

Women's lacrosse comeback falls short

By Liz Farquhar
STAFF WRITER

"Go for the red Jen!" a fan screamed to senior Jennifer Abelin during April 4's women's lacrosse match against Randolph-Macon.

The Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) contest at Armfield Athletic Center was a site to behold, as the Quakers played to a 12-10 loss. During the course of the game, six yellow cards were given out, five to Guilford players.

"There were definitely more cards than usual," said sophomore defender Meaghan Dill while looking back on the game.

Abelin received two of Guilford's five cards, due to her determination to win.

"I'm always going to get (cards), that's just how I play," Abelin said with a laugh.

Abelin's on-field play in the past four years was recognized before the match in the yearly "Senior Day" celebration.

During Abelin's Guilford career she has started in 26 wins, accumulated 68 points, caused 88 turnovers (Guilford record) and recovered 204 ground balls (second all-time). As the team's only senior, Abelin knows of the rivalry with Macon best - the Yellow Jackets eliminated the Quakers from the ODAC tournament twice in the past three years.

Last season, the Yellow Jackets knocked the Quakers out of the quarterfinals by one goal. According to head coach Matthew Grosso, the women have been waiting for revenge.

"Randolph Macon has become one of our biggest rivals," Grosso said. "They definitely bring out the best in our team."

Despite playing hard, the women were unsatisfied with the outcome of the game.

"It was a heartbreaker," junior Carrie Ernst said. "We had some good transitions; I don't know what happened, or why we lost this game to be honest."

The Saturday match looked promising for the Quakers, as they struck first off Abelin's score in the first 30 seconds of the game. The Yellow Jackets were quick to respond, as Macon senior Morgan Hutchinson and sophomore Elyse Cooper found the lower pockets of the goal, which gave Macon the lead. Moments later, Ernst tied the score with a close-range shot.

Throughout most of the first half the Quakers and Yellow Jackets continuously exchanged possessions until a commotion caused an ankle injury to Macon player Emily Kent.

After hobbling off the field to applause from fans, Kent sat out and watched Guilford take a 4-3 lead from another Ernst goal.

Macon didn't stay down for long, and scored four goals in as many minutes, each flying swiftly into the net, taking the lead at 8-4. After another goal exchange, the scoreboard read "9-5" at halftime.

With Guilford trailing, the huddle was tight, and Grosso was heated in a discussion with the team. First-year men's lacrosse player and fan Efram Evans believed that Guilford could turn the game in their favor in the second half.

"They've made a couple mistakes, but they can rebound from that easily," Evans said. "It's a close game."

While getting into position for second-half's draw

(faceoff), the Quakers looked ready to win. But following the trend of the first half, fouling was common.

"I tell the kids to play hard, play aggressive, but you can't keep playing recklessly," Grosso said. "They've got competitive girls; (fouling) happens."

As the scoreboard flashed "Defense," Macon pushed past the Quaker backfield and bounced the ball past junior goalkeeper Alyzza Callahan twice, now leading by five.

Not ready to throw in the towel, Abelin shot a frozen rope into the upper-left corner of the goal. After three quick goals by Summer Frazier, sophomore Hannah Merrell, and Merrett, the Quakers were in striking distance - down by two goals with four minutes remaining.

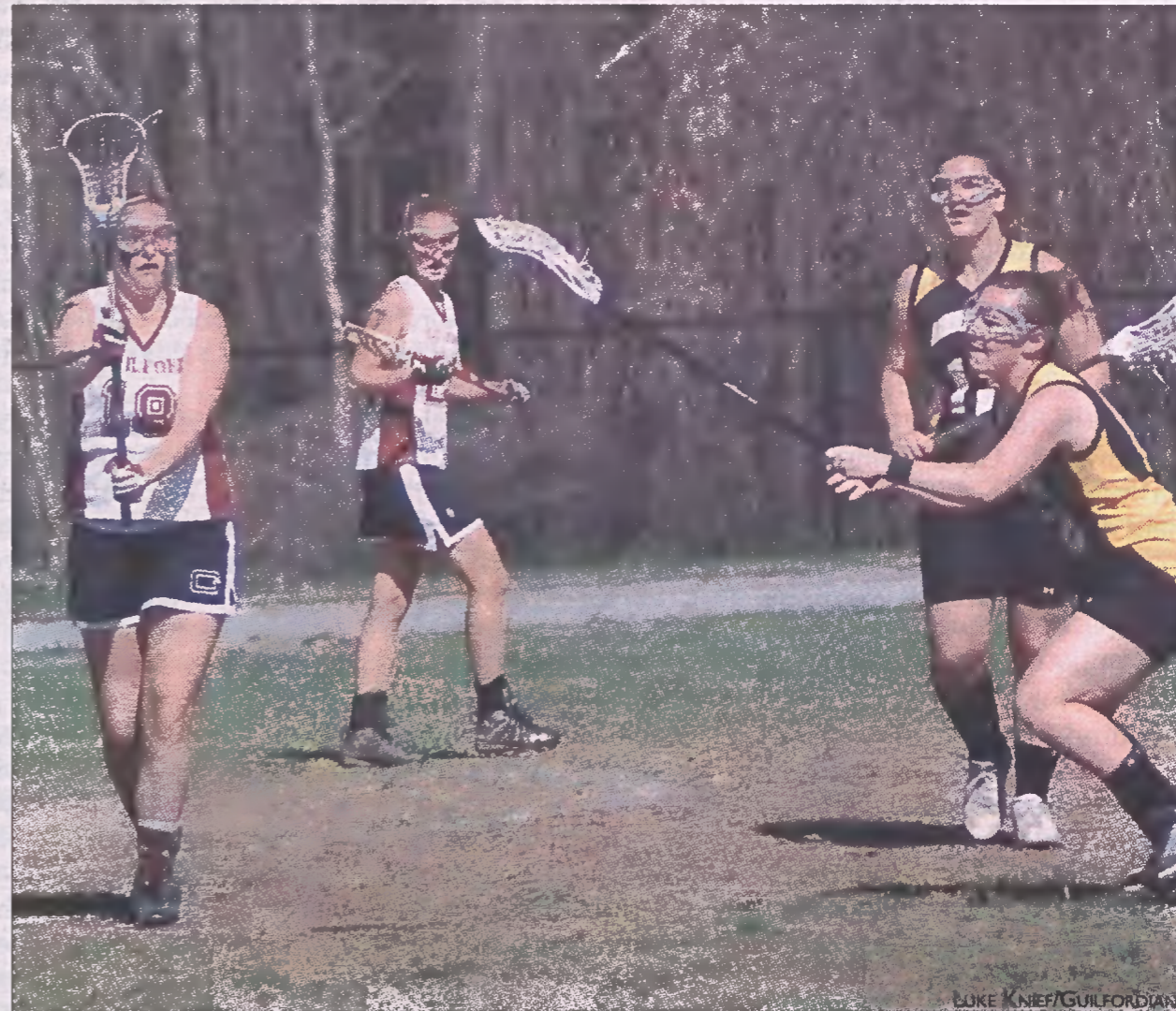
"Get ready Jackets," Macon fans chanted from the sideline.

In the last two minutes of the game both Abelin and sophomore Kaitlin Feeney received yellow cards and were forced out of play for the remainder of the game. The Quakers fought to the end, but the buzzer sounded too soon, and the Yellow Jackets erupted in screams as the lady-Quakers slinked back to the bench.

"I think the game went well," Randolph-Macon coach Dan Kanach said. "It is always a very tight competition."

The rivalry may have gotten the best of the Quakers this season, but they have three conference games left, and Grosso believes the team can do well in the ODAC.

"They're a tough group of girls. I want to see them win this year."



Freshman **Kathryn Carella** (18) and junior **Carrie Ernst** (23) look to make a successful clear from the defense on April 4.

QUAKER QUICK STATS

COMPILED BY PATRICK CHILDS

18

Points by Tyler Hansbrough in University of North Carolina's NCAA basketball championship game. The Tar Heels won by 17 over Michigan State, and Hansbrough's college basketball legacy is complete.

3:05

Left in men's lacrosse conference game last Saturday before freshman Chris Ashcraft scored the game-winning goal. The win over Virginia Wesleyan marked the Quakers first win in the ODAC since 2005.

351

Hits, 240 runs, .360 batting average, 208 runs batted in. This is the evidence to Guilford baseball's offensive explosion this year. These stats are the conference's best.

15

Game winning streak by the Lynchburg Hornets, which was snapped by Guilford College's softball team last Sunday when the Quakers split a double-header 3-8, 5-4. Freshman Jessica Burcham struck out seven hornets in seven innings.

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