



Seahawk Sports

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SPORT
NOTES

Hugh
Fisher

UNCW Track fares well in CTS meet

by HUGH FISHER
& WES MELVILLE

The Seahawk

UNCW Track and Field hosted the Collegiate Track Series last Saturday at Greene Track. It was their second home meet in two weeks, and the last chance for the UNCW team to compete in front of a home crowd this year.

The Collegiate Track Series presents a new format for the team, one that is aimed at attracting a larger fan base. "The meet is shorter and is intended to attract more people to the event," said first-year interim coach Jacquie Grimes. "It allows people to come and watch the events without having to spend their entire day at the track."

The series also attempts to make track and field more desirous of a television audience by shortening the meet to a finish time within three hours.

While defending their home turf, UNCW faced teams from Winthrop, Mount Saint Mary's, Manhattan College, and University of Miami, Ohio.

Manhattan College was their toughest draw: "They've got a strong overall team," said Grimes, adding that each team has a different area of strength.

UNCW's team performed well. Both the men and the women won their runnings of the 4x100 relay. Tim Jones, regularly a high jumper for UNCW's team qualified for IC4A competition with a long jump of 23' 10" on his first attempt.

The men's team had been competing against tough odds following five of their runners receiving minor injuries at the March 17 meet.



James Fling The Seahawk

Freshman Tim Jones automatically qualified for the IC4A with a long jump of 23 feet, 10 inches in last Saturday's meet at UNCW's Greene Track.

"A couple of hamstrings got pulled - just minor setbacks," said Grimes, adding that the players should be back in action after another week of rest.

Jones pulled his hamstring on his third long jump and was unable to compete in the high jump later that afternoon.

Erica Anderson, who ran in the women's 5000-meter race, considered her participation in the

event a personal challenge. She normally runs in shorter races.

"I wanted to try this," Anderson said, "it's closer to cross-country and I'm used to that. I need to work on my endurance."

The Collegiate Track Series is just another contest for UNCW on route to their pursuit of an unprecedented fourth straight CAA conference title.

New Recreation Center slated to open in April

by REBECCA LEWIS

Correspondent

Only six weeks behind schedule, UNCW's new Student Recreation Center is projected to open on April 11.

Actual construction began in September 1998. Previously estimated as a 14-month construction process, the University granted extra time for completion after construction was halted by hurricanes, snow, and a steel shortage.

"From the very beginning we had a hard time getting steel at a time when a lot of building was occurring. The orders just weren't going in," said Rex Pringle, director of Student Recreation and Sports Facilities.

Although the building was completed in February, finishing touches such as installing furnishings and fire alarms required more time. Pre-final inspections were completed Feb. 15 and 22. It was the first and second in a series of three final inspections. After each inspection the contractor has one week to fix and adjust the building before the next inspection.

Pringle said that most of the new equipment should have been moved in prior to

spring break.

\$500,000 has been spent on state-of-the-art weight machines, top quality free weights, cardiovascular machines, sports equipment, and aerobics equipment. The total cost for the 64,000-square-foot building was approximately \$7.3 million. The center is paid for with student fees because the state of North Carolina doesn't permit state dollars to go into building recreation facilities or areas.

The increase in student fees that funded the center has been augmented by a further fee increase to support new recreational and athletic programs on campus.

Other features of the new center include an aerobics room, which is 33% larger than the current one. It will be equipped with a high-tech sound system and special spring-cushioned flooring. A raised walking and jogging track will be a safe exercising environment for students who like to run or walk at night.

Another much-anticipated highlight is the rock-climbing wall, which will have three levels of difficulty. The wall is being built by a top-quality private company, but due to complications beyond the University's control it will not be ready for use until a few weeks after opening.

The new center will also be home to the Discover Outdoor center, the Heart and Sole Fitness Program, and the Hundley Wellness Promotions Center, which will move from offices in other campus buildings, freeing up space for other programs to grow.

Once the new center opens, the current student recreation center located in Hanover Gym will be used for physical education classes. The need for a new recreation facility was evident to the University by overflowing waiting lists in the weight room, continual gridlock in reservation of facilities by sports clubs, and complaints that weekend rentals take away any possibility of free play during the weekends at Hanover Gym.

UNCW junior Kelly Meyers' main complaint about the current recreation center is that it never fits her schedule.

"The new center is an alternative, another place to go," said Meyers. "The weight room is too crowded. I just got a membership at Corey Everson's (a local women's health club)."

Another factor that will allow for more free time is that students will not be competing for time and space with student athletes.

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As spring continues, and several sports kick into high gear, we at the paper are sometimes finding it hard to keep up. With only one issue coming out each week, and a Saturday afternoon deadline for the next Wednesday's stories, it's hard for *The Seahawk* to cover all of the sporting events that happen on campus in a given week.

And with so many events that happen on other campuses, even out of state, we find it hard to write about each one due to budget limitations.

The point of it all is, your campus newspaper is experiencing growing pains.

Our staff of writers are all students. They are paid less than \$10 per story published, and due to the way our budget is distributed we cannot pay writers to travel to other schools.

In addition, not all of our writers could just "drop everything" - school, other jobs, social obligations - in order to watch a track meet or basketball game away from UNCW, even if the money were there to adequately compensate them for their work.

It's because of the help of individuals in UNCW's athletic department that we were able to send a writer and photographer to Nashville for the school's NCAA game on March 17. And the Sports Information Office, associated with UNCW Athletics, has provided us information and statistics for events that do take place out of town on other occasions. They're the reason we can publish - for the first time in *Seahawk* history - professional, complete box scores for UNCW sports the way that other newspapers do every day. But we still have to run with the scores and information available by Saturday afternoon - which makes it hard to cover late-breaking news.

Even with all of the information we are provided, there is the issue of space. Out of our usual 24-page issue, five pages are reserved for sports. Fifty percent of that space (on average) is sold to advertisers.

The remainder is divided between topics of interest to UNCW students: varsity athletics, student club sports, intramurals, and news from professional and other collegiate sports. When appropriate, we publish stories that deal with breaking news or other events that affect sports and recreation - such as the new Campus Recreation Center.

Not every sporting event can make it into the pages of *The Seahawk* every week - not at our present size, and not as long as we are only able to publish once per week. One of our goals for the near future is to begin putting out two issues every week, which will greatly improve our coverage not just of sports, but of campus and community news as well.

We'll do our best to make sure your favorite sport is covered regularly and well - and we want you to look forward to our school paper's improvements this semester and beyond.