

Lady Bishops ranked fifth in region

By MARIE LENANE

It is another exciting year for the Lady Bishops softball team at North Carolina Wesleyan. The Lady Bishops are presently ranked fifth in the Central Region polls. They have four wins and two losses in the Dixie Conference and are presently tied for second place.

Led by Captains Kim Wivell, Tanya Parrish, and Jackie McCullough, the Lady Bishops have the determination and the talent to beat any team they face.

Kim Wivell, a returning All Conference performer, is starting at first base. Jackie McCullough has played well at shortstop and has been consistent at the plate all season, receiving the Dixie Conference Batter of the Week award. Tanya Parrish has played consistently at both first and third. Parrish leads by example with her strong athletic ability and hard work ethic.

Carrie Shank, an All Conference selection last year, is the starting pitcher. Shank has already been named Dixie Conference Pitcher of the Week twice. Second baseman, Tammy Bowen is backing Shank up on the mound. Pitching for the first time in her life, Bowen had a strong game against Meredith recording the 10-5 win.

Freshman Diana Friedrich is starting at catcher. Friedrich is a driven two-sport athlete who provides a strong arm and consistency behind the plate. L.B. Watson, the only three sport athlete at Wesleyan, is the back-up catcher and she is doing well as the designated hitter. Lori Bright and Missy Jeffries have added depth to the team. Bright has played well in left field and is consistent at the plate.

The talented freshmen have added to the success of the Lady Bishops. Jennifer Littlejohn was

named Dixie Conference Rookie of the Week for March 22. She is consistent in the field and has impressed many in the league with her ability to hit the ball.

Freshmen Jen Jones, Lisa Lambert, and Jen Winell have also been playing well in the outfield. Jones has a strong arm, a quick bat, and always plays with a high level of intensity. Lambert's speed and athletic ability allow her to do well in the

field and make her a dangerous base runner.

Coached by Trey Davis and John Brackett, the Lady Bishops concentrate on teamwork and intensity.

Captain Tanya Parrish said, "We are a strong team considering the number of first year players. If we continue to do well and avoid making mental errors we will beat any team we face."

Kim Wivell added, "We

haven't reached our potential at the plate, but we are playing well all around. Beating Methodist was a big lift this season."

Wesleyan defeated conference rivals Methodist 14-2 and 11-6 earlier in the season. Wesleyan played at Ferrum College Thursday April 8 to see who will take second place in the league. With the talent on this team they are the one to watch in the Dixie Conference Tournament.

Wesleyan's baseball team jumps to strong 13-2 string of victories

By JENNY BEEMER

The Wesleyan College men's baseball team is off to a good start so far. The team began the season with the record of 10-0; but, due to terrible weather, their record is now 13 wins to two losses.

There are several seniors this year who are pulling the team together: Todd Spreen, third baseman; John Bolen, outfielder; Ernie Jones, shortstop; Rodney Grainger, and Steve Robertson, pitchers. So far there are no recruits for next fall, but there are

active freshman recruits this year: Rick Martin, Jason Jenkins, and Doug Shiffley.

Coach Fox thinks that the team has improved in several areas, "We're off to a good start so far. The team is offensively better at batting and has an average of 308. Last year the average was 285."

As with any college team, whether baseball or basketball, the goal is usually to get to the Championship or Conference playoffs.

"As a team we would like to get to the Dixie conference. So far we've played three out of 12

games and have done well. Our biggest games will be against Christopher Newport, Ferrum, and Methodist. Unlike in basketball, the team does not get an automatic bid by winning the Conference. Instead, a National Selection Committee picks 32 teams to play in NCAA tournaments. So far we've been invited to the last 12 tournaments, and hopefully we'll be invited to more," said Coach Fox.

Some average statistics of the team are: hitting, .308; stolen bases, 63; stolen bases percentage, .875; fielding average, .974; earn run average for pitchers, 2.25; and in 15 games, 10136 for hits against opponents.

Although the team is doing well so far, there are two players with knee injuries: Rahman Turner and Scott Morgan.

"Losing these two players has been a major blow to us because they're good players," said Fox.

Rodney Grainger added, "We've been successfully making regionals and the conference and we want to make the whole series. Defense is our biggest asset, and our hitting and pitching has improved."

After graduating, Grainger hopes to go back home and play in the semi-pros or to go on to graduate school.

"I like that the game attendance is up about 50 percent overall, 46 percent at home and 63 percent away," he said.

The Decree Sports

Modern baseball striking out

By PATRICK BRANNAN

"The one constant through all years, Ray, has been baseball. America has rolled by like an army of steam rollers, has been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game, is a part of our past, Ray; it reminds us of all that once was good and it could be again." (*Field of Dreams*).

Baseball has been a constant through the years, but it is embarking upon a time of uncertainty. If the economic and political problems surrounding baseball continue along its current path it will lose the distinction of being a great sport. Yet it could become what it once was and return to the golden days of its past.

The greed of the owners and players is the cause of the problems in baseball. The players think that because there is money, from the television contracts, they can earn more money. After all,

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the players are the ones that bring the fans to the parks. They want and deserve a share of the money that the owners get.

The owners think that the players are paid too much. The owners think that they are above the law and that they can do whatever they want to. If the commissioner stands in your way, just fire him. The owners are like a bunch of kids; if they don't get their way, they make it a living hell for the fans to fix it so they can get what they want. It's about time that something is done about this.

The owners have sold out to the television networks. The preliminary changes that the owners approved to take effect in 1995 are for one reason to guarantee a large television contract so that baseball will continue into the fu-

ture. Baseball, like America, can continue on its current path. These paths do not lead to extinction or destruction, they just lead to lack of public support and chaos.

It was 20 years ago this season that the American League adopted the designated hitter, allowing another player to bat for the pitcher. This rule was adopted to help boost the offense and the attendance, and it continues to be a hot topic today. The itch is back and this time the owners want to go with wildcard playoffs, realignment of the leagues, interleague play, and other revolutionary changes.

One of the great things about baseball is that it does not matter who finishes second; only the first place teams make it to the playoffs. That is part of the fun with the late season trades to improve the rosters for the stretch run.

There are a number of things that baseball needs to do to fix the problems. First, baseball needs a new, strong, bright, commis-

sioner — someone who will lead the sport into the next century. This person must have the freedom to act as he sees right and not under the owners' watchful eyes. Second, baseball needs a fan association. The sport has a players association, so why not a fans association. After all, who pays for the whole thing in the end? Since the players and the owners obviously can't work together, maybe with a third party something can be done.

I wish that I had been able to see the baseball of yesterday. I can only dream of the days of Shoeless Joe Jackson when players played the game for the game. When players said, "I just love this game. I would have played for food money. It was a game, the sounds, the smells" (*Field of Dreams*).

I also dream that the game can return to the way it was. This will only happen, however, with cooperation between the owners, players, and the fans.

Writers needed

The Decree needs writers and reporters.

The staff meets every Thursday at 4:15 p.m. in the Spruill Building. Stop by!