

SPORTS BRIEFS

Phoenix alum named to NC Hall of Fame

Current Major League Baseball Umpire and former Elon University football quarterback Joe West has been named to the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

West, along with 14 other athletes from around the state will make up this year's class. While at Elon, West passed for 3,373 yards, which currently still stands at ninth all-time in program history. He helped Elon capture conference titles in 1971, 1972 and 1973.

West was inducted into the Elon Sports Hall of Fame in 1986 and is the longest tenured umpire in the MLB.

Head coach Matheny teams up with Coaches vs. Cancer

On Tuesday, Jan. 16, Elon University men's basketball head coach Matt Matheny and other coaches from around the region took part in a fundraiser at the Greensboro Subway inside Wesley Long Hospital.

Matheny, joined by High Point University's head coach Scott Cherry, North Carolina A&T's head coach Jay Joyner, and University of North Carolina at Greensboro's head coach Wes Miller, served as guest sandwich artists for an hour on Tuesday, launching a special Coaches vs. Cancer fundraising campaign.

The Coaches vs. Cancer organization is a collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches to promote healthy living and support the fight against cancer.

Men's tennis starts season on high note

It was a cold day at the Jimmy Powell Tennis Center Saturday, Jan. 13, but the Elon University men's tennis team started the season hot, picking up two victories against other teams from the Tar Heel state.

The Phoenix was able to sweep North Carolina A&T State University 7-0 in the first match before facing Div. III North Carolina Wesleyan College in the second match. Elon smashed Wesleyan 6-1 in the latter match of the doubleheader.

The Elon men's tennis team will be away from their home courts for the next six matches, starting with a matchup against No. 20 University of South Carolina Jan. 20 at the neutral site of Davidson University.

Women's tennis smashes competition in spring opener

Also facing North Carolina A&T State University and North Carolina Wesleyan College on Jan. 13 at home, the Elon University women's tennis team started the season perfectly, defeating both teams 7-0.

Sophomore Sofia Edo and senior Erica Braschi were the top Phoenix players, finishing a perfect 2-0 in both doubles and singles competition. Elon was strong in doubles play, only dropping three games across all three matches.

The women's team will return back to the Jimmy Powell Tennis Center Sunday, Jan. 21 at 1 p.m. facing Furman, the reigning Southern Conference champion.

Tough conference play in the CAA

Ten teams makeup the league – but only one can cut down the nets and punch its ticket to the big dance once March comes around.

All of Elon's sports teams compete in the Colonial Athletic Association. Founded in 1979, the CAA is comprised of schools spanning the East Coast – from Massachusetts to South Carolina. The Elon Phoenix are the most recent team to join the league, switching from the Southern Conference in 2014.

Since joining the CAA, Elon has made a name for itself, gaining more recognition each year. The men's basketball team has been no exception to that. Returning all five of its starters from last year's team and narrowly losing in the first round of the CAA Championships to close the season last year, the Phoenix were picked to finish third in the league when the first preseason poll came out.

Like most CAA games, including the two games this weekend, each one is a battle and often comes down to the final minutes or even the final shot.

Elon came into the weekend 3-1 in conference, facing a University of North Carolina at Wilmington team that had been lackluster on the year, going 4-12 in the first 16 games after losing most of their star players.

Junior forward Tyler Seibring hit a layup with three seconds remaining to tie the game up and Elon had a chance to win the game at the buzzer after UNCW turned the ball over shortly after gaining possession. Seibring missed the game-winner and the game headed to a duel in overtime. Elon came up just short on Jan. 11, falling to the Seahawks 80-78.

"Just a great college basketball game, said UNCW head coach C.B. McGrath after his team's victory over Elon. "That's what the CAA is about. It seems like there's been a lot of good games so far in the CAA."

"Close loss, home loss, conference loss – it stings," head coach Matt Matheny said after the game. "You



Junior guard Dainan Swoope stares down his defender in the matchup against College of Charleston Jan. 13. The Phoenix defeated the Cougars 63-58.

feel like we're starting to play better and I feel like we played well. It's not like we played any differently, it's not that we played really poorly so I feel like we're a good team that's playing pretty well and then we lost a close one."

Coming into Saturday's match up against the College of Charleston, Elon had vengeance in mind. After winning the CAA last year, the Cougars were picked to finish a top the league in the preseason poll.

It was another exciting CAA finish on Saturday, Jan. 13. Senior guard Dmitri Thompson hit two foul shots with less than 10 seconds remaining to give Elon a three-point lead. On the final drive, the Cougars took a shot from the top of the arc to tie the game up and give the fans some extra minutes of action. The ball seemed to dip halfway into the hoop but didn't fall, giving the Phoenix a much-needed 63-58 win over the league favorite.

"We're climbing the mountain and it's not an easy climb," Matheny said after the win against Charleston. "It's not an easy hill. It's treacherous at times and we stumbled Thursday night. We got a beautiful view on

the climb up the mountain now, but we've got a lot of mountain left to climb."

With 12 league games before the CAA Championships in North Charleston, South Carolina the first weekend of March, there are still many more minutes of basketball to play against high-ranking players.

Through Jan. 13, the CAA currently holds the national-leading rebounder in UNCW's Devontae Cacoc (12.9 per game), the nation's second highest scorer in Hofstra University's Justin Wright-Foreman (averaging 25.6 points per game) and nation's second-ranked shooter from behind the arc in the College of William & Mary's Connor Burchfield (51.5 percent).

The next couple of games will be crucial for Elon to keep the train on the tracks in CAA play. The Phoenix will head north to Harrisonburg, Virginia, for its next test – facing the Dukes of James Madison University on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. Elon will then be in the friendly confines of its home arena on Jan. 20, hosting current league leader, William & Mary.

THE PHOENIX FOCUS

MEN'S BASKETBALL

RESULTS 12-7

JAN. 11 UNCW/ELON 78-80
JAN. 13 COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON/ELON 63-58

SCHEDULE

JAN. 18 JAMES MADISON/HARRISONBURG, VA 7 P.M.
JAN. 20 WILLIAM & MARY/ELON 7 P.M.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

RESULTS 10-5

JAN. 12 JAMES MADISON/HARRISONBURG, VA 67-70
JAN. 14 WILLIAM & MARY/WILLIAMSBURG, VA 75-81

SCHEDULE

JAN. 19 TOWSON/ELON 7 P.M.
JAN. 21 DELAWARE/ELON 1 P.M.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

RESULTS 2-0

JAN. 13 NORTH CAROLINA A&T/ELON 7-0
JAN. 13 NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN/ELON 7-0

SCHEDULE

JAN. 21 FURMAN/ELON 1 P.M.
JAN. 24 DUKE/DURHAM 3 P.M.
JAN. 24 MEREDITH COLLEGE/RALEIGH 6:30 P.M.

WOMEN'S TRACK

SCHEDULE

JAN. 19 VMI KEYDET INVITATIONAL/LEXINGTON, VA
JAN. 20 VMI KEYDET INVITATIONAL/LEXINGTON, VA
JAN. 20 WAKE FOREST INVITATIONAL/WINSTON-SALEM
JAN. 21 WAKE FOREST INVITATIONAL/WINSTON-SALEM

MEN'S TENNIS

RESULTS 2-0

JAN. 13 NORTH CAROLINA A&T/ELON 7-0
JAN. 13 NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN/ELON 6-1

SCHEDULE

JAN. 20 SOUTH CAROLINA/DAVIDSON, NC 11 A.M.
JAN. 23 WAKE FOREST/WINSTON-SALEM 7 P.M.