

# "The Road To Resurgence"

## Softball team starts season with wins

By Demarious McNeill  
Sports Writer

With the Fayetteville State University football team recruiting new players, and the basketball teams ending their Cinderella seasons, what's next for Bronco fans? Lady Bronco Softball!

Before you turn the page, hear me out: after a pre-season tune up with Coach Miguel Justiniano, the Broncos started practices with recognition on their minds. They wanted to let the softball world know that Fayetteville State is ready to be considered a powerhouse. Want proof?

The season opener pitted Fayetteville State against Concord University. That's where the fireworks started. The Concord Lions caught the Broncos off guard in the top of the first inning with a double steal attempt.

The runner on third snuck home giving the Lions a 1-0 lead. The Broncos wasted no time striking back. After Danisha Lyons reached base in the bottom of the first, she was brought in by Alicia Frank who connected on a double off of the opposing pitcher.

In the bottom of the third, FSU proved that they could produce offense. With runners on first and third, Aja Sawyer connected on a line drive single allowing Shatia Gidrey to score. After a wild pitch scooted past the Lions catcher, Terisha Foat sent an RBI single up the middle. Dominique



Photo by: Ashley Smith

### Lady Broncos turn a double-play during practice

Mills had her chance in the same inning sending a chopper down the third base line scoring the runner from third.

The bottom of the fourth saw the Broncos expanding the lead when Alicia Frank added another RBI after a double scored the runner from second base. This lead proved enough for the Broncos pitcher Alicia Frank who held the Lions to 4 runs as the Broncos took game 1 of this double header. The Lions assumed that game 2 would turn in their direction. The Broncos defended their home turf taking game two 8-0 to improve to 2-0 on the young season.

Where is this success coming from? Who is responsible for this "Road

to Resurgence?" His name is Miguel Justiniano, but he goes by "Coach Who."

His track record assures everyone that he meets all the criteria for the job. In a recent interview with Coach Justiniano, he feels that coming to a young and energetic team is great.

It gives him a chance to build on top of what is already here and with each passing game, to gain experience. 'Coach Who' is up to the challenge and is confident that he can turn around a Fayetteville State team who has not won a championship title since 2001. Under the mentorship of Coach Simpson, Coach Who has assembled a lineup with power, speed and finesse. Leading the charge for

the Broncos are Danisha Lyons, Alicia Frank, and Bobbi Boucher. These three ladies hope to carry the Broncos to the championship title. With the talent these ladies possess and the supporting cast surrounding them, the title is within grasp. Utility player Bobbi Boucher said, "It is very important to get off to a good start because when we win then people will hear about us and actually know we have a softball team. Then they would come out and support us for the rest of the season."

If the Broncos continue to impress, expectations set for them will be exceeded and they will become the Cinderella story of softball. Boucher is passionate that they have only one thing to prove to the league. "We can do this," she said, "We are not the same team from last year."

Fayetteville State utility player Danisha Lyons said "My prediction for the rest of the season is looking pretty good. I think this is going to be an awesome season. As you can see, we have already started off really well. I just see us keeping up the good work."

One thing the Broncos are sure about is that they will not rest until they have the CCAA championship back at home at Fayetteville State. Brace yourselves, because with talent and commitment under the hood, attitude in the tank and heart behind the wheel, this ride will be unbelievable. Start your engines!!

## Bronco Softball Needs Better Facilities

By Ashley Smith  
Sports Commentary

Last week the Lady Broncos Softball Team defeated Concord University in a double-header. The second game was a shutout. Why is this important? Because it was the first time that our softball team has ever beaten Concord. The Voice had a writer covering the game, but was unable to have a photographer present for the victory. I made it a point to locate the Lady Broncos at their practice over Spring Break, so that I could get photos of the team for this issue.

My first task was to find out where the team practices. In all my days at FSU, I have never saw a softball field. After asking around, I found that our team practices and hosts home games at the Seabrook Community Center softball field across from campus. The day of the practice I made my way over to the field, and at first I thought I was lost. The field's dugouts were chain-link fences connected to a dusty-floored stat keepers area. The infield was mostly mud due to recent rains, but even with the rain it was easy to tell that the field hadn't been kept in decent condition for a while.

Anyone reading this that has ever played baseball or softball knows that you are supposed to rake the dirt in the infield to keep it loose so that ground balls do not take a bad bounce and hit the player in the face. The condition of the infield seemed pretty hazardous to the players. For example, besides the un-raked infield, there was a washed-out dip in the field between the pitcher's mound and the first base line that could potentially lead to bad hops and even sprained ankles.

The outfield seemed like something out of the movie "Sand Lot" with crabgrass, weeds, and ant-hills everywhere. I could not tell that I was standing on the game field for a Division II collegiate softball team. I coached softball for Fort Bragg this past year, and the fields that my 9-12 year old girls played on were in much better condition.

Simply put, this is unacceptable. If you drive down the road to Methodist University, you can look at their beautiful baseball/softball field. It is well kept with cinder-block dugouts, a properly tilled infield and beautiful green grass in the outfield. The interesting thing is that Methodist is a Division III university.

Why is it that at FSU we have neglected a Divi-

sion II sports team by telling them that they have to practice at a local community center, have limited resources, and almost no scholarships to offer players they recruit to Fayetteville State University? I mean, their field is acceptable for a junior high team, but not a collegiate team. Shame on you Athletics Department.

When other schools play against Fayetteville State University, do you want them to look at that field and think that is what FSU thinks of its athletic programs? I hope not.

However, there is some light to this story. I stayed and watched the Lady Broncos practice and I must say that I was impressed the amount of talent that our girls have this year. If you like baseball, softball, or just like supporting our Bronco teams you should definitely go see the girls play at Pembroke on March 16th (an away game) or March 25th against Livingstone at home. And if you just want to drop by and look at the softball team's practice and game field, go to J.W. Seabrook Park across from Fayetteville State (down from the Fire Station) and see for yourself if it is fit for a collegiate team. Any comments on this article can be directed to VoiceCopyEditor@yahoo.com.