

# Baseball approaches important SoCon play

Conor O'Neill  
Assistant Sports Editor

Going into this weekend's games against University of North Carolina Greensboro, the Elon University baseball team will attempt to carry the momentum it has established during the past week, head coach Mike Kennedy said.

Following a weekend in which the team was swept by The Citadel, the Phoenix traveled to fifth-ranked Clemson University and won two games last week. The team won its first game 15-10 and took the second contest 4-3 in 10 innings.

Elon then traveled to Davidson College during the weekend and swept the Wildcats, earning 8-3, 12-4 and 4-2 (11 innings) victories.

The series sweep against Davidson ran the team's record to 5-4 in the Southern Conference.

Current standings have the Phoenix tied with the College of Charleston for fourth in the SoCon.

"With the way The Citadel is playing, every weekend is important," Kennedy said. "I told our guys that we have to show up and be ready to play, and we can't give any games away at this point with the way (The Citadel) is playing. All we can control is how we play."

Kennedy said the big difference between the team's performance against The Citadel and Davidson was the pitching.

The improvement in pitching cannot be traced to one player on the team. According to junior pitcher Jared Kernodle, the pitching staff as a whole is starting to come together.

"We're starting to figure out our roles," Kernodle said. "Everybody is doing their part, and we had some freshmen step up big at Clemson for us to get those two wins."

The bullpen put up an efficient



FILE PHOTO  
Senior catcher Mike Mellillo gets set at the plate March 16 against UNC Wilmington. Against Davidson College, Mellillo scored two runs, batting a combined .333.

showing in the second game of the trip to Clemson. Freshman Jim Stokes, juniors Mitch Conner and Thomas Girdwood and senior Ryan Adams combined for two hits allowed and five strikeouts in 6.2 innings pitched in the Phoenix 4-3 victory.

Kernodle has also done his part in the Phoenix pitching staff. A reliever for his first two years at Elon, he is 2-0 in five starts for the Phoenix this season, with an ERA of 3.72.

When asked how he was able to transition from the bullpen to the rotation, Kernodle was quick to point to assistant coach Nick Brannon.

"I give a lot of credit to coach Brannon," Kernodle said. "He and I have gotten more work in to get my

endurance up. He's also worked with me to be more of a pitcher than a thrower."

Kernodle has surrendered just four walks compared to 24 strikeouts in 29 innings pitched.

Another player who has had a larger impact for the team this season than last has been Adams. The senior first baseman, who also pitches, has belted eight home runs so far this year. Last year, he hit just two.

"I'm just seeing the ball well right now," Adams said. "I worked hard in the offseason, got in the best shape I could be in, and I've been hitting a lot with (associate head coach Greg Starbuck)."

Last season, when the Phoenix won the regular season conference crown, the team began SoCon play with a 3-3 mark. Its final conference record was 23-4.

Kennedy said for the team to make a similar run this season, the offense must manufacture more runs.

"Offensively, we have to continue to get better," Kennedy said. "We've struggled at times, and I think we need to work on getting on base more than hits. We just have to get on base and produce runs."

As Adams is one of the hitters leading the Phoenix offense, he said he sees the team as being very capable of stringing together many SoCon victories.

"We're a very different team this year," Adams said. "But I can easily see us doing the same exact thing we did last year. We got on a roll already so if we just keep going we can roll wins off and not look back."

The team will take the field at 7 p.m. tonight at home, looking to improve when it plays Wake Forest University, an ACC team that offers more top-level competition for the Phoenix as the team moves into the heart of conference action.

## SPORTS BRIEF

### Baseball players receive honors

Elon University junior pitcher Jimmy Reyes garnered national attention Monday when Collegiate Baseball named him one of the "Louisville Slugger's" National Players of the Week.

Also on Monday, senior first basemen Ryan Adams became the Southern Conference Player of the Week. Both awards came after sweeps against No. 5 Clemson University and Davidson College.

### Women's golf earns fourth place at the UNCW Lady Seahawk Classic

After shooting 933 as a team in the tournament, the Elon University women's golf team finished fourth in UNC Wilmington's tournament March 22 and 23.

Senior Tara McFadden finished third individually, securing her second SoCon Player of the Week award of the season.

### Women's tennis sits in second place in the SoCon

The Elon University women's tennis team played two conference matches during Spring Break, resulting in a win and a loss to bring the overall record to 13-4 and the SoCon record to 3-1.

March 21, the team defeated Georgia Southern 5-2 in Statesboro, Ga., before falling to the College of Charleston 2-5. This brings the team to second in the SoCon, behind College of Charleston.

### Men's golf finished 16th in Furman-hosted tournament

At the Furman Invitational March 19 through 21, the Elon University men's golf team finished 16th in a field of 24 with a score of 917 (308-303-306).

Clemson University won the event, posting a 865 (289-294-282).

# Mellow Mushroom

## April Showers Bring...

**LIVE MUSIC to Mellow!**  
bands start at 9 pm

<b>April 1st</b>	<b>Me and My Monkey</b> (Blues/Rock)
<b>April 8th</b>	<b>To Be Determined</b>
<b>April 15th</b>	<b>Hitmen</b> (Contemporary Rock)
<b>April 22nd</b>	<b>The Ends</b> (Rock/Funk)
<b>April 29th</b>	<b>Selah Dubb</b> (Reggae)

**LADIES' NIGHT EVERY THURSDAY**  
1/2 price wine, \$3 rum and cokes, \$5 Appletinis,  
1/2 price appetizers after 9pm

## Mon., April 5th

### MELLOW MAYHEM

Come out and cheer for  
the NCAA Championship

Test your basketballs smarts with  
NCAA trivia and win prizes!

**\$2 Bud Lights \$3 Shock Tops**  
all domestic bottles \$2.25

**Join us on the Mellow patio!**  
the best place to dine and drink on a spring weekend.