintner, a senior from Waldorf, Maryland, said she came to Wesleyan to play soccer, but joined the lacrosse team in her sophomore year, the team's second season.

"I was a manager my first year," she said. "I saw that the team was really close, that they had fun and that they worked hard in practice and in games. I wanted to be part of that."

Saying that she's "excited" about lacrosse's reinstatement, she's hopeful that new players can be recruited from campus so that Wesleyan can put a competitive team on the field in the spring. She said that considerable interest has been generated among current Wesleyan students, including some who are not on a team at present.

Like Penrod, Sarah Matulich, a junior from Buffalo, came to Wesleyan with the express purpose of playing lacrosse. An attacker, Matulich ranked third on the team in goals and first in assists during the 2007 season.

When she heard the team had been reinstated, she said, "I was happy. I'm just excited to play with my teammates again."

Matulich recalled the disappointment and anger that players felt last year after the team was cut.

"Our first thoughts were for our coach. She had just had a baby and moved into a new house," she said, referring to Lorin Titus. "Then I became mad. I came here to play lacrosse."

Titus confirmed that she will not be a candidate for the open coaching position. She guided the team to three victories in both the 2006 and 2007 seasons.

Still a resident of the area, Titus said she is happy to be a stay-at-home mom to her infant daughter, Carmen. She said she hopes to referee lacrosse matches, but noted that coaching opportunities are limited in eastern North Carolina.

"We were steadily building the program as a team and I'm sure the new coach will do a great job taking up where we left off," Titus said. "I know that they have the ability to be great because they have been working toward that greatness since day one. I will forever be proud of the NCWC Women's Lacrosse Team."